

# Ince CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106476
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wigan
<b>Inspection number</b>	287521
<b>Inspection dates</b>	1–2 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Mark Madeley

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	456
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Ruth Wareing
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Jillian Ramsbottom
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 March 2003
<b>School address</b>	Charles Street Ince Wigan Lancashire WN2 2AL
<b>Telephone number</b>	01942 245218
<b>Fax number</b>	01942 704129

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is much larger than average, although pupil numbers have declined since the last inspection. The pupils are mostly of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is almost twice the national average. Just under one third of pupils have an identified learning difficulty and/or disability, which is much higher than average. The school has an average proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need. A higher than average percentage of pupils join or leave the school other than at the normal time.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school, with an outstanding strength in the provision for pupils' care, guidance and support. It gives good value for money because it meets the wide ranging needs of its pupils well. Parents feel strongly that their school is very effective. They say that the school supports the pupils, and sometimes the families, exceptionally well and this is certainly evident. A very positive feature of the school is the Seasons Room, which helps pupils with social and emotional problems talk through their difficulties, while continuing to help them make progress in their learning. Effective teaching manages pupils' sometimes difficult behaviour well. Pupils respond positively by behaving better, and behaviour overall is good as a result. Pupils are highly motivated by the good use of the local rugby league team's anti-bullying programme, which helps them understand how to stay safe.

The school is led in an outstanding way by the headteacher. All staff are behind her in striving for the best for each pupil. Effective management has maintained pupils' good rate of progress since the last inspection. Very good systems to check provision and pupils' progress are in place. As a result, governors and managers have a clear picture of the strengths and areas for development on which to base their future planning. Because managers know their school well, the school's self-evaluation is accurate. The school has good capacity to improve further because checking systems are robust and staff and governors are fully involved in the review process. Highly effective partnerships with parents, local health agencies, the learning support service and the church community all contribute outstandingly to pupils' personal development.

Pupils achieve well because teaching is good. It meets their learning needs well. They start school with attainments which are very low. Good provision in the Foundation Stage helps them make good progress. By Year 6 pupils generally reach standards which are close to the national average. In 2006, Year 6 national test results were below average because pupils' progress was affected by staff absence. Effective management has now restored pupils' progress to its previous good levels across the school. Standards are generally higher in mathematics and science than in English. However, in the last year, pupils' writing has improved markedly as a result of recent initiatives, with exceptional progress in terms of accuracy and expression. Many pupils could do better in problem-solving activities in mathematics. Teachers make lessons interesting by using new technology well. The pace of learning is rapid in most classes and tasks are usually well matched to pupils' abilities. Pupils know their individual learning targets and work hard to achieve them.

The curriculum is innovative because staff have designed it with the pupils' needs in mind. As a consequence, pupils really enjoy their work and make good use of their literacy skills in other subjects, though there is inconsistent provision for the use of their information and communication technology (ICT) skills. Very good use of visits and visitors broadens pupils' understanding of the world around them and further adds to their enjoyment.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the ability of pupils in Key Stage 2 to solve problems in mathematics.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to use and develop their ICT skills in other subjects.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

On entry to Nursery, many children find it difficult to communicate effectively and do not have much experience of playing with others. Children make good progress through the Foundation Stage but by the time they join Year 1 their attainments are below the national expectations for their age. Pupils make good progress in Years 1 to 6 to reach close to average standards. National test results at the end of Year 2 are usually close to average because staffing has remained almost unchanged and teachers are highly skilled with this age group. Results in national tests at the end of Year 6 are generally close to or slightly below average, depending on the mix of pupils and the length of time they have had in this school. The dip in progress in 2006 was caused by unavoidable absences of key staff, though management successfully minimised the impact on most pupils' learning. Standards are set to be higher with the current group of pupils in Year 6, not least because of the rapid improvement in pupils' literacy skills, though problem solving in mathematics remains a weakness. The school is well placed to meet its challenging targets.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because staff and their peers support them very well. The few pupils with minority ethnic heritage have an adequate command of the English language and make similar progress to their peers.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. They say they feel respected and well cared for. They enjoy school but this is not reflected in their attendance, which is below average. However, the school is doing all it can to improve it. Pupils think that there is not much bullying and know that their teachers deal with any problems. The use of the 'bully box', which enables them to express concerns in confidence, has been a major factor in pupils feeling safe from bullying. Pupils know about living in a healthy way and this is reflected in the school gaining a National Healthy Schools award. They are proud to be school or class councillors, and older pupils carry out duties as play leaders and monitors very responsibly. There are relatively few opportunities for younger pupils to take on responsibility. There is an adequate level of involvement in the local community through church services and events. Fundraising for charity and links with schools in Africa give pupils an awareness of the global community and improve their understanding of Britain's multicultural society. Pupils are very responsible, for example when collecting the toast money, and are well prepared for secondary school because they have made good progress in their basic skills.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils are keen to learn because they are taught in a lively way: for example, both staff and pupils use the 'interactive whiteboards' to make learning very visual. Teachers follow this up with clear explanations and use questioning well to confirm that pupils understand what they have to do. In mathematics lessons, teachers sometimes miss opportunities to highlight the key words in problems so pupils do not know

which arithmetic operation they have to use to solve the problem. Tasks in most lessons are well matched to pupils' abilities because teachers know what pupils understand and how to move them forward. Pupils have been effectively taught methods of planning writing, and their writing skills have improved significantly in a short period of time. While pupils are working at their tasks, teachers and their assistants provide good support to individuals and groups. In a few lessons, teaching assistants are not used effectively when the teacher is working with the whole class.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum meets the needs of the pupils well because staff have planned it from this starting point. Pupils enjoy the thematic approach because it helps them see the links between subjects and to use their skills, particularly their writing skills, in other subject areas. It is early days to judge the overall impact of this initiative. Opportunities for pupils to use their ICT skills in other subjects are inconsistent across the year groups. Good use is made of visits. For example, Year 3 pupils were keen to research Roman life after a stimulating visit to Chester. The school makes very good use of visiting artists and the pupils' high quality artwork displayed around the school is a testament to their impact. A good variety of activities outside lessons are very well supported and add greatly to pupils' general enjoyment and their understanding of healthy living.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Staff have built up a very positive relationship with pupils' families, who trust the school to care for their children. The pupils, some of whom experience disruption in their lives, know that the school is a safe place where they are valued. This has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are in place. The school makes excellent provision for pupils to learn to manage their feelings and emotions. This improves their behaviour and concentration and helps them to make academic progress too. The school makes exceptional use of external welfare, medical and educational support agencies to enhance pupils' well-being. The breakfast club encourages pupils to come to school on time and the provision of toast at break time is for some pupils the first food of the day. The school actively promotes good attendance, closely monitors absence and liaises effectively with the education welfare officer to help families of pupils with attendance problems. Pupils know how to improve their work because teachers mark it thoroughly and helpfully. They also work hard to reach their learning targets and these two factors are raising standards.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher is inspirational. She works tirelessly to achieve her vision, which is shared by all, that every pupil will fulfil their potential. The school is working hard to raise standards by the end of Year 6 to at least national average levels. The headteacher is very capably supported by the deputy headteacher, whose drive to raise standards in English is having an impact throughout school. Management checks teaching and learning thoroughly. It shares good practice and, where there are weaknesses, puts in place well-thought-out measures to improve it. Equal opportunities are promoted well. For example, additional features were added to allow

full access to pupils with mobility difficulties and the school partly finances staffing in the very successful Seasons room. Pupils' progress is very carefully monitored and teachers have to explain when insufficient progress is made. Subject managers have a good overview of their subject because they frequently check teachers' planning, look at pupils' work and support colleagues with their teaching. The management of provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for the Foundation Stage are very strong. Governance is good. The governing body fully supports the school in all that it does. They held the school to account when pupils' progress dipped in 2006 and maintain a general overview of spending.





## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Inspection of Ince C of E Primary School, Ince, WA2 2AL.

Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. We were delighted to be greeted so warmly. We valued your views about the school and took them into account when making our judgements. You, and your parents, told us that your school was really good and we agree. It helps you make good progress in your learning. We agree with you that your headteacher is a very special person who is dedicated to improving the school for you, your parents and her staff. Here are some of the many other good things about your school.

- You behave well and respect each other and the staff because they respect you.
- Good teaching helps you improve your understanding in English, mathematics and science.
- You are enthusiastic about your topic work and this is helping you to learn.
- You know a great deal about living healthily and have helped your school get a national award.
- The work of the staff in the Seasons room is very good.
- You do good work for charity and the schools in Africa.

Even good schools need to continue to improve. We have asked your headteacher to do two things which will make your school an even better place in which to learn.

- Help you improve your ability to solve problems in mathematics.
- Give you more chances to use and develop your computer skills in other subjects.

You can help your school by continuing to attend every day and by working hard towards your targets in literacy and numeracy.

We feel that it was a privilege to have been in your school and to work alongside you and the staff. We hope that you are proud of what you, the headteacher, her staff and the governing body have achieved.

We wish you and the school well for the future.