



# The Quinta Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 111041  
**Local Authority** Cheshire  
**Inspection number** 288837  
**Inspection dates** 2–3 October 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Kevin Johnson

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 address</b>	Ullswater Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Congleton
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11		Cheshire CW12 4LX
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01260 273269
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	310	<b>Fax number</b>	01260 297042
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mrs M Williamson
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss T Walklate
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 March 2003		

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<b>Age group</b> 5–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 2–3 October 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 288837
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors. An independently run kindergarten on the school site was inspected at the same time but has a separate report.

## Description of the school

The Quinta Primary School serves an area of mainly privately owned housing on the outskirts of Congleton. It has a larger than average number of pupils on roll, drawn from Congleton and the surrounding villages. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is lower than the national average. The school has won the Basic Skills Quality Mark and has achieved a Healthy Schools award. The headteacher was appointed six months prior to the inspection, following several changes in leadership during the previous two years.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory and improving school which provides satisfactory value for money. There is good capacity to improve further. Parents, pupils, governors and staff all agree that the new headteacher has revitalised the school following a period of unsettled leadership and management. Her incisive action has resulted in new management systems which have already brought about improvements. She has a clear and accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and, in partnership with governors and senior staff, is tackling them through thoughtful and well planned action. Children themselves say that behaviour is much improved. Teachers are working with renewed vigour and purpose and the governors are beginning to be more involved in monitoring the school's performance. There is a collective vision about where the school is heading and what still remains to be done. All are justifiably proud of what has been achieved over a short time.

The high turnover of staff during the last two years has led to inconsistencies in teaching quality and to pupils making only satisfactory progress. The staffing situation has now been resolved and teachers are working under clear direction to raise standards. One of the most effective new initiatives is the setting of individual targets, which pupils know and understand, so they are better informed about what is expected of them. Teachers' planning and lesson quality are improving. The grouping of pupils according to their abilities for English and mathematics is a start. Most pupils within the groups, however, do the same work which results in more able pupils not being challenged well enough. Consequently, although they are above average, standards are not as high as they used to be. Children in the Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress, rather than the good progress suggested by the school in the self-evaluation because the planned activities do not give them enough scope to develop their skills independently. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress as they benefit from the additional support provided by teaching assistants.

The curriculum is satisfactory, although there are some good elements which encourage pupils' interest and their enjoyment of school. These promote aspects of personal development including pupils' above average attendance. Pupils enjoy the challenges of keeping fit and even those in the Reception class wear their 'I am a healthy eater' stickers with considerable pride. Pupils have a growing awareness of and involvement in the local community and are prepared well for their future through their acquisition of basic skills. Most pupils are well behaved and thoughtful. However, a minority behave immaturely in lessons and display a lack of urgency to work. This legacy from previous unsettled times is not managed consistently by teachers and slows progress.

Provision for the care, guidance and support of pupils is satisfactory. Procedures for the safeguarding of children have been vigorously updated. The most vulnerable pupils are given the sensitive support they need to help them learn and all pupils form trusting relationships with adults who work in the school. The academic guidance which pupils now receive is beginning to bear fruit in the form of accelerated progress. This is because pupils' individual targets combined with teachers' consistent marking ensures that all know what they must do to improve.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more challenging work for the most able pupils.
- Ensure that the Foundation Stage curriculum provides children with more opportunities to make choices in their learning.
- Ensure that teachers' expectations and management of behaviour are consistent.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Children join the school with skills which are above average for their age and leave Year 6 with above average standards. Their achievement is satisfactory. Standards of attainment have fluctuated over time but have always remained above the national average. In the 2005 national tests, overall standards at the end of Year 6 were better than the national picture but they were boosted by the levels gained in mathematics and science. Pupils' performance in English fell to broadly average. The school's unvalidated 2006 test results show a reverse trend, with a recovery in English but a decline in overall standards. At the end of Key Stage 1, fewer pupils than in previous years attained the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics. The school recognises that the recent decline in standards and achievement at the end of Year 6 is the result of more able pupils failing to make the progress which might be expected of them.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 3

Pupils proudly state that 'Miss Walklate has made a huge difference,' when recalling how much their behaviour has improved. They feel more secure than previously because codes of conduct have been reaffirmed. However, a minority of pupils are still too easily led by others, resulting in immature behaviour and unwillingness to persevere with their work. This is why the inspection judgement differs from that of the school.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils respect others' feelings and have a growing awareness of different cultures and beliefs.

Staying healthy and safe is high on pupils' agenda. They appreciate and enjoy the good range of sports activities arranged for them as well as the healthy snacks and lunchtime choices. The newly formed school council already take their responsibilities seriously and clearly plan to have a voice in the running of the school.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

The reason the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory is that new procedures for marking and assessment of pupils' work are still in their infancy. There has been a high staff turnover over the last two years which has affected some older pupils' attitudes to learning. The recently introduced use of targets and improved marking system give pupils a better understanding of what they have to do. Teachers and assistants work together as a team so that provision in the classrooms is strengthened, particularly for those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Good relationships between staff and pupils create a positive climate for learning. Teachers work energetically to plan interesting lessons. Nevertheless, despite these real strengths, there are occasions when pupils' attitudes and behaviour are not managed consistently. Sometimes work does not challenge the more capable pupils well enough and there are too few opportunities for pupils, including in the Foundation Stage, to take some responsibility for their own learning.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The school has plans to rejuvenate the satisfactory curriculum in order to make it more creative and purposeful by giving pupils the chance to practise and apply basic skills across all subjects. The same applies to the curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage where children do not currently have enough choices about their learning and lessons are often too long. Already, the arts have an increasingly high profile because of the good enrichment brought by visitors to the school and the visits pupils make. The teaching of French in Years 1 to 6 is well established. The school's strengthening links with the community are used purposefully to enrich pupils' learning and promote their personal development. These include participation in the Congleton carnival, helping to maintain the local environment as well as links with other schools and colleges.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 3

Adults who work in the school show good levels of care towards the pupils. They are always available to offer help when it is needed. That is why pupils say that they feel secure. That they think their headteacher is 'firm but fair' is a reflection of the clear guidance they now receive. A good range of healthy food is available so that pupils are able to make sensible choices about their diet. They are encouraged to drink water and are aware of the rules to promote their safety.

Although the school judged this aspect to be good overall inspectors brought some matters of health and safety to the attention of governors. Routine checks on

equipment and fire drills are properly carried out and risk assessments along with other procedures for safeguarding pupils are satisfactory.

Academic guidance is given effectively through the targets that teachers set and by the way they mark pupils' work. This is beginning to have a good impact on progress.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The headteacher has had a strong impact on many aspects of the school since her recent appointment. She has successfully brought the school together as a cohesive unit and prepared solid foundations for continued development. Significant improvement in pupils' attitudes and behaviour is underpinning the signs of progress which are now evident. Evaluation of the school's current performance with regard to standards, teaching quality and leadership is accurately derived from the headteacher's rigorous analysis. Ownership of the improvement plan is now shared by governors and staff and it sets out clearly what needs to be done. There is good capacity for improvement. Governors say they have 'regrouped' under the new leadership. Although they are solidly committed to maintaining the school's high profile in the community, they are not yet fully effective as critical partners in evaluating its performance. Finances are managed prudently and are directly linked to school improvement. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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## 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>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
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>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
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>	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	3
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>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3

<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.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for making us so welcome in your school. We enjoyed our visit very much. We were able to talk to quite a lot of you and it was good to find out that you enjoy school and that things are improving for you. We think you are all making satisfactory progress.

These are some of the things your school does well.

- Most of you behave well. You told us how much your behaviour has improved. Well done!
- Your attendance is good.
- You are very keen on keeping yourselves fit and healthy.
- Your new headteacher has some great ideas about how to make the school better for you and some improvements have already begun.
- Your teachers work hard and make sure you know what to do to improve your work.

Your school will be better:

- if you are expected to take more responsibility for your own learning and work your hardest even when there are no adults working with you
- when some lessons for the very youngest children are shorter and they have more choices about the way they practise their skills
- when your teachers plan more challenging work to make sure all of you achieve as well as you can.

We know how well everyone is working to make The Quinta an exciting school to be in. You can help by making your behaviour even better and by making sure you reach your learning targets.