



Wimboldsley Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 111056
Local Authority Cheshire
Inspection number 288842
Inspection dates 29–30 January 2007
Reporting inspector Jon Lovgreen

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Nantwich Road
School category	Community		Wimboldsley, Middlewich
Age range of pupils	4–11		Cheshire CW10 0LN
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01606 832321
Number on roll (school)	101	Fax number	01606 832683
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr M Young
		Headteacher	Mr M Bousfield
Date of previous school inspection	4 February 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This small village primary school draws pupils from surrounding towns and villages. The number on roll has risen since the previous inspection and the building has been extended. Pupils are taught in four mixed-age classes. The proportion entitled to free school meals is low. The number with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is lower than average. No pupil speaks English as an additional language. The school holds the Basic Skills Quality Mark and a local authority award for being a healthy school.

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 small school which has seen considerable staff changes, especially of headteacher, in recent years. This has been well managed so that the school continues to provide a good standard of education, and parents have a high degree of confidence in it. They value the quality of care and interest which all those in the school give to pupils, and how this encourages their children to become confident, sensible and thoughtful young people.

Children join the school with average standards. Good provision in the Foundation Stage helps them make good progress, especially in learning to work in groups, follow routines and talk about work. The very small size of some year groups means that examination statistics can vary greatly and appear misleading. When allowance is made for this, pupils make good progress and reach above average standards, other than in mathematics. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities do well because they are well integrated and supported, following quick and accurate assessment of their needs. All this comes from good teaching and learning which is the norm in lessons. Marking and assessment are thorough, but pupils are not always sufficiently aware of how they are doing and how to improve. The curriculum is imaginative and makes good use of links to widen and enrich what pupils can experience.

The school knows itself well and has evaluated its overall performance accurately. While there is a range of systems to check what is going on, these are not used routinely to carefully check lessons and books to see what progress pupils are making. Nevertheless, issues from the previous inspection have been tackled well, and swift action has successfully countered a slip in writing standards. The headteacher provides clear and sensitive leadership so that the school has good capacity to improve further. It provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and improve progress in mathematics.
- Use assessment information to ensure that pupils have a clear idea of their standards, and of what they need to do to improve.
- Check the quality of teaching and learning more regularly and rigorously.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good and standards are above average. Children join the school with average standards. Good teaching helps children make good progress in Reception so that they soon become confident and motivated, many attaining standards beyond those expected for their age. Good progress in Key Stage 1 sees pupils reach standards which are above average, although mathematics has not improved as much as reading and writing. Results in the end-of-Key Stage 2 tests have been above average but declined in 2005 because pupils did less well in English. They did better in 2006, despite

poorer results in mathematics. Evidence from the inspection shows that current Year 6 pupils have made good progress from their Key Stage 1 test results. However, gains in reading, speaking and listening and science are not matched by those in mathematics. This is because average-attaining pupils find difficulty in applying methods they know to practical mathematical problems. The school is making good headway in continuing to improve pupils' standards of written work, although extended writing still shows some weaknesses. There is no pattern of underachievement by any group of pupils and good provision helps those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities progress at the same rate as other pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school and have very positive attitudes to it. 'Everyone is kind and everyone gets involved' was a view agreed with by many and demonstrated by pupils' smiling enthusiasm. They quickly learn to share and cooperate because they are encouraged to think about other people's ideas and feelings. Especially impressive is their ability to listen to teachers and each other, and to think carefully about what is being said. As a result most become clear and confident speakers. Behaviour is good in lessons and around school. Pupils are attentive, sensible, and have an excellent understanding of how what they say and do might affect other people. This leads to outstanding relationships and bullying is very rare. Pupils are interested in each other, support those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and celebrate others' achievements. Positions such as play leaders, buddies and librarians help pupils learn how to take responsibility and serve the community. Pupils take pride in the school and the work of the school council. School council members show a good ability to weigh ideas and make suggestions, for instance about competitions and outdoor facilities, while understanding the need for procedures and organisation. Attendance is average. Pupils are well prepared for life in terms of study skills, literacy, and information and communication technology (ICT). Practical mathematics skills are less secure.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The good quality of teaching and learning is founded on excellent relationships, good humour, and well organised classrooms. Pupils are happy and clear about what they are doing, and good progress results. Most lessons move at a brisk pace and good use is made of resources. Teachers use groups of pupils well to provide work suited to specific needs and abilities, but occasionally allow too much chatter. Their methods encourage pupils to think, and questioning is used well both to help pupils understand and to increase their ability to express ideas. In one lesson, very effective use of laptops enabled pupils to agree words to describe the shape and size of objects. Imaginative vocabulary was the result. Pupils have targets, and work is regularly marked. In many

cases, however, teachers do not make clear what skills are being looked for and precisely what the pupil needs to concentrate on next in order to improve. Specialist teaching or coaching in sport, French and music generate enthusiasm and progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities benefit from early and exact identification of their needs. The assistance they get from teachers and teaching assistants is very well targeted to help them see how they are improving.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good because of its range and the use of time. Issues from the previous report have been dealt with. Pupils now receive a good and progressive experience in ICT, and those in the Foundation Stage get a better balance of indoor and outdoor activities. Mixed-age classes are well organised to benefit pupils both in social terms and in helping them see how learning progresses. The curriculum is regularly checked to see that subjects get proper coverage but further work is required for the school to be sure that topics fully cater for the knowledge and skills pupils need. A strength of the school is the number of clubs and extra-curricular activities: outdoor pursuits and sports, a visit from a 'Roman soldier' to explain life and tactics in the legions, and a 'wedding' arranged by and for younger children in a local church, for example. Learning is further enriched by links which allow some subjects to be taught by specialists from outside the school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

'Everyone is equally different' reads a sign, aptly summing up the school's philosophy. Uniqueness and individuality are celebrated and supported while responsibility to all in the community is encouraged. Good communication with parents and thorough procedures make sure that pupils feel safe and happy. Pupils have total confidence in all adults in the school, with whom they have excellent relationships. Bullying is not a concern. While the youngest pupils settle in well, the school is aware of the need for better information about them as they arrive. Arrangements for transition to secondary school are well thought-out. Vulnerable pupils, and those who find some aspects of learning difficult, get good and sensitive support and encouragement.

Pupils' academic development is carefully monitored and analysed. Targets are set, and in English and mathematics these are reviewed each term. This potentially good system is limited by inconsistency. Some targets are not expressed or explained well enough for pupils to understand them and marking does not relate sufficiently to them to explain what pupils need to do next.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has carefully and accurately analysed the school's strengths and weaknesses, and has given it clear direction for the future. He has developed a range of good systems for checking the quality of what the school does. However, monitoring of lessons, lesson planning and marking is not performed often enough, nor does it sufficiently challenge and stimulate thinking about teaching and pupils' progress. Coordinators are fully involved in planning for the future, and manage their subjects well. Leadership of the Foundation Stage is good. There is a strong sense of teamwork among all in the school, including support staff. The school sets itself challenging targets, but not enough is being done to see how, and how effectively, these are being met. Financial management is good with careful thought given to the cost and use of resources. The governing body has provided stability to steer the school successfully through a period of staff changes. Building improvements and planning for changing pupil numbers have been well managed. Governors are less clear about how to support and check the school's progress in terms of pupils' achievement and in development planning. The school has successfully addressed issues from the previous report and the clarity of its planning is another indication of its good capacity to improve.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	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	3

The quality of provision

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

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	3
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	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

As you know, I recently visited your school to see how well you are doing and if the school is giving you the sort of education you deserve. This letter is to tell you what I found.

Thank you for being so friendly and polite. The way you were willing to talk about your work and what you think of school was really helpful. You are part of a good school. All the adults care and have time for you. This helps you to grow in confidence and be kind and thoughtful. You all get on with each other so that you work and play together well. Your behaviour around school and in lessons is good. Teachers have planned a good range of activities for you, including the chance to do things like quality sport, music, French and dance. You also get the chance to learn about things like camping and climbing at Craven Arms, the life of a Roman soldier, and what it is like to organise and take part in a wedding. Teachers are good at getting you to talk about your work and ideas during lessons so that you learn from each other. This also helps you to learn important things like listening to other people and thinking about what they say. The school is clean and bright and you play a part in keeping it looking so nice. You appreciate how lucky you are to have the woodland walk and other outdoor activity areas.

I have asked the teachers and governors to do three things to help your school improve:

- help you to do better in mathematics so that you are able to solve problems more quickly and with fewer mistakes
- give you a clearer idea of what the standard of your work is and what you need to concentrate on to improve it
- make more regular and careful checks that you are making good progress during lessons and with your written work.

You can help by continuing to work hard and concentrating on the targets you are set. Do ask teachers if ever you are not sure about your targets, or whether you have achieved them.