

# Winsford High Street Community School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	111057
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cheshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	288843
<b>Inspection dates</b>	16–17 July 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Frank Carruthers

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	313
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Paul Hardwick
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Mark Joule
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 February 2003
<b>School address</b>	High Street Winsford Cheshire CW7 2AU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01606 592643
<b>Fax number</b>	01606 861934

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This larger than average primary school serves the town centre and other areas of Winsford. Almost all pupils are of White British origin and none is learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average but the social backgrounds of families are mixed. Many pupils are from low income households. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. The school is resourced to cater for up to ten pupils with speech and language difficulties. It has gained the Basic Skills Award, the Arts Mark (Gold), Sports Mark, Inclusion Quality Mark, the Effective Early learning Quality Mark, the Family Learning Quality Kite Mark and the Healthy Schools Award. There has been a change of headteacher and deputy headteacher since the last inspection.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

The school provides a good education for pupils and has some outstanding features. The quality of its provision, leadership and management are good and this leads to the positive outcomes evident in the pupils' good academic and personal achievement. Pupils do well in English and mathematics. They make good progress from levels of attainment that are generally below those expected of children on entry to the Reception classes. Pupils start school with skills below those typical for their age in their personal, social and emotional development. Provision in Key Stage 1 classes has significantly improved since the time of the last inspection when it was a key weakness. Standards by the end of Year 2 are rising and now require consolidating. For the first time in four years, standards in Year 2 are in line with the national average and this indicates better performance. Standards by the time the pupils leave school in Year 6 are broadly average compared with schools nationally.

Pupils enjoy school, behave well and develop a good awareness of personal safety. Their awareness of how to lead a healthy and fit lifestyle is excellent. They take on responsibility exceptionally well, for instance when they become school councillors or produce a school newspaper. Provision for the care, guidance and support of all pupils is outstanding. It is evident, for example, in the support the school provides for vulnerable pupils, including those experiencing stress in their lives and those with emotional or behavioural difficulties. The staff have developed good procedures to keep track of how well pupils are achieving and use the information well to identify and support able and talented pupils and give attention to any pupils who appear to be under-achieving.

The quality of teaching and learning is good, as are standards and provision in the Foundation Stage. Strengths of the teaching include the staff's very positive relationships with pupils and the effectiveness of intervention programmes to bolster the achievement of specific groups of pupils. Teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 have improved since the last inspection, when they were key issues for action. The curriculum has a good emphasis on basic skills and has outstanding features, for example topics such as rivers in Year 5, which are explored through a field trip and a variety of activities that cover science, English, mathematics, geography and history. However, a weakness is evident in science in Key Stage 2 classes, where the quality of pupils' investigative work does not match the average standards reached by pupils in Year 6 tests. Teachers' expectations for what pupils can achieve in this aspect of their work is not good enough. By contrast, the provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is excellent and leads to the consistently good progress of pupils towards the targets in their individual education plans.

Leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides exemplary leadership. He is ably supported by the deputy headteacher and assistant headteachers, and together the senior leadership team monitors the school's performance well. They have a good grasp of how well the school is doing. Their self-evaluation of the school is accurate and matches the views of this inspection closely though they are modest about the care, guidance and support the school provides. Governors are very supportive of the school and have developed effective links so that they have a good awareness of how well the school is doing. They are fully involved in the processes of decision making. Parents have positive views of the school and support the view that, 'all staff are very committed to providing a pleasant and rewarding environment for the children'. They have special praise for the 'informative and stimulating field trips'. The school has a clear capacity to improve and gives good value for money.

## **What the school should do to improve further**

- Make sure that achievement in Years 1 and 2 is consistently good, building on this year's average standards at the end of Year 2.
- Increase opportunities for pupils to carry out challenging investigations in science in Key Stage 2 classes.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Children in the Reception classes make significant strides in their learning because of the effective use of resources and good teaching. By the end of the Reception year, most achieve the expected goals for learning in all areas of development. In communication, language and literacy and mathematical development, some children, boys especially, are still working towards them. Pupils' progress has improved in Years 1 and 2. Teaching and learning have improved and good monitoring of performance has led to effective action to lift the achievement of some groups of pupils, especially boys. Pupils in the speech and language unit achieve well because of effective teaching and good use of specialist agencies. By the time they are in Year 3, these pupils have frequently caught up with their peers. Standards in Year 6 have improved since 2004, being average overall. Most improvement is evident in pupils' writing, thanks to a clear focus on these skills by the school. Boys' performance is also improving as a result of successful measures taken to close the gap with girls. Evidence from pupils' science books, however, indicates their skills of investigating and recording findings are below average.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils say they enjoy coming to school and have good relationships with one another and with staff. They are polite and friendly. Behaviour is good both in class and around school and the staff deal well with the few pupils who have behavioural difficulties. Pupils report that bullying is rare and say that any incidents are handled properly by staff. Levels of attendance are usually in line with the national average and are just above average this year. Pupils have a good awareness of how to look out for one another and how to be safe themselves. They respond exceptionally well to the very good opportunities they have to take on responsibilities. The school councillors say they are proud of what they have done to improve resources and facilities at playtimes. Pupils are aware of the need to help others less fortunate than themselves, for instance when they raise money for charities locally and further afield. They learn to work independently and as a team, which are important skills to take forward to high school.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Strengths of the teaching include good planning, which caters well for the different levels of attainment in classes and emphasises links between subjects. The management of pupils is good and staff provide excellent opportunities for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties to learn how to cope in class, for example through the successful 'nurture group'. The school has catered very well with a mid-year increase in pupil numbers in Years 3 and 4. It

has also established a new teaching group in which the teaching and learning of lower attaining pupils are exceptionally well managed. There is effective support from teaching assistants, for instance in the speech and language unit. Pupils are given positive encouragement to learn well through praise and teachers' marking, which is consistently supportive and informative, giving guidance on how to improve. Teachers' expectations of what pupils in Years 3 to 6 can achieve when they carry out investigations in science are too low.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good with outstanding features. It places a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy, which is why the school has achieved the Basic Skills Award. There are regular opportunities for themes to be pursued that promote excellent links between subjects and stimulate the pupils' learning very well. Pupils had much to say about the visits and residential experiences they find so enjoyable and interesting. However, investigations initiated by pupils themselves in science are lacking in Key Stage 2 and this has been identified as an aspect for development in school improvement plan. The curriculum contributes well to pupils' awareness of personal safety and a healthy lifestyle, for example through physical education, where the school has achieved the Sports Mark. Pupils have a 'Thoughts and Feelings Workbook' in which they record their ideas and views on lessons and which teachers use successfully to canvass opinion and modify the curriculum. There is an excellent range of activities outside lessons for pupils to enjoy and provision for French. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good and makes effective use of outdoor as well as indoor resources.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The school promotes the well-being of all pupils exceptionally well. A positive atmosphere encourages pupils to feel safe and happy. As a result, the school has achieved a national award for how it helps all pupils to take a full part in the life of the school. All aspects of health, safety, child protection and recruitment of staff are in place. There are good arrangements for the transition of children into the Reception classes and into Year 1, as well as for pupils going on to high schools. Links with outside agencies are excellent and contribute very well to excellent provision for, and the good progress of, pupils with additional needs. Procedures to track both attendance and the progress of pupils are good and used effectively to identify good achievement, under-achievement and gaps in learning. The school has effective links with parents, including workshops and courses that are having a positive impact on how pupils perform. The school listens very well to parents. They have positive views of the school and appreciate how fond their children are of the school and staff.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher and deputy and assistant headteachers are a strong leadership team, whose expertise has been recognised by the local authority and called upon to provide support for schools within the local partnership and further afield. There is a shared vision for how the school is to improve and a very strong commitment to promoting the school's role in the community and providing for pupils with additional needs. The school is popular and its roll has risen significantly in recent years. Its process of self-evaluation is robust and based on good

monitoring procedures. The leadership of the school is now faced with the task of ensuring that average standards at the end of Year 2 are maintained or improved upon. Governors, very ably led by the chairperson, support the school very well.

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## 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	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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	1
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

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

On behalf of the inspection team I would like to thank you very much for your help when we inspected your school. We enjoyed our visit very much. Now I would like to share with you what we thought about your school.

Yours is a good school and has some outstanding features, for instance:

- the staff take exceptional care of you all and teach you well
- your attitude to lessons is good, you enjoy school and behave well
- you are making good progress in your work
- the staff give excellent help to those of you who find it hard to concentrate in class or who find the work difficult
- you take on responsibilities really well, such as being school councillors and road safety and recycling officers
- the staff provide you with excellent opportunities to enjoy activities after school, go on visits and residential and have visitors in school.

To make the school even better:

- the staff in Years 1 and 2 need to make sure the improvements they have made to their teaching continue to help the pupils to do well, and
- the teachers in Key Stage 2 classes need to give pupils more opportunities to do good investigations in science.

Work hard and do your very best. You have much to be proud of in your school.