



St Oswald's Worleston CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 111266
Local Authority Cheshire
Inspection number 288908
Inspection date 28 February 2007
Reporting inspector Peter Toft HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Worleston
School category	Voluntary controlled		Nantwich
Age range of pupils	4-11		Cheshire CW5 6DP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01270 623826
Number on roll (school)	31	Fax number	01270 623826
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs F Haywood
		Headteacher	Mrs A Ansell
Date of previous school inspection	5 November 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

This very small school serves the village of Worleston and the surrounding rural and urban areas. All pupils are White British and all speak English as their first language. They come from a range of social backgrounds and start school with average attainment. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is below average. The school has close links with St Oswald's Church. The school has been awarded Investors in People and has twice secured the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This very small school provides a good standard of education for its pupils, with some excellent features. The recent proposal to close the school gave rise last year to major concerns for the staff, governors, pupils and parents. The school has ridden this storm. The proposal for closure has been withdrawn and the school is well placed to continue to develop, and to extend the major improvements it has made since the last inspection. These reflect the very capable leadership of the experienced headteacher, supported by conscientious staff at all levels, and an active and effective governing body. The school enjoys the strong support of parents, for whom it is very popular and highly regarded. The pupils feel safe, are highly satisfied with the education they receive and the vast majority enjoy all aspects of school life. Pupils are well taught about healthy lifestyles and the school lunches, both made in school and brought from home, are well balanced. The school's small size supports the efforts of the staff to create a close family environment, and excellent relationships exist between the pupils and the staff and among the pupils themselves. Staff work very hard to provide an excellent level of care, guidance and support for all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This, together with the good and sometimes outstanding teaching, promotes the very good personal development of pupils and their excellent behaviour and motivation to learn. The curriculum is broad and balanced and covers National Curriculum requirements well. However, pupils' awareness of other cultures is underdeveloped and the school recognises that the teaching of information and communications technology (ICT) could be improved. In all other areas of the curriculum, standards are high and pupils of all abilities make good progress. Children joining the Foundation Stage benefit well from excellent provision that builds their confidence and enables them to acquire skills for learning. Pupils are well prepared to transfer to secondary schools and pupils in Year 6 are looking forward to this change with confidence. Staff know in fine detail the progress being made by pupils and procedures for assessment and the process of setting targets are well developed. This is aided by the capacity teachers have to give close attention to pupils in the small classes. Though small, these classes cater for pupils in a number of year groups. This requires meticulous planning which staff carry out very effectively.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the teaching of information and communication technology (ICT).
- Strengthen pupils' awareness of people from cultures other than their own.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science standards are above average. Pupils enter the school with broadly average attainment and they make good progress thereafter. The weak provision for the youngest pupils identified in the last inspection has been properly rectified and provision at this level is now very good. There is no

significant difference between the progress made by boys and girls. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also make good progress under the careful and detailed tuition they receive. Staff have a very good insight into the performance of pupils because of the highly developed assessment procedures they use. Overall, pupils are very well prepared to take advantage of secondary education when they leave at the end of Year 6.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good and in some respects they are outstanding. Relationships between pupils and staff are extremely good. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school is excellent. The school has a strong sense of community.

Pupils have first-rate attitudes towards learning. Their ability to learn independently is outstandingly well developed. Their moral and social development are very good and the school's strong Christian ethos promotes excellent spiritual development. However, their awareness of other cultures is underdeveloped. Pupils particularly enjoy coming to school and appreciate the care and individual attention they receive. Because the school has only a small number of pupils, teachers have a very good knowledge of the personal development needs of every individual and adjust their teaching accordingly.

Pupils are encouraged to explore healthy eating in imaginative ways and are aware of how to live healthy lifestyles. Attendance is good overall. Pupils feel valued. They respond positively to the many opportunities they have to take responsibilities and duties. By the end of Year 6, pupils have developed into thoughtful, confident and reliable young people who are well prepared for the next stage of education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. In the Foundation Stage it is outstanding. The headteacher, teachers and teaching assistants work hard and plan their lessons extremely well. They have a thorough understanding of the learning needs of every pupil and this enables them to provide learning experiences which challenge every pupil. Throughout the school, teachers and teaching assistants have good subject knowledge. They have enabled pupils to become very successful as independent learners who take responsibility for their own learning and also to support each other with great maturity. This is one of the key aspects which enables the adults to manage classes of children of widely different ages so effectively.

Pupils have good opportunities to share ideas and work practically, and are fully challenged to achieve their best. This promotes particularly good learning. Where

learning is outstanding, pupils work at a cracking pace on practically-based and interesting tasks that fully engage them and that match their needs exactly.

Teachers and teaching assistants have a thorough understanding of exactly what each individual has learned and what they need to do to lead them to the next stage. The progress of pupils is very carefully tracked and those who fall behind are quickly identified and measures are put in place to bring them back on track. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive very good care and teaching and achieve well.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

It is difficult for a very small school like this with a small number of teachers to provide a rich and varied curriculum but this school does it outstandingly well. The excellent curriculum in the Foundation Stage ensures that children acquire the right skills, good self-confidence and a strong desire to learn. Teachers have skilfully mapped out what pupils need to learn and have successfully identified how one subject can link with another. Together with the excellent way lessons are planned, this enables smooth progression as pupils move from the Foundation Stage to Year 6. All pupils in Key Stage 2 receive swimming lessons. These contribute well to their physical development. Provision for ICT has continued to improve and the school has correctly identified this as an area it needs to develop further.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The way that this harmonious school cares for its pupils is outstanding. Pupils have a strong sense of responsibility for each other and the school has developed an ethos resembling a large Christian, caring family. Because this is a small school, all adults, not just teachers, have a detailed and thorough knowledge of every pupil's personal development and learning needs and they nurture them well. Detailed records carefully track the progress of every pupil. All pupils have challenging targets which are regularly reviewed and individual attention ensures that any identified weaknesses are quickly sorted out.

Pupils feel safe and valued. Teachers and teaching assistants have been very successful in developing mature attitudes to learning in their pupils. Routines are well established and understood and this creates a safe and secure environment for the pupils. Proper arrangements for safeguarding pupils are fully in place.

Pupils are very closely supervised at all times. Pupils say they feel able to talk to any member of staff if they are concerned or worried. The overwhelming majority of parents are highly supportive of every aspect of the school's work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher leads this school skilfully. This is clear not just from the very effective way in which it currently operates. It is also clear in the high morale of staff and pupils, and in the high satisfaction rate amongst parents. Previous concerns about the future of the school have not been allowed to undermine the good education provided for the pupils. The governing body has provided strong and capable support. Recent retirements have brought new governors into the group and they benefit from the extensive training provision made by the local authority. The school makes good use of data on various aspects of its performance in order to determine how well it is doing. This gives managers at all levels a clear view of current strengths and an insight into what needs to be improved. All statutory requirements are being met and the school manages its budget effectively, providing good value for money. The building is in good shape and is well maintained and resourced to provide an attractive environment for learning. Those areas identified in the last inspection as needing improvement have been dealt with vigorously and effectively.

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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	1
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

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	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
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

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?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

We visited your school a few days ago to see how well you are doing. Thank you to those who talked to us and told us about what you do in school and how well you get on there. I promised to let you know about what we thought of St Oswald's.

Your school is good and some of the things it provides for you are excellent. Your teachers and their assistants give you a good education which covers a wide range of subjects.

This helps you to achieve and develop well and by the time you are ready to go to high school, you are well prepared to do this confidently.

You are cared for extremely well by the staff. They all work very hard to ensure that you are safe, secure and can enjoy your time in school. Most of you enjoy it a great deal. You get on with each other very well indeed and your behaviour in school is excellent.

The lessons we saw were very interesting and well prepared. You told us how much you appreciate the way in which your school provides for you all. The school is well led and managed and all of the staff are keen to help it to get even better. To do this, they will need to consider:

- improving the teaching of your use of computers
- improving your knowledge of people from other cultures.

Best wishes for the future at St Oswald's.