

Orrell Newfold Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106412
Local Authority	Wigan
Inspection number	309118
Inspection date	10 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Colin Smith

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	425
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Andy Davis
Headteacher	Mr G McArdle
Date of previous school inspection	17 January 2005
School address	St James' Road Orrell Wigan Lancashire WN5 7BD
Telephone number	01942 207134
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The following issues were investigated: pupils' achievement, particularly in writing; the impact of teaching upon pupils' learning; and the extent to which leaders check the work of the school to raise standards. Evidence was gathered from observation of lessons, pupils' work, discussions with staff, governors and pupils and a scrutiny of school documents and questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

The school is larger than average in size. The proportion of pupils entitled to a free school meal is below average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average, although the school serves a typically mixed community. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. A very small number of pupils are of African or East European backgrounds and virtually all of them are beyond the early stages of learning English.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Orrell Newfold is a good school with outstanding features that provides good value for money. The headteacher's astute and sensitive leadership is the bedrock of the school's success. The school's highest priority, to provide excellent levels of care and support for all pupils, is achieved through a first-class partnership with parents and health professionals. Consequently, pupils are safeguarded and their emotional and social needs are nurtured meticulously. High quality support provided by teaching assistants ensures that the most vulnerable pupils are helped to overcome many of their barriers to learning. The school's good curriculum, which includes an excellent programme of personal, social and health education (PSHE) and an impressive range of additional activities, makes a vital contribution to pupils' outstanding personal development. They develop an exemplary awareness of safe and healthy lifestyles, cultural diversity and social responsibility. Pupils behave impeccably, reject any form of bullying or racism and enjoy school immensely. The vast majority of parents are highly appreciative of what the school offers. Comments such as, 'The curriculum is interesting', 'The school is well managed' and 'Children are proud to attend', are typical of parents' views.

Pupils achieve well overall. They enter Year 1 with good reading skills for their age, which greatly assists their learning in other subjects. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well in mathematics and reach above average standards. They also achieve well in reading where standards are well above average. Pupils achieve well from Years 3 onwards and by the end of Year 6 standards are above average in reading, mathematics and science. Standards in writing are average throughout the school and pupils' achievement in this subject is satisfactory. In most subjects, the more able pupils fulfil their potential, although not all of them do so in writing. On the whole, pupils understand their targets and how to achieve them. However, they are not as confident or skilful in combining creativity and accuracy to produce work of a consistently high standard in writing. Pupils who receive additional support for learning make good progress and many of them reach the standards expected before moving on to secondary school. The very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds overcome any initial language difficulties quickly and go on to achieve as well as their classmates.

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. The management of pupils' behaviour is very effective. Lessons are calm and purposeful. Teachers explain new ideas clearly and question pupils shrewdly to probe their understanding. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) to enhance learning in other subjects has improved significantly since the previous inspection. There are also very good opportunities for pupils to investigate and solve problems. As a result, learning is often visual and exciting, which captures pupils' interest and increases their understanding and skills. Teachers use assessment effectively to measure how well pupils are learning and usually provide tasks at the right levels to match pupils' different needs. Where teaching is at its best, the most gifted and talented pupils receive additional challenges. Although the teaching of writing is not as effective as the teaching of mathematics and science, work is underway to make improvements. Teachers select stimulating topics to increase pupils' enjoyment of writing. Pupils are encouraged to plan their written work, use interesting vocabulary and edit their writing to improve spelling and punctuation. The marking of their completed work is mainly good.

Good leadership and management ensure that the school achieves its challenging targets. Senior staff and subject leaders approach their work with enthusiasm, determination and ambition. Each year, a carefully constructed plan is drawn up to check the work of the school.

Assessments of pupils' learning are analysed rigorously. The information is used very effectively to halt any faltering progress and put pupils back on track. Information concerning the progress made by pupils in each class is shared with class teachers. Along with carefully organised lesson observations, these are key factors influencing much of the good teaching. Governors are also knowledgeable about pupils' performance, which enables them to have a good level of involvement in strategic planning and to provide good support in holding the school to account. Although pupils' work is systematically examined at regular intervals and much of their written work is good, the process is not sufficiently watertight to eliminate the few instances where pupils present their work untidily. Marking is not as constructive as it could be. Overall, school self-evaluation is accurate, matches the inspection findings in almost every aspect and is the basis of the school's good capacity for improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Most children enter the Nursery with the skills expected for their age. By the end of the Reception year the vast majority of children are working within the learning goals expected for their age. While children's achievement in the Nursery and Reception classes is satisfactory overall, they achieve particularly well in reading and in aspects of their personal development to reach good levels in these areas. The quality of leadership and management of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and successful in ensuring that children's learning is conscientiously assessed and carefully recorded. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Children are taught well how to blend letters to make words. There are good examples of teaching number skills through mathematical games, which children greatly enjoy. The provision made for outdoor play is excellent. It is challenging and interesting even on a wet day, as children splash through the puddles with their colourful umbrellas exploring the intriguing pathways, dens and climbing apparatus. Although there are plenty of indoor activities for children to experience, much of the equipment is limited and uninspiring, particularly in Reception. Although children play cooperatively, behave very well and show good concentration, their imagination is not fired sufficiently and their creative development suffers. In addition, they are sometimes left too long without direct intervention by adults, which restrict the development of their spoken language and knowledge and understanding of the world. This is why the effectiveness of the Foundation Stage is not as good as the school believes.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' achievement in writing.
- Improve opportunities for creative play and spoken language in the Foundation Stage.

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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	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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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

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?	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.

Annex A

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	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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**

Thank you for welcoming me to your school and answering my questions so politely. I really enjoyed my visit and would like to share my inspection findings with you. I can see why you are so proud of your school. It is a good school in which most children achieve well and reach standards that are above average in reading, mathematics and science. I can also see many improvements in ICT.

Your good achievement comes from trying your best but good teaching plays an important part. Your teachers work hard and prepare work at just the right level to help you to learn. They use many different methods such as games, investigations and drama to make learning more interesting and there are lots of excellent additional activities to help to develop your interests and talents. Above all, teachers and support staff are extremely caring. They look after you exceptionally well and keep you safe. Lessons about keeping healthy and safe and understanding people's feelings have helped you to show kindness and consideration for others. Behaviour is excellent.

Your school is successful because of the way it is led and managed. Your parents know this and feel welcome to ask for help at any time. The headteacher and senior staff make sure that the school runs smoothly and work extremely hard to make sure that you are all achieving as well as you can.

Your school is already a good one. There is not much I can ask to make it even better but I believe the following will help.

- Your achievement in writing is not as good as in the other subjects so I have asked teachers to concentrate on helping you to improve it. You can help by working hard to achieve the targets set for you.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes love learning outside. I have asked teachers to try to make indoor play equally interesting, challenging and stimulating.