

Calveley Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111071
Local Authority	Cheshire
Inspection number	310494
Inspection dates	9–10 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Geoff Lawrence

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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	97
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs A McDonald
Headteacher	Mrs Catherine Harvey
Date of previous school inspection	27 June 2005
School address	School Lane Calveley Tarporley Cheshire CW6 9LE
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This small school takes pupils from its surrounding rural area. Eligibility for free school meals is much lower than usual. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average as is the proportion of pupils with a statement of educational need. The school is an Investor in People and holds the Healthy Schools and Eco Bronze awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This good school promotes pupils' personal development outstandingly well. This contributes significantly to their good academic progress and provides them with good basic skills that will serve them well in the future.

Good links with the community and other partners ensure that all pupils are cared for well and that learning is successfully promoted. This is recognised by parents who are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. Typical views are, 'The school places equal emphasis on personal and academic development' and 'The children enjoy school immensely and are happy, safe and self-confident.'

The school has created an exciting and stimulating learning environment in which pupils know how to stay safe and have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles. They are particularly proud of the fact that they grow their own produce, which is regularly used for school lunches. The excellent relationships formed between adults and pupils help them to become confident learners and to develop into articulate and mature young people whose behaviour is impeccable in class and around the school. Consequently, attitudes to learning and pupils' enjoyment of school are outstanding. This is why attendance is well above average.

Pupils' performance is carefully tracked and teachers have started to involve pupils more in their own learning and progress so that they have a good understanding of their targets. However, many pupils are uncertain about how to reach them. This is because the guidance given through marking is inconsistent in helping them to achieve their next steps in learning.

Throughout Years 1 to 6, good teaching and an enriched curriculum capture pupils' imagination. They say they enjoy lessons because, 'Teachers make them interesting.' This encourages them to work hard, develop an enthusiasm for learning and make good progress as they move up the school. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress too because the support they receive is tailored specifically to meet their individual needs.

Standards have risen over the last two years and are now above average overall at the end of Year 6, although there is some variation between subjects. Nevertheless, given pupils' average skill levels on entry to the school, this represents good achievement for most pupils. While standards in mathematics and English have risen to above and well above average respectively, standards in science have remained broadly average. This is because too few opportunities are planned for pupils to experience practical work and this restricts their ability to reach the higher levels.

The school is well led and gives good value for money. Its self-evaluation is generally accurate, and backed up by determined action to improve the areas of relative weakness. For example, mathematics in Key Stage 2 and writing in Key Stage 1 have improved because of the school's actions. This indicates that the school has good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory but improving, as is leadership and management. Children enter Reception with skills and knowledge generally in line with those expected for their age. Good personal, social and emotional provision enables children to develop positive attitudes and helps them settle quickly. They enjoy coming to school and

behave well. Children make satisfactory progress during their time in the Foundation Stage so that by the time they enter Year 1 almost all reach the targets set for them nationally in all areas of their learning.

The indoor and outdoor accommodation for children in the Reception class has improved significantly since the previous inspection, when it was inadequate, and further improvements are planned. The outdoor curriculum, however, remains underdeveloped. This restricts opportunities for children to practise and extend their experiences, in all areas of learning. Assessment systems are satisfactory and adults' closer observations of children are beginning to contribute to the overall picture of children's development and achievement. Partnerships with parents are strong and many support their children's learning by listening to their children read at home.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that marking clearly identifies how pupils can reach their targets and improve their work.
- Enhance the learning experiences of children in the Foundation Stage through more engaging and purposeful outdoor activities.
- Provide pupils with greater opportunities to carry out scientific investigations in order to raise standards in science to match those in other subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Recent test results show that the previous year's decline in standards at the end of Key Stage 1 has been reversed with a notable improvement in the quality of pupils' writing and mathematics. Standards are now in line with those nationally. This has been in response to specific action taken by the school to raise standards in these subjects. Pupils continue to achieve well throughout Key Stage 2. Well above average standards in English have been maintained and standards in mathematics have risen to above average with a significant number of pupils achieving the higher levels. Standards in science have remained broadly average because the lack of practical experiences has prevented pupils from reaching the higher National Curriculum levels that would be required to raise standards to above average.

Good individual guidance helps pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well. The school has set appropriately challenging targets for the coming year.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is outstanding as is their appreciation of other cultures and religions. Pupils have a voice in school and they speak enthusiastically and articulately about how they have contributed to improving the school. Their thriving garden is helping pupils understand the importance of healthy eating and many take regular exercise through the many sporting activities on offer both at break-times and after school. They have a very well developed social conscience, fully understand their responsibilities to each other in school and in the wider community and enjoy raising funds for numerous charities. They develop into thoughtful and mature young people who are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good in all classes and this enables pupils to learn well as they move through the school. Teachers plan lessons conscientiously to provide a good level of challenge to meet the needs of pupils in mixed-age and mixed-ability classes. However, they do not plan enough opportunities in science for pupils to carry out experiments. Teachers use information and communication technology (ICT) well to enhance pupils' learning and enjoyment. Consequently, pupils say that ICT has made lessons 'more interesting and fun'. A good example of this was seen in an English lesson where pupils had to write a letter in response to an invitation card created in a previous lesson by another class member. Pupils were clearly excited by this and thoroughly enjoyed the lesson. Teaching assistants are very well trained and give good support to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, which contributes significantly to their good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Although the curriculum meets the needs of most pupils well, it is currently under review in order to create better links between subjects and improve the opportunities for practical science. The clear focus on developing pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT over the last two years has contributed to higher standards in these areas. Improvement in facilities for ICT since the previous inspection has had a positive impact on enjoyment and learning across other subjects. Good use is made of themed days in and out of school, which allows pupils to develop their learning across a number of elements of the curriculum. Pupils greatly enjoy this approach and have become more active and independent learners because of it. The school has made a satisfactory start to the introduction of French into the curriculum and there is a very good programme of personal, social and health education, which plays a crucial part in promoting pupils' outstanding personal development. The good provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including specific support programmes enables them to achieve well.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils are well cared for and supported and this is a judgement endorsed by many parents. Good systems ensure pupils' excellent behaviour, attendance and punctuality, which are strengths in their personal development. Procedures to check on pupils' progress are comprehensive and well established. The achievement of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is tracked carefully and they are supported very well. The school works closely with parents and other agencies to help them gain both academic skills and personal confidence. Safeguarding systems, including risk assessments and first aid, are in place and meet current guidelines.

Pupils know their targets but do not understand fully what they have to do to reach them. This is because marking is inconsistent in quality and does not always help pupils to understand how to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good leadership and management are a major factor in ensuring pupils' good progress. The headteacher, who provides good leadership, is well supported by a very able and talented deputy. They provide a good steer to school improvement, working well with the small but enthusiastic staff team to identify where improvements are needed. These areas are then pursued with careful consideration and quiet determination.

The school has developed the role of subject leaders in evaluating the work of the school. The current school development plan, to which staff and governors contribute effectively, has a sensible number of well focused priorities for this year. However, it does not show clearly enough the success criteria against which progress towards the priorities will be measured. Nevertheless, the checks the school makes on its work, including teaching and learning, are accurate. They have led to good improvements since the previous inspection and this indicates a good capacity to improve further. Many governors are new, but very knowledgeable leadership has enabled them to discharge their duties effectively.

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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?	2
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	1
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?	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.

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	2
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 making me feel so welcome during my time with you. It was really nice that everybody knew my name. I really enjoyed talking to you and seeing you work. In fact I enjoyed playing tennis with some of you on the playground. I was impressed by your excellent behaviour and how friendly, polite and helpful you were. I also thought you were very mature and sensible. I noticed that nearly all of you joined in an activity at break or lunchtime. I was also pleased to hear you tell me about the many things that you enjoy in school. These are some of the other things that I judge to be good about your school.

- You work hard and make good progress in your lessons.
- Adults in school work hard and make sure that you are safe, well cared for and happy.
- You get on very well together and have excellent attendance.
- There are interesting things for you to do including after-school clubs.
- You understand the importance of healthy eating and taking lots of exercise.

You go to a good school that is excellent in helping you to become outstanding young people. However, there are some things that the school needs to do to make it even better. These are the things I have asked the staff to do.

- Make sure that they plan more science experiments for you to carry out.
- I know you understand your targets, so I have asked your teachers to help you reach them more easily by making comments, when they mark your work. This will make it clear to each of you what you need to do to reach those targets.
- Provide the children in Reception with a wider range of outdoor activities to help them learn better when they choose an activity which interests them.

Thank you once again for helping me. I enjoyed my two days with you and I hope that you continue to work hard and enjoy school.