

# Frodsham Weaver Vale Primary School

Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	111115
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cheshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	310507
<b>Inspection date</b>	12 June 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Graham Martin

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	131
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Nicholas Smith
<b>Headteacher</b>	A Hardman
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 March 2004
<b>School address</b>	Ship Street Frodsham Cheshire WA6 7PZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01928 732695
<b>Fax number</b>	01928 735012

---

<b>Age group</b>	3-11
<b>Inspection date</b>	12 June 2008
<b>Inspection number</b>	310507

---

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the effectiveness of the school's assessment and setting of targets to sustain recent improvements in standards, with a particular focus on writing; the suitability and quality of recently integrated provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities; and the quality of provision in the Foundation Stage following reorganisation of staffing and accommodation. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation, the school's assessment records, observations of the school at work, discussions with pupils, staff, parents and governors, and analysis of parent questionnaires. All classrooms were visited. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified. These have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

This school is smaller than average. Nearly twice the national average of pupils has some form of learning difficulty and/or disability. The school provides integrated specialist provision for children with autistic spectrum disorders, so the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need is very much higher than the national average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. Most pupils come from White British backgrounds, although there are a few from the Traveller community. A Children's Centre, due to be opened in September 2008, was under construction on the school site during the inspection.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Parents are correct in saying that this school provides their children with a good education. They are particularly pleased with the outstanding care and guidance given to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Standards have risen steadily over the last three years, despite the fact that, with the integration of autistic spectrum disorder pupils into mainstream classes, there has been an increase in the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need. This is testament to the outstanding quality of provision for the needs of these pupils. 'My child has become more confident in his lessons because he has received a lot of care and support at Weaver Vale School' was typical of the views expressed by grateful parents in their returned questionnaires. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are in place. Parents and pupils comment on how happy and friendly the school is, as seen in pupils' exceptional enjoyment of learning. Good teaching and a stimulating curriculum that taps into pupils' interests promote this enjoyment well. Teachers' good planning of lessons links pupils' work to meaningful activities such as interesting visits and workshops. This results in work of good quality, such as when Year 2 wrote about taking Sunny the Meerkat to visit Chester Zoo and the persuasive letters produced by Year 6 to publicise their book fair. Such good opportunities for purposeful writing provide pupils with a stimulus that fires their imaginations and motivates their learning.

Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils behave well and enjoy exceptionally good, positive relationships with each other and with the adults who help them. Children in the Foundation Stage have a very happy start to school, setting them off with positive attitudes to learning. Pupils are understandably proud of their school and their teachers. They readily comment that, 'Lessons are fun, the children are kind to each other and if anyone is upset the teachers and children do their best to make them feel better.' Standards by Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with to the national average. These standards reflect good achievement. All pupils achieve well, often from starting points below or well below average. This achievement is largely due to key staff raising expectations of teaching and learning by making better use of assessments to set higher year group attainment targets. Some teachers use marking exceptionally well to give pupils clear advice on how to improve their work and attain higher standards, such as that seen in Year 6. However, this quality of marking is not consistently good across the whole of Key Stage 2. The skilled and highly competent teaching assistants provide good support to teachers and pupils. Their work adds considerable value to that of the teachers, particularly in meeting the needs of pupils who often need one to one or small group care and attention.

Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities for helping to run their school and contributing to its success. They are keen to be members of the recently established school council. They are genuinely aware of their responsibility to serve other pupils as school councillors and of how their suggestions to improve their school must be sensible, mature and achievable, such as making the access to fresh water easier. Pupils' effective skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) prepare them well for future learning. Furthermore, the school's exceptionally good links with local business give pupils outstanding workplace skills that contribute to their future economic well-being. In their planning and organisation of a book fair to raise funds for an end of year trip, Year 6 pupils, for example, showed exceptional maturity and worked outstandingly well together to produce letters and leaflets to publicise the event. Pupils have further good opportunities to work collaboratively in the wide range of interesting clubs and enrichment activities, including exciting theme weeks

for art. Pupils' personal development is good. They are well aware of the importance of living healthily and they have a good understanding of hazards and how to keep safe. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Links with communities in Africa give pupils a good appreciation of the cultural richness of other countries.

Good improvement has been made to the provision for ICT, so that the school now ensures that all aspects of the statutory curriculum are taught. There is sufficient challenge in the work set for pupils of all abilities, including those of higher ability and those taught in mixed-age classes. For example, younger pupils in the Year 2 and 3 class have an understanding of how to improve their writing by following the good example modelled by the older pupils in their class.

The school is led and managed well. The work of school leaders to ensure that all pupils are treated equally well is of a high standard. Astute re-organisation of the leadership team has strengthened management, seen in how key staff have improved systems for using assessments to raise standards in literacy and mathematics. School leaders evaluate the school accurately and prioritise improvements well, leading to considered and effective action. Governors work hard to check on the school's effectiveness but not all use their expertise yet to the best effect. Staff teamwork is strong and the school gives good value for money. Consequently, the school's capacity to improve further is good.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good because very effective teaching results in good learning outcomes for the children in the Nursery and Reception classes. The school has done well to sustain these outcomes in spite of disruption to the accommodation during the building of the Children's Centre. Parents are very pleased that their children settle quickly and happily into school. They have readily accepted the need for their children to be taught in temporary classrooms for a while, knowing the long-term benefit of having better accommodation opening soon. Parents comment positively on how cheerfully their children run into school, how reluctant they are to leave at the end of the day and how well staff keep them informed about their children's well-being. The children in the Nursery and Reception classes make good progress in all of the areas of learning. By the end of the Reception class children are prepared well for entry to Year 1. Leadership of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Curriculum planning and the assessment of children's learning is satisfactory but could be better. They have not fully implemented a planning and assessment system that will meet the September 2008 requirements, so staff do not have fully embedded curriculum planning systems and assessment routines.

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

- Ensure that the quality of marking is as consistently good as the best.
- Improve curriculum planning and the assessment of children's learning in the Foundation Stage

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

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

### 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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	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

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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	1

### 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

<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 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	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



---

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

You will probably remember that two inspectors visited your school a little while ago and we promised to tell you what we found out. Your two Year 6 school councillors also promised to read our letter out to you! Before I tell you what we discovered, I would like to say thank you for the warm welcome you gave to the school inspectors and the polite and friendly way you shared your thoughts about Weaver Vale School with us. The school council and the other pupils we talked to were tremendous ambassadors for your school.

I agree with you and your parents that you have a good school. I was particularly impressed with how much you enjoy learning and how good you are at working together on special projects. You told us you enjoy learning because the teachers make it fun and interesting. I agree with that too. You do have good lessons that inspire you and help you to try your best. I was pleased to see how this helps you all to achieve well. I also agree with your view about how well cared for you are. You are given good support for your learning and your personal development. This shows in how knowledgeable you are about caring for one another and about healthy living and keeping safe. I was also very impressed with the lovely art work you proudly display around school.

Your headteacher and teachers help you to make sure that Weaver Vale is a welcoming and friendly school. They have the right plans to keep improving your school but it would be good if they could make sure that all your teachers mark your work equally well to give you the right help to improve your learning. It would also be good if the activities for children in the Nursery and Reception classes could be more clearly planned out and their learning checked more carefully.

Having met you and enjoyed talking with you I am sure that you will play your part in helping your school to get better still by working hard and keeping up your good standards of behaviour. It was delightful to meet you and I wish you all every success for the future.