

# Daresbury Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	110994
<b>Local Authority</b>	Halton
<b>Inspection number</b>	325267
<b>Inspection date</b>	16 September 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Eileen Mulgrew HMI

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	98
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Reverend Felix
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs C Brown
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 October 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Chester Road Daresbury Warrington Cheshire WA4 4AJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01925 740309
<b>Fax number</b>	01925 740917

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## Introduction

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

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the standards and achievement of pupils; the quality of pupils' personal development and well-being; the quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and the quality of the curriculum. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation, plans for further improvement, nationally published assessment data and the school's own records of progress over time. Discussions were held with staff, pupils, governors and the local authority representative. Questionnaires returned by the parents were considered. 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

Daresbury Primary School is much smaller than the average primary school. It is organised into four mixed-age classes. Children attend from several affluent areas surrounding the village of Daresbury and the percentage of pupils eligible for a free school meal is very low. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is much lower than the national average, with no pupil in receipt of a statement of special educational need. The school has received several awards including Investors in People, Halton Healthy Schools, Artsmark Silver, and Activemark.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Daresbury is an outstanding primary school. The headteacher has successfully established a professional team of teachers and teaching assistants committed to providing the highest quality of care and education for the pupils. As a result parents are confident that their children will be well looked after, reach high standards in their work and develop the qualities needed to become good citizens. The very positive relationships between all members of the school community result in a family atmosphere much appreciated by parents. The overwhelming support for the school is summed up in comments such as, 'Daresbury is an excellent school with hard working, dedicated staff' and 'We have always been impressed not only by the standard of education, but also by the pastoral care the children receive and the leadership of the school. The staff really believe in the education of the child as a whole'. Since the last inspection, the school building has been reorganised and mobile classrooms replaced by new build. All members of the school family contributed to the reorganisation, bringing governors, staff, parents and pupils together as one team. Daresbury provides excellent value for money and, due to its track record of success, has excellent capacity to improve further.

Standards reached by pupils by the time they leave school in Year 6 are very high and the progress that they make is excellent. The school has maintained this level of success for the past five years. By the time pupils enter Key Stage 1 the majority are working securely at the levels expected for their age, with a few working above the expected level. Progress of all groups of pupils accelerates as they move through the school with pupils consistently reaching overall above average standards at the end of Key Stage 1, with particularly high standards in reading, and very high standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2. In the 2007 national tests for Year 6, all pupils gained the expected level in science and almost all gained the higher Level 5. Also, almost all pupils gained the expected level in English and mathematics with well above average numbers of pupils reaching the higher Level 5. This level of performance has been maintained in the 2008 tests. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) and art are very high.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Excellent relationships, high expectations and attentive attitudes of pupils lead to a very positive, supportive, relaxed learning atmosphere in each classroom. Pupils respond by showing excellent behaviour and enjoyment of their learning. A group of pupils commented, 'Our teacher is funny and makes us laugh but we have to work hard.' Consequently, pupils learn very well and achieve very high standards in their work. Staff know their pupils very well and use information generated from checking on pupils' progress to set targets, plan work that matches each pupil's need, is of interest to them and challenges them to think. Pupils' work is marked thoroughly and teachers' comments not only praise the effort of pupils but give clear advice as to how to improve. Highly skilled teaching assistants work very effectively with individuals and groups of pupils.

Outstanding care, guidance and support underpin pupils' excellent personal development and well-being. Child protection procedures are in place and understood by all staff; arrangements for safeguarding pupils and health and safety follow the latest government guidelines.

Procedures for settling new pupils into school are very good, a key feature being the buddy system of younger pupils being cared for by older pupils. Smooth transfer to high school is achieved through a series of planned activities involving visits to the school and lessons taught by secondary school teachers. Pupils who have additional educational needs are identified early

and support is provided to enable them to make the same excellent rate of progress as their classmates.

Pupils appreciate the importance of a healthy diet and regular exercise. They make healthy choices at lunchtime, both from the healthy menu and in the contents of their lunch boxes, and they enjoy sport. The many after-school activities are eagerly attended and pupils talk enthusiastically about their recent residential visit to Wales. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They are polite and caring to each other, know right from wrong and have a clear sense of fairness. Opportunities to reflect, pray and meditate are taken during assemblies and visits to church. The whole school visited a Hindu temple to find out more about their classmates' beliefs. Pupils contribute very well to the smooth running of the school through their willingness to accept roles of responsibility such as team captains. Celebrations, such as carol services and harvest festival, give pupils the chance to join the wider community at the local church. Pupils from other communities visit the school to experience a small rural school. Pupils understand that other people are less fortunate than themselves and enthusiastically organise events to raise money for charity, for example the National Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (Cafod) and their work for a school in Romania. Through these activities pupils are gaining a good grasp of the diversity of the global community. By the time they leave Year 6, pupils have developed into mature, confident and sensible young people. Together with their excellent basic skills, they are extremely well prepared for the next stage in their education and for their later role as citizens in a diverse community.

The excellent curriculum is broad and balanced and meets the needs of all pupils. Despite the mixed-age classes, effective planning of the curriculum enables all pupils to build on prior knowledge, cover content and develop skills relevant to their age group. There is an emphasis on the basic skills of English, mathematics and ICT. Pupils throughout the school enjoy learning French and the abundance of high quality art work displayed around the school is testimony to the award of Artsmark Silver in 2007. Pupils appreciate the wide range of activities after school and enrichment activities include visits, visitors and a residential visit for Years 4, 5 and 6. Since the last inspection the library area has been relocated into a much larger space and there is a wide range of attractive and accessible books for the pupils to use.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher, together with the deputy headteacher, has effectively developed a school culture in which all contributions are valued. Using accurate self-evaluation the leadership team identifies priorities for further development and utilises the expertise of all stakeholders to achieve success. Governors are well informed. They visit the school regularly and have a very good picture of its day to day running. The chair of governors and headteacher meet frequently and subject governors meet with subject leaders. Each governor is allocated to a class and takes a particular interest in that group of pupils; for example, by listening to readers, assisting in the classroom and accompanying the class on visits. Consequently all governors are well placed to support and challenge the school, and have first hand knowledge of the impact of their decisions. Individual governors effectively contribute valuable expertise to develop different aspects of the school, for example a small group of governors were instrumental in securing finance for the development of the school accommodation, giving the school much needed space.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage (Reception) is good. High priority is given to this stage of the school as demonstrated by the determination of the leadership team to achieve an outdoor classroom area for the youngest children. Parents appreciate the arrangements for children starting school and are kept well informed by staff; for example, when the children have been in school four days the teacher sends a letter to parents explaining what their children have been doing. This enables parents to talk to their children about activities in school and a strong partnership of trust and confidence is established. Parents feel their children are well cared for, staff are approachable and the Wednesday 'pop in' allows children to show parents what they have been doing. Although cohorts vary, children join the school with skills and knowledge generally comparable to most children of that age group. Good progress is made and by the time they enter Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils have fully achieved standards expected for their age in all areas of learning. Activities are led by adults and there is some opportunity for individual activities. However, this is at an early stage of development and there is scope for children to further develop the skills needed to follow their own curiosity and initiate their own learning. The outdoor area is new and although it has started to be used, the school has plans to ensure that this area provides more challenging and stimulating activities, especially for the more capable children.

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

- Further develop provision in the EYFS to enable children to choose their own activities and initiate their own learning.

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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?	1
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	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.



## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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
The extent to which 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	1

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	1
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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
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	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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**

Inspection of Daresbury Primary School, Warrington, WA4 4AJ

Thank you for your friendly welcome when I inspected your school to see how well you are learning. I agree with you that life at Daresbury is fun; all the smiles and happy faces that greeted me around school proved to me how much you enjoy school. Your parents, and I agree with them, think you attend an outstanding school. Please thank them for completing and returning the questionnaires.

I really enjoyed talking to you and hearing your views. I was impressed by your hard work and excellent behaviour, as well as the way you respect and take care of each other. You told me you feel safe and well-cared for in school, enjoy the extra activities and your attractive classrooms.

These are the things I found best about your school:

- you know how to keep healthy and fit
- you work very hard and reach high standards
- you help each other and people less fortunate than yourselves
- you are polite, well-mannered and have super speaking and listening skills
- your headteacher and governors want the very best for you.

You now have more space in the school and the youngest children have an outdoor area just for them. So we have asked your headteacher to ensure Reception children have a chance to follow their own curiosity by choosing their own activities.

I certainly enjoyed my visit to Daresbury and wish you all every success in the future.