

Worth Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111028
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	325276
Inspection dates	30 June 2009–1 July 2009
Reporting inspector	Steve Isherwood HMI

The inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr R Moorcroft
Headteacher	Mr P.R. Taylor
Date of previous school inspection	January 2006
School address	Birch Road Poynton Stockport Cheshire SK12 1QA
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Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. The inspectors visited 14 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and a representative from the local authority. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of evidence including: the school improvement plan; the tracking of pupils' progress; minutes of governors' meetings; the work pupils were doing in their books and the questionnaires completed by 75 parents.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- how well pupils' achieve from their starting points
- how effectively teaching is engaging pupils in their learning
- the effectiveness of the school's strategy to promote community cohesion
- the capacity of the school to sustain improvement.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average school. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage with a small number from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average, as is the number of pupils eligible for free school meals. The school has gained several awards including the European Foundation Quality Mark, the Inclusion Quality Mark, the Physical Education (PE) Activemark and the Eco School Award.

Inspection judgements

Grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness

1

Capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

'The school is an excellent place for any child to develop'. 'I am extremely pleased with the standard of education and care that my children receive'. These comments expressed by some parents and echoed overwhelmingly by others help to explain why Worth Primary is an outstanding school. Pupils achieve extremely well. They reach high standards in their work and make exceptionally good progress in their personal development. They behave really well and are caring and considerate towards each other. They feel very safe in school and are confident and enthusiastic learners. When asked to express their views on how they see things, they found it very difficult to think of any improvements they would like to see. There was strong praise for staff, the excellent relationships that exist and for the high levels of care they receive. Their pride and enthusiasm for the school came shining through. Pupils are very friendly and confident in approaching adults and visitors to the school from far and wide. They are very keen to find out who people are and are more than happy to engage in conversation. As one young child said politely to the inspector, 'Are you the man from Spain?'

The school has gained an impressive reputation in the local community and there are outstanding partnerships with parents, other schools and local agencies.

Pupils come on in leaps and bounds from the moment they enter the school. By the time they leave in Year 6, pupils reach high standards in English, mathematics and science. This represents outstanding achievement considering their starting points. Much of this success is down to the fact that the curriculum is very successful in meeting pupils' needs and teaching is consistently good with elements of outstanding practice. In the highly effective lessons, the range of teaching styles allows pupils to flourish with a variety of challenging and stimulating tasks that allow pupils to think about how they learn, direct their own activities and work independently. Where teaching is less effective, opportunities are missed to fully engage pupils in their learning and, on occasions, pupils' work is over-directed. Information shared with pupils about their progress is of good quality. There are some excellent examples in teachers' comments where pupils are given clear advice on how to improve their work. However, senior leaders are well aware that academic guidance to pupils in teachers' marking lacks consistency in some classes.

The school is driven forward by outstanding leadership and management spearheaded by the headteacher. Senior leaders are very secure about the direction the school must take to sustain its progress. They keep a close eye on performance and know the school extremely well. Considering the good advances made since its

last inspection and along with its other strengths, including rigorous self-evaluation, the school has excellent capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further

Stimulate pupils' greater involvement in learning by:

- providing more opportunities for pupils to learn in different ways
- creating further opportunities in lessons where pupils can investigate, show independence and use their thinking skills
- making sure that teachers' marking consistently provides pupils with advice on how to improve their work.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils achieve outstandingly well and consistently reach high standards for their age. Pupils enter Year 1 with above average skills. Progress accelerates rapidly in Years 1 and 2. In 2008, standards at age seven were very high in all core areas at the expected National Curriculum Level 2 and at the higher Level 3. A notable success was that all pupils achieved a Level 2 in mathematics and 96% of pupils did so in reading and writing.

Work in lessons and in pupils' books, together with the school's own data show that pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good and frequently very good progress as they move through the school to Year 6. Standards are high, as reflected in the latest test results for 2008. All pupils achieved Level 4, the standard expected for their age in English, mathematics and science. In addition, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 was above the national average in all three subjects.

Pupils speak highly of staff and feel very safe and secure in school. They mature into thoughtful and caring young people with clear values of honesty, respect and tolerance. They have positive attitudes to their work, behave extremely well and are keen and enthusiastic learners. This is reflected in their high level of attendance and by their strong commitment to the wide range of activities that the school provides.

Throughout the school, careful attention is given to the emotional needs of all pupils through an extensive programme of personal, social and health education. This means that pupils know the difference between right and wrong and recognise that they have responsibilities to each other and the adults in the school. They develop a strong social conscience and are acutely aware of the needs of others in the community through their regular charitable donations and by their strong commitment to participating in local events.

Pupils have an excellent understanding of the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle through regular exercise and a balanced diet. Gaining the Activemark and working towards the Healthy Schools award confirms the school's strong commitment to pupils' health and well-being.

The school is very aware of the mono-ethnic nature of the local community. It uses the curriculum well to extend pupils' understanding of other ethnic groups, cultures and faiths. As a result, pupils have good cultural development. A strong emphasis on pupils' needs, combined with well developed basic skills ensures that pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	2
How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning?	1
To what extent do pupils feel safe?	1
How well do pupils behave?	1
To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles?	1
To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community?	1
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	1
What is the extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	1

How effective is the provision?

Teaching and learning is at least good with some elements of outstanding practice. A number of common strengths were seen in all lessons. Teachers are enthusiastic, plan well and have good subject knowledge. They make good use of resources and interactive technology to enhance visual demonstrations and support pupils' learning. Very good relationships exist between adults and pupils. Teaching assistants provide an effective layer of extra support, particularly for those that find learning difficult. All staff use praise well to celebrate pupils' achievements, to encourage them to try their best and raise their self-esteem. Teachers are skilled in developing pupils' thinking through effective questioning that keeps pupils on their toes. New skills build well on prior learning. In the very best lessons, teachers have the confidence to stand back and let the pupils make the learning their own with carefully crafted activities that promote high levels of discussion and independent thinking. In these lessons the pace of learning is brisk and pupils are given every opportunity to direct their work and share their ideas with others. For example, in an outstanding history lesson in Year 3, pupils were able to articulate the attitudes and emotions of people in Tudor times with excellent prompting and encouragement from the class teacher.

Where teaching is less strong, pupils' work is sometimes over-directed. There are fewer opportunities for them to test and deepen their knowledge by investigating and finding things out for themselves. This is why pupils' learning is good and not outstanding.

¹The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

Systems to assess pupils' progress are extensive and benefit from the outcomes of regular reviews. As a consequence, support and interventions are planned well; staff are aware of the needs of individual learners and are confident in judging what pupils need to learn next. There are some excellent examples in teachers' marking where pupils are given clear guidance on how to improve their work and reach the next level. However, the quality of marking is inconsistent in some classes.

The curriculum is very well planned with a clear emphasis on the development of key skills in literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT). The teaching of these subjects is made more meaningful to pupils through a flexible approach by staff and reference to cross-curricular themes. For example: by linking work on climate change and erosion to a creative writing task in English. All pupils benefit from very good enrichment opportunities such as visits and visitors to the school. There is high take-up of the additional extra-curricular clubs and activities. These add considerable enjoyment to pupils' learning and are very well attended.

No stone is left unturned to ensure that all pupils including those most vulnerable are very well cared for and supported. There are excellent procedures for introducing pupils to the school and very effective links with high schools ensures their smooth transition to the secondary sector.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The success of the school is underpinned by outstanding leadership and management at all levels. As a group they know the school extremely well and actively seek ways to improve further the current position by communicating ambition and driving continuous improvement. In doing so, they effectively ensure that the work of the school is clearly focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning and in raising the achievement of all pupils, whatever their circumstances. The school's commitment to equality of opportunity is outstanding. As a consequence, it is highly inclusive and very effective in improving pupils' life chances and in tackling discrimination. Staff are very committed to removing the barriers to learning and celebrating the achievements of all pupils.

At the time of the inspection, safeguarding was a high priority and procedures were highly effective. All required checks, systems and procedures are in place to safeguard the pupils' well-being.

The school's promotion of community cohesion is good. Opportunities that develop pupils' awareness of other faiths and cultures in their own community are sensitively taught across the curriculum in ways that are meaningful through special themes and assemblies, discussions with visitors and through links with other schools. Senior

leaders are not complacent and recognise that the school's procedures to judge the impact of this work require some fine-tuning.

The governing body plays a very strong role in shaping the school's direction and in holding it to account. Governors are very well informed about the school's performance and are confident to act when necessary to support improvements or to question proposals.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in communicating ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

The good and improving provision in the Foundation Stage gives children a good start and ensures that they achieve well. When children enter the school their skills and levels of learning vary but overall are broadly typical for their age. They get off to a good start and within a short period of time they settle quickly into well-structured routines and make great strides in their learning with carefully crafted activities that are well targeted on key learning goals and match well with their stages of development. For example, in one session children made good progress in their mathematical understanding by counting the number of legs on a selection of pet animals. Elsewhere, children improved their knowledge and understanding of the world by planting bulbs and by looking closely at a group of butterflies. In addition, children in the outside play area were very keen to show the inspector their 'dens' made with different sized cardboard boxes. Staff have high expectations, children are very well cared for and relationships are strong. This means that children show positive attitudes, become absorbed in their learning and have increasing confidence to initiate activities for themselves. Staff continually assess how well children are achieving and use this information to plan further challenges. As a result, by the start of Year 1, most children have reached the levels expected of them and have made good and frequently very strong progress from their starting points. Parents are kept well informed and are encouraged to become actively involved in their children's learning. The Foundation Stage is very well led and managed. Staff are forward-thinking and reflective. They have an excellent awareness of the strengths in provision and where further improvements can be made.

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Worth Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. If a parent has more than one child at the school, we ask them to record an answer against all the questions, for each of their children.

Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school's work. Almost all agree that pupils enjoy school, make good progress and are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Parents said the school was a welcoming and safe environment with approachable staff and senior leaders. The inspection team fully agrees with these views.

The inspection team received 75 completed questionnaires. In total, there are 283 parents and carers registered at the school.

	Always	Most of the time	Occasionally	Never
Overall I am happy with my child's experience at this school	52	21	0	2

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. In 2007-8, 15% of schools were judged to be outstanding.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. In 2007-8, 49% of schools were judged good.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. In 2007-8, 32% of schools were judged satisfactory.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. In 2007-8, 5% of schools were judged inadequate.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, training or development. This may refer to the acquisition of skills, knowledge, understanding or desired attributes. Attributes include qualities or personal competencies which are important to the development of the pupil; for example personal, social, cultural, emotional or health.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.



2 July 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Worth Primary School, Poynton, Stockport, Cheshire,
SK12 1QA

Thank you so much for helping the inspectors when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed chatting to you in lessons, in the playground and in the pupil interview. You expressed your views very clearly and they were very helpful to us. You told us how much you love your school and having spent the two days with you we can understand why.

We are pleased to tell you that you go to an outstanding school. You achieve really well and are well taught. We were very impressed to see how the adults in school look after you really well and your parents told us this, too. We were delighted to see how well you behave and how you help one another in class and around the school.

You made sure you told us about your lessons and how your teachers help you to learn well by making your work interesting and often fun. We could see this with our own eyes when those of you in Year 4 were discussing the role of the disciples in religious education, when those of you in Year 2 were completing your book reviews of different authors and when those of you in Year 1 were making reflective jackets in science.

Mr Taylor and all the staff work very hard to make the school as good as it can be and we are confident that it will continue to improve. To help them, we have asked if more of your lessons can be like the very best ones we saw when you were very involved in making decisions about how you learn and were able to investigate things for yourselves. We have also asked that when your teachers mark your work they always give you advice on how to improve further. You can help by telling your teachers what makes your lessons interesting and what helps you to learn.

Keep trying hard. We can see why your teachers enjoy working with you every day. We wish you and your families all the best for the future.

Steve Isherwood
Her Majesty's Inspector

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