

Wrenbury Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111078
Local Authority	Cheshire
Inspection number	325288
Inspection dates	16–17 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Jane Hughes

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	121
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr E.W. Forshaw
Headteacher	Mrs Justine Joule
Date of previous school inspection	June 2006
School address	Nantwich Road Wrenbury Nantwich Cheshire CW5 8EN
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Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector visited seven lessons and one assembly, and held meetings with the headteacher, staff, two groups of pupils and the chair of the governing body. The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at the school's self-evaluation, policies and assessment information, pupils' work and 63 parental questionnaires.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work. She looked in detail at the following:

- Standards and pupils' achievement.
- The school's use of assessment data to support pupils' progress, particularly those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Pupils' awareness of diversity in modern British society.
- The effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels.

Information about the school

This smaller than average size school draws pupils from a mixed rural and urban area. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much smaller than average, as is the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Most pupils are of White British heritage. A very small number of pupils are from Traveller families. The school has achieved the Inclusion Quality Mark, Activemark and the Basic Skills Quality Mark and is waiting the outcome of its recent assessment for Artsmark Gold status. The school has 24 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are taught in the Reception class.

A privately run playgroup and a local authority Nursery operate on the school site. The Nursery is managed jointly by the school and three other local primary schools. An out-of-school club operates in the mornings from 08.00 until the start of the school day and then after school until 18.00.

Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

2

Capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Wrenbury Primary is a good school. It promotes outstanding behaviour among its pupils and provides them with first-class support and care, as well as good teaching and a good curriculum, so they settle well and make the most of their time here. Children join the school with skills that are broadly typical for their age. They are taught well and make good progress so that, by the time they leave, they reach above average standards in English, mathematics and science. Effective provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage helps children get off to a good start in their learning and to develop well.

The school is highly inclusive and welcomes pupils with a variety of different needs. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and priorities for development. Robust monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress ensure that any weaknesses in teaching or pupils' learning are quickly identified. For example, the school has identified that some pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make slower academic progress than their peers. This is because some of the support programmes for them have not been as successful as the school had expected. As a result, staff reassessed these pupils' needs and amended the support they receive. These different strategies are bearing fruit in lessons, where the pupils are now making better progress. The school is very successful in enabling pupils to become highly effective members of the community within school and the local neighbourhood. It has won local and regional awards for its work with the local community. Parents typically commented, 'One of the strengths of the school is its family and community spirit'. Pupils develop valuable personal, organisational and social skills. These complement their good academic achievement and help prepare them well for future success. Nonetheless, pupils live and learn in a largely mono-ethnic community and their awareness of diversity in British society is not as strong as other aspects of their development.

The headteacher brings the school clarity of purpose and direction. She, along with the deputy headteacher and governors, has high expectations of staff and pupils. Together, they have shown tenacity and determination to drive the school forward at a good rate and set a challenging agenda for sustainable improvement. As a result of changes since the last inspection, the school now successfully:

- achieves above average standards and good pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science
- monitors rigorously the quality of teaching and learning

- gathers accurate data on pupils' progress and uses this data effectively to identify any weaker areas of performance
- involves subject leaders more in curriculum planning.

These improvements, along with other developments in school, demonstrate the school's good capacity for continued improvement.

The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide a clear steer for less experienced staff members who are growing in confidence as new subject leaders. They are monitoring what is happening in their areas of responsibility with increasing rigour, although their impact in terms of whole-school improvement is at an early stage.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate further the rate of progress of those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who have not responded quickly enough to their initial support programmes.
- Develop the contribution of subject leaders to whole-school improvement.
- Help pupils to understand more about how people from different backgrounds live, work and contribute to British society.

How good is the overall outcome for individual and groups of pupils?

2

Current standards are above average and pupils make good progress in lessons because effective teaching and a stimulating curriculum engage pupils fully in their learning. Pupils show good attitudes to their learning and participate with enthusiasm in lessons. They are quick to volunteer answers and work well together as 'talking partners'. They are particularly keen to participate in practical tasks such as making 'story sticks' or to conduct their own research on the internet. Since the last inspection, standards have risen to above the national average and pupils now make good progress overall from average starting points. Standards continue to rise across the school because teaching is stronger and lessons are more carefully pitched to challenge pupils to reach higher levels in their work. The school's tracking of pupils' progress shows that, for some of those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, the programmes of special work were not successful last term and these pupils did not do as well as they should have. The school has adjusted the provision for these pupils and they are clearly making faster progress in lessons now. Improvements in the quality of teaching across the school mean that pupils in all year groups make similar rates of progress. Pupils from Traveller families attend lessons as often as possible. They gain more from their learning as a result of the external support the school organises from the local authority Traveller support service, although their fractured attendance means that this very small number of pupils make slower

progress than others.

Pupils say that they really enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in the regular and punctual attendance of most pupils. Overall attendance is average due to the impact of the prolonged absence or more sporadic attendance of some pupils. Pupils agree that they feel very safe in school and that they know who to turn to with a problem. Pupils confirm that their peers behave very well and that staff deal speedily with any rare instances of bullying. Parents comment that staff have ‘a good understanding of children’s educational, social and emotional needs’. Pupils have a growing understanding of how to live healthily, although they do not always put this knowledge into practice when it comes to choosing healthy options, either at school or at home.

The school encourages pupils to make a strong contribution to the life and work of the school and surrounding community. Pupils clearly want to make a difference to their school and the neighbourhood. They take their duties as school councillors very seriously and pursue ideas to improve the school. They compose and present individual feedback to governors to keep them up to date with developments. Pupils of all ages are expected to be school ambassadors as they represent the school in community activities such as maypole dancing, concerts or sports events. Some pupils become buddies and everyone helps to organise fundraising events during the year to benefit the school and various charities. Pupils’ well developed skills of organisation and presentation, coupled with their above average skills in English, mathematics, and science, ensure that they are well equipped for the next stage in their education.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	3
How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning?	2
To what extent do pupils feel safe?	1
How well do pupils behave?	1
To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles?	2
To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community?	1
Pupils’ attendance	3
How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2
What is the extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	2

¹ Grades for attainment are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; 4 is low

The quality of the school's work

Pupils enjoy their learning, say that lessons are fun and remark, 'Teachers push us on so we do well'. Teachers and teaching assistants have consistently high expectations of pupils' behaviour and pupils respond well to these. During the inspection, classrooms and corridors buzzed with purposeful learning. In some of the best lessons, teachers employed imaginative and often practical strategies to stimulate pupils' interest so that pupils immersed themselves in their learning and produced a good quality and volume of work. For instance, pupils in Year 2 were thrilled to learn how to calculate fractions while decorating biscuits. Similarly, older pupils in a Year 5/6 science lesson thoroughly enjoyed role-playing an emergency rescue team who had to instruct stranded youngsters in the Australian outback about how to turn salty water from a nearby billabong into drinking water with the aid of a few rudimentary artefacts. In such ways, the engaging curriculum successfully enriches pupils' learning and develops their problem solving skills. The leadership has ensured that all adults have the correct skills to support effectively pupils' learning. For example, all staff received training in the new Early Years Foundation Stage framework, to help them see how early learning supports pupils' later development and success.

The school provides pupils with support, guidance and care of the highest order. Vulnerable pupils receive just the right levels of support to feel at ease in school and to participate fully in everything the school offers. The school also reaches out to other schools and supports pupils with particular needs to socialise with children their age. Parents of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities comment warmly about the support and care their children enjoy, adding that the staff are 'massively supportive' of any individual problems they may have. For example, the school goes to great lengths to support pupils with medical needs so that they miss as little schooling as possible. Similarly, staff establish good liaison with a number of external agencies so that outside expertise is at hand to meet individual needs wherever necessary. Pupils from Traveller families are able to link up with a specialist support service that caters for their particular circumstances.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

High quality teaching and purposeful learning	2
Effective assessment	2
An appropriate curriculum which meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, provision through partnership with other organisations	2
Support, guidance and care	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders, including governors, have an accurate view of the school's effectiveness. The headteacher provides a strong example to colleagues of how to

ensure continuing improvement. Leaders, governors and staff work together effectively to ensure all pupils enjoy equality of opportunity in school. Very careful tracking of pupils' progress enables the school to identify any differences in performance between groups of pupils and to deal with them promptly. The small number of pupils in some year groups magnifies the impact of these in terms of data analysis but the school works with determination to address any concerns.

Robust and rigorous safeguarding procedures support pupils' safety and well-being. Parents are clear that the school keeps children safe. Staff are well trained in child protection procedures and the school works closely with outside agencies to assure the welfare of all pupils, and particularly the most vulnerable. There are regular and detailed health and safety checks and the school building and grounds are clean and well maintained. Efficient financial management and administration ensure that the school provides good value for money and has come successfully through a period of budget restraint following a sudden rise in pupil numbers at the start of the academic year.

Governors take a close interest in the work of the school and are a strong presence in its daily life. A good mix of very experienced and relatively new governors brings a wide variety of useful skills to the school. Governors contribute to school development planning and help with its self-evaluation, although the governing body does not monitor formally the impact of its work. The school continues to develop its relationship with parents and has identified communication with them as an area to develop. Parents are supportive of the school and help with fundraising and other activities. Most parents ensure that their children attend school regularly. There is a clear commitment to community cohesion throughout the school. However, there is a weaker focus on multicultural awareness and the school is only at the early stages of formally evaluating the effectiveness of its strategies to promote community cohesion.

The school welcomes parental involvement in school life and enjoys a supportive relationship with parents. Nonetheless, a significant number of parents responding to the inspection questionnaire expressed dissatisfaction with the information they receive from school about the progress their children make. The school has good partnerships with other organisations and schools and these enrich pupils learning. For instance, there are supportive links for pupils with particular gifts and talents to attend county-wide groups and the school's active involvement in a physical education partnership ensures pupils receive specialist coaching.

These are the grades for leadership and management

Communicating ambition and driving improvement	2
Promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination	2
Ensuring that safeguarding procedures are effective	1
Ensuring that the governing body provides effective challenge and support so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities are met	2

Promoting the school's relationship with parents and carers, including their involvement in decision-making about matters relating to learning and well-being	3
Developing partnerships with other providers, organisations and services	2
Ensuring the school contributes to community cohesion	3
Deploying resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Practitioners in the lively Early Years Foundation Stage (Reception) provide children with a stimulating start to full-time education. The bright and welcoming learning environment engages children well and they settle quickly in the warm and purposeful atmosphere that the adults create. Staff plan activities well to reflect all six areas of learning, both inside and outdoors. Planning takes good account of children's individual needs so all groups of children make good progress. Children join the setting with skills typical for their age. By the time they move into Year 1, most children reach a good level of development in all areas of learning, although their reading skills are weaker than other aspects of their communication, language and literacy development. Some children leave Reception working at levels above the national average.

The first-class relationships that characterise the whole school stem from this strong start in Reception. Children learn and play together harmoniously and treat each other and adults with respect. Their excellent behaviour means that they can make the most of their time here. They share resources and take turns so that everyone can use the equipment, toys and games. Children work independently, follow instructions carefully and take care of their surroundings. Children sustain good levels of concentration and perseverance as they participate in a wide range of adult-led or child-initiated activities. For example, during an activity to extend children's problem solving, reasoning and numeracy skills, a small group worked with the teacher, matching small, medium and large bowls, plates, spoons and chairs to the corresponding teddy bears as a follow up activity to their literacy work on 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. The teacher developed their learning well through careful questioning as she checked how well they understood the vocabulary of comparative sizes. Currently, children are more highly directed by the staff to activities in the mornings and have more frequent opportunities to choose where to work and play during the afternoon sessions. Similarly, children's learning is interrupted in both morning and afternoon sessions as they participate in formal playtimes along with the rest of the school rather than staying in their own learning environment.

The setting is well led and managed by a knowledgeable leader who understands the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and ensures these are met. There are close links with other early years' settings so that children's induction into school is well managed. Providers liaise well in terms of curriculum, planning and outcomes and these firmly support young children's ongoing learning.

How good are the outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
What is the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
How effectively is the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
Overall effectiveness: how well does the setting/school meet the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2

Views of parents and carers

Around half of the pupils' parents responded to the inspection questionnaire. They expressed positive views about their children's enjoyment of school, how well the school cares for them and how secure their children feel. Parents wrote comments praising different aspects of the school's work such as its support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and its welcoming ethos. A significant minority of parents expressed concern about the information they receive with regard to the progress their children make. A similar proportion wished for the school to take better account of parents' suggestions or concerns, while some parents expressed concern about the size of the Year 3/4 class. The school has already identified communication with parents as an area to develop through their own survey.

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 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:	an overall measure of the pupils' success in their academic learning. The term combines attainment and progress. Pupils might make good progress, for example, but if their attainment remains low, inspectors may judge that their achievement is only satisfactory.
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.



18 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wrenbury Primary School CW5 8EN

Thank you for your help when I inspected your school recently. You were very kind and welcoming and I enjoyed coming into your cheery classrooms and listening to your views.

Wrenbury is a good school and I found much to praise in it. You all work very hard, do well and reach above average standards in your English, mathematics and science work. Well done!

The young children in Reception enjoy a good start to school because there are so many interesting things for them to do and learn. They also see how well everyone else in school behaves and they follow that good example. You all behave so well and are polite and very kind to each other. People really value those skills as you get older. Your teachers plan interesting work for you. They check very carefully how well you are doing so that they can give you just the right amount of work in the next lesson. There's no escape from the hard work!

You have a good understanding of how to stay healthy and could tell me lots of ways to keep safe. I was very impressed with the way you all help to decide how to make your school a better place through the school council. Many of you are very good at taking responsibility as monitors, recycling officers or buddies. You are very good at organising fundraising events to support the school and different charities.

One of the reasons for my visit was to see what your school could do better. I have asked your headteacher, the governors and staff to help some of you who find learning more difficult to make faster progress in your work. I would also like you all to know more about the cultures and beliefs of different people who live and work in Britain. I have also asked for the teachers who are in charge of different subjects to do even more to improve how well you all learn.

Enjoy making your new raised beds in the garden – I hope the vegetables you grow are delicious.

With my very best wishes for the future

Jane Hughes
Lead inspector

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