

High Legh Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111096
Local Authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	325294
Inspection date	2 July 2009
Reporting inspector	Stephen Wall

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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	127
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
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs J Atkins
Headteacher	Miss Louise Robbins
Date of previous school inspection	6 February 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Wrenshot Lane High Legh Knutsford Cheshire WA16 6NW
Telephone number	01925 753713
Fax number	01925 756182

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: standards and achievement, personal development and well-being, and the overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Evidence was collected from the school's self-evaluation, national published assessment data and the school's own assessment records, policies and minutes, observation of the school at work, interviews with senior members of staff and pupils, and the parents' questionnaires. 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 the self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in the report. However, the quality of care, guidance and support which was evaluated as good by the school was judged outstanding by inspectors, based on evidence from discussion with pupils, the school's records, policies and procedures, data tracking pupils' progress and pupils' work.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average sized school situated in a rural area of generally favourable social and economic circumstances. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below average. Nearly all pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average but none has a statement of special educational need. The school has the Inclusion Quality Mark, Artsmark and Activemark. It is also a nationally accredited Healthy School. Early Years Foundation Stage provision comprises a Reception class.

The High Legh Pre-school nursery which is run by a private provider on the school site was subject to a separate inspection. The report will be available separately on the Ofsted website.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school in which the pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Equally outstanding is the quality of care, guidance and support it provides, despite the school's own modest judgement that this aspect is good. Pupils achieve well and standards are rising because purposeful leadership is providing a sharp focus on improvement. Rising standards are testament to the positive impact leadership is having and they signal clearly that the school has good capacity to improve further. Parents are unanimous in praising the school. Typical comments are, 'I am so glad my children attend this school. I would recommend it to anyone.' and 'I moved into the area not long ago. I am delighted with how smoothly and successfully the school has helped my children settle in. They are very happy!' The school has made very good progress in addressing the issues identified at the previous inspection. It gives good value for money.

The school is a very harmonious community built on strong relationships. Pupils and parents comment favourably on its 'family atmosphere'. Adults are good role models. They have high expectations for pupils' work and conduct. Pupils respond to the respect and warmth with which they are treated by respecting each other, behaving outstandingly well and showing real eagerness for learning. They enjoy school, as seen in their very high attendance levels. They know that there is always an adult to turn to if they have any problems. Very strong links with outside agencies have been established. These enable specialist help to be called on when the need arises. Pupils feel safe and secure. Policies and procedures for protecting children are in place and regularly reviewed. Pupils know and value the importance of healthy lifestyles; a high proportion of them take part in the wide range of enrichment sporting activities. The school council is an active body that has done a lot to improve the facilities by successfully suggesting better playground equipment and bicycle sheds, for example. Pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve their work because the school has sophisticated systems to check on their progress. As a result, teachers identify and tackle underachievement at an early stage. Pupils' high levels of self-confidence and basic skills mean that they are well prepared to take advantage of the next steps in their education.

Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills broadly in line with those expected. Good teaching and a good curriculum enable pupils to make good progress as they move up through the school. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards in reading and mathematics are consistently above average. In writing, standards are rising; this year they are above average. Teaching in Key Stage 2 has suffered significantly in the past because of unavoidable staff absences. As a result, Year 6 national assessment results dipped, particularly in 2006. By 2008, however, they had recovered strongly overall to be above average, especially in mathematics and science. However, in English, the improvement was less well marked because of pupils' weaker writing skills. The latest provisional results show that pupils in Key Stage 2 have continued to make good progress and mathematics has consolidated its improvement. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels in writing has risen. The school accepts, however, that standards in writing still need to rise further.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. It is supported by a good curriculum, which is developing to add extra relevance and excitement to learning through a more thematic and topic based approach. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this well to encourage pupils to think for themselves. Strong relationships are the bedrock on which teaching is built, with the result that pupils have positive attitudes to learning. Teaching assistants support pupils

very effectively, especially those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, so that they make good progress. Good pace and a wide variety of activities keep pupils active in most lessons. Occasionally, however, the level of challenge for the highest attaining pupils is not high enough to stretch their thinking and learning.

Good leadership and management promote impressive levels of teamwork and a shared sense of purpose. Procedures to evaluate the effectiveness of the school are thorough. They enable leaders and managers to have an accurate view of what the school does well and where it could do even better. The good quality school improvement plan uses this information to identify what needs to be done with clearly defined outcomes to measure success. The school's commitment to equality and successfully breaking down barriers to discrimination are strong. Every pupil is valued equally, regardless of background or ability. The school's contribution to community cohesion is good. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities in the school community and are very active in the local community. Pupils' understanding of citizenship in a multicultural society is developing. Links with schools abroad, including Africa, are well established. Governance is good. Governors know the school well, are very supportive but not afraid to hold the school rigorously to account when necessary.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Good leadership and management are bringing about rapid improvement and laying firm foundations for future success. From starting points that are broadly typical for their age, children make good progress to attain skills and understanding that are above age related expectations by the time they join Key Stage 1. Good achievement is the result of good teaching, which is meticulously planned to provide a wide range of stimulating learning opportunities appropriate to the needs of the children. There is a good balance of teacher led activities and activities that children initiate themselves. Teaching makes effective use of the outdoor provision to help children's physical development and encourage their knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Children feel safe in the nurturing and stimulating environment. Effective induction procedures ensure that children settle quickly into Reception where there is a warm and welcoming atmosphere. Procedures to check on children's progress are developing solidly. They enable teachers to make increasingly accurate judgements of children's progress and achievement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing.
- Make sure that teaching consistently challenges higher attaining pupils.

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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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

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?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
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	2
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 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?	1

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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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 welcome and treating me with such courtesy when I inspected your school. I enjoyed talking to you. What you told me helped me in judging how effective your school is.

You will be pleased to know that you go to a good school. I was very impressed with how well you behave and how well you all get on together. I was also very pleased to see how good your attendance is: well done! This shows that you enjoy coming to school. You make good progress in your learning as you move up through the school because your teachers go to great lengths to make sure you get well prepared and interesting lessons. Your teachers and all the adults working with you take exceptionally good care of you and work very hard to make sure you enjoy school and do your best. They do all they can to help you succeed and prepare you for the next stages in your schooling. I was also pleased to see so many of you taking part in the wide range of extra activities the school puts on for you. These help you live healthily. They also help you to develop into interesting and well rounded individuals.

To make your school even more successful there are two things it needs to do.

- Make sure that your skills in writing improve.
- Make sure that teaching always challenges those of you who are fast learners.

A lot of the success of your school is down to your hard work and your positive attitudes. I am confident that you will continue to play your part in the coming years to make sure your school goes from strength to strength.

I wish you all the very best for the future.