

# Pewithall Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	111141
<b>Local Authority</b>	Halton
<b>Inspection number</b>	325300
<b>Inspection date</b>	9 October 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Paul Bamber

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	208
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>	Mr T Payton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs C Minshall
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 January 2006
<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>	Kenilworth Avenue Runcorn Cheshire WA7 4XQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01928 576139
<b>Fax number</b>	01928 581737

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: pupils' overall achievement and standards; the degree to which pupils are knowledgeable about their own learning and have a say in target setting; the quality of teaching throughout the school and the quality of leadership and management, especially governance. Evidence was gathered from the school's judgements about attainment on entry to Reception; test results and teachers' assessments and records; observations of teaching; the analysis of pupils' work and responses within parents' questionnaires; and discussions with senior leaders, staff, pupils, parents and governors.

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 the report.

## Description of the school

The pupils who attend this average sized school come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds and are predominantly of White British heritage. Around 5% are from a minority ethnic group, mainly Chinese. A lower than average proportion speaks English as an additional language. The percentage known to be eligible for a free school meal is considerably lower than normally found. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also well below average. The school has earned a number of accreditations, including Activemark Gold, Artsmark and the Halton Healthy Schools Award. The close partnership with a local private provider enables pupils to be cared for both before and after normal school hours.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Pewithall provides its pupils with an outstanding education. Excellent leadership and management, combined with extremely good teaching and a very rich curriculum, enable pupils to make rapid progress and to attain exceptionally high standards by the time they leave Year 6. The superb care and the high quality of support and guidance provided contribute significantly to pupils' outstanding personal development.

Parents overwhelmingly delight in and respect the school's work. They are particularly impressed with how happy their children are in school and how well they develop academically and personally. Many parents understandably feel that the headteacher 'has drive, a total commitment to the children and is bringing about continual improvement.' Senior leaders' great attention to detail means that pupils' progress is tracked rigorously and their individual needs are met extremely well. Close analysis of assessment information results in any relative weakness identified being quickly addressed. The very successful way in which leaders and managers have addressed the issues raised at the time of the last inspection, is testimony to the school's continued excellent capacity to maintain its current outstanding provision. Since then more pupils in Key Stage 2 have reached higher than expected levels and the quality of pupils' writing has improved greatly over the last two years.

Leaders carry out thorough checks on the quality of teaching and learning and teachers' practice continually improves as a result of sensitive support, pertinent advice and well focused training. As a result of effective professional development, teachers' expectations of what pupils should achieve have been raised and staff have enabled pupils to be more knowledgeable about the purpose of lessons and what they should learn from them.

The quality of pupils' learning is excellent. This is because they are continuously encouraged to participate in lessons and to work independently or cooperatively. Teachers impart their good subject knowledge in interesting and helpful ways. The very warm relationships that exist throughout the school play a significant part in how well pupils behave, how much they respect each other and the keen attention they pay in lessons. Learning moves on at a cracking pace and teachers have very high expectations of pupils' work rate and of the quality of their work.

Teachers and pupils are constantly spurred on by the very challenging targets set throughout the school. For example, the school has exceeded the most challenging targets it set for Year 6 pupils' performance in English and mathematics for the last two years. Pupils are fully involved in setting their own targets, and this enhances their understanding of what they need to aim for. Year 6 standards have been exceptionally high in English, mathematics and science in that period. Because these pupils entered the Reception class with typically expected skills this represents excellent achievement. In recent Year 6 national tests in science, all pupils succeeded in reaching the expected level and over 90% reached the higher level. The highly popular science day and the school's keen focus on promoting pupils' investigative skills have contributed extremely well to their outstanding performance in the subject. Over recent years more than half of the Year 6 pupils reached the higher level in English and mathematics. Those pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language make the same progress as their peers because of the excellent support and guidance they receive.

Parents rightly emphasise that the school educates their children very broadly. There is no doubt that the exciting curriculum widens pupils' knowledge, gives them many stimulating

experiences and helps them become articulate, responsible and concerned young citizens. The Healthy Schools Award, Activemark and Artsmark the school has earned reflect pupils' excellent knowledge of the benefits of eating sensibly, of taking regular exercise and their keen appreciation of the arts. The school has forged many very strong partnerships. For example, links with the business world and local emergency services promote very well pupils' economic awareness and their knowledge of potential risks to their safety. Pupils receive specialist teaching in French and expert tuition in playing a variety of musical instruments. They enjoy many opportunities for drama and this helps them to become more confident. Pupils excel at sport and turn up in great numbers for the many, varied after-school clubs on offer, some of which are run by parents or other outside helpers. Residential experiences and visits out of school provide settings in which pupils live closely together and have opportunities to work in teams to meet challenges and solve problems.

The school does much to make the pupils aware of different communities both in their immediate area, nationally and internationally. For example, they have regular contact with local older citizens, either to entertain them with performances or to learn from their experiences. The visits Year 6 pupils make to a very large multi-faith school in inner city Manchester and their hosting of pupils from that school provide them with a first-hand insight into another community. It also gives them opportunities to hone their social skills and to increase their cultural awareness. Many parents praise pupils for how well they care for each other. They particularly cite Year 6 playleaders and Years 5 and 6 buddies who look out for Reception children at playtime and those pupils who might be a bit upset or lonely. Leaders and other staff ensure that pupils are well protected and that requirements regarding vetting adults are met. As a result, pupils report that they feel safe from intimidation and are extremely happy in school.

Governors are very supportive of the school's work and they are a useful sounding board for the headteacher, who consults them fully. They also regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the school's provision for pupils' personal development. They are less active in sounding out pupils' views or in gaining information about any new initiatives the school undertakes. They manage finances prudently, ensuring that resources are deployed in such a way as to provide excellent value for money.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Parents rightly praise highly the sensitive arrangements for introducing them and their children to Reception. As a result, children quickly and confidently settle into routines and soon busy themselves with the wide range of activities available to them. Many of these are extremely well planned by the experienced and talented staff. Adults use their keen observations of children's progress to ensure that the tasks set match children's different needs extremely well. They also give children the freedom to explore ideas and use resources freely both indoors and outdoors. Much excellent use is made of role play and several boys thoroughly enjoyed using their 'walkie talkies' to summon help to an 'emergency'. Overall, children enter the school with skills in line with those expected for their age. They make very good progress in all areas of their learning but especially in their reading and writing, in mathematics and in their physical development. The changes the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) leader has made to the curriculum over the last two years have resulted in children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them improving considerably.

Parents are very confident that their children are safe and very well cared for. The high quality of support and the positive encouragement children receive, contributes significantly to their extremely good personal and emotional development. Leadership is very strong and based on very effective teamwork. Parents emphasise how well informed they are about their children's welfare and progress.

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

- Ensure that governors become better informed about new initiatives carried out in school and establish closer links with the school council so that they are fully informed of pupils' views.

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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?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
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?	1
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	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**

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Pewithall Primary School, Runcorn, WA7 4XQ

I greatly enjoyed the day I spent recently inspecting your school. You and all the adults made me feel very welcome. Many things impressed me about your excellent school which gives you an outstanding education. Not least was you own super behaviour and the way you obviously enjoyed your lessons and all the other opportunities your school offers. You are very polite, confident and responsible. It was a joy to see some of you leading the after-school 'wake and shake' session for so many of the children and the staff!

Of course, the fact that you do so well with your work and make such good progress is not just because of your great attitude and hard work. It is also because you are taught so well and that the school is run so efficiently by your headteacher and her team. They not only make sure that you learn lots of things but they also help you to become very nice young people by encouraging you to behave so well, to think of others before yourself and to mix with people and children of all ages and from different backgrounds. I think the exchange Year 6 pupils have with children from the big school in Manchester is a great idea.

As well as finding out how well you are doing it is part of my job to suggest to the school ways in which it could be even better. I have, therefore, asked the governors to link up with the school council so that they can find out a bit more about what you think about the school and how you are helping to improve things. I have also asked some of them to keep a closer check on how things are going when something new is introduced.

Thank you once again. I hope you all carry on trying your very best and really enjoy your time at Pewithall.