

# Willow Lane Community Primary School

## Inspection report

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119134
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	326951
<b>Inspection dates</b>	4–5 June 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Heap

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.

<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)	114
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>	Mrs Tracy Moat
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Linda Pye
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 June 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>	Willow Lane Lancaster Lancashire LA1 5PR
<b>Telephone number</b>	01524 65880

<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	4–5 June 2009
<b>Inspection number</b>	326951

**Fax number**

01524 844687

<b>Age group</b>	4-11
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<b>Inspection dates</b>	4-5 June 2009
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

## Description of the school

This smaller-than-average primary school serves a mainly White British population. There are very small groups of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, some of whom are at the early stages of learning English. The area has significant social and economic disadvantage and around double the national average of pupils are entitled to free school meals. Although the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average, the number with a statement of special educational need is above the national picture. The school provides for the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Reception class. The school has achieved several awards, including: Healthy School status; Basic Skills Quality Mark; Activemark and Eco School Bronze.

There is a before-and after-school club on site that is run by a private provider. As this is not managed by the governing body, it was not inspected as part of this inspection. However, it was inspected around the same time and a separate report for this provision is available 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 that provides good value for money. This judgement reflects the good progress the school has made since the previous inspection and confirms the accurate and effective school self-evaluation of its overall quality. Parents and pupils are very satisfied with the work of the school and a typical comment from parents is, 'As a parent I couldn't be happier with this school, both my children are very happy and progressing really well.'

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. This is because the good curriculum promotes pupils' personal development in an exemplary way and pastoral care is excellent. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and, as a result, the level of attendance has risen to a point that is currently in line with last year's national average. Moral and social development is particularly strong and lead to both excellent behaviour and attitudes to school and work. Pupils have an exceptionally good knowledge and understanding of the importance of leading healthy and safe lifestyles. Plenty of opportunities are provided for pupils to make an excellent contribution to the local community and those further afield.

Pupils' achievement is good. The overall attainment on entry to Reception is usually well below what is typical for their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy skills. Pupils progress well and by the time they leave Year 6, most pupils reach average standards. Results in national tests vary because of the effects of small numbers in each year group, but over time, standards are on a rising trend. Nevertheless, standards in writing are not as high as in other subjects at both the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, those from minority ethnic backgrounds and learning English as an additional language and the able, gifted and talented make good progress towards their individual targets. Overall, pupils are well prepared for their future education.

Teaching and learning are good. Throughout the school there is evidence that lessons are well planned, challenging and enjoyable. The development of basic skills is a priority and pupils are increasingly learning them well. However, there are too few opportunities to use and develop writing skills across the full range of subjects. Consequently, pupils make slower progress in writing than in reading and the standards are lower, particularly in Key Stage 2.

The enrichment of the curriculum is very good and this is readily recognised by parents and pupils alike. Provision for pupils with extra learning needs is effective and much effort is expended on lowering barriers to learning. The excellent care, guidance and support play a major part in this work. Close attention is paid to developing and using very strong procedures and practices for monitoring behaviour, attendance and academic achievement.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher is leading the school very well. She and key colleagues have a clear and shared vision for the school. Governance is good. The knowledgeable governing body meet their legal responsibilities and provide a good balance of support and challenge for the school.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Overall, attainment on entry to Reception is well below expected levels. This is because many children arrive with skills and abilities that are well below the typical range expected for their age, particularly in their communication, language and literacy and personal, social and emotional

development. Generally, children make good progress and achieve well. Attainment on leaving Reception has fluctuated year-on-year because of the small numbers and the changing incidence of extra learning needs. However, recent improvements are leading to greater consistency with children leaving Reception with broadly average skills. This means that they are well prepared for their future education. Children's personal development and the promotion of their well-being are outstanding. This is because both the curriculum and welfare provision promote personal development in an exemplary manner. There is a good balance between the adult-led activities and the ones that children choose for themselves, both inside and outside the classroom. Practical and play activities allow children to develop their unique interests and abilities well. The grouping of children according to their individual needs means that activities are mostly matched well to a child's needs, most particularly in the good work on letter sounds and building words and counting. The very good links with a range of outside agencies directly supports children with specific needs. Leadership and management are good. A significant factor here has been the strong vision of the Early Years Foundation Stage leader, particularly in developing the good provision for learning and welfare.

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

- Raise standards in writing.
- Increase the opportunities for pupils to write at length across all subjects.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Over time, pupils have entered Year 1 with variable, but improving, levels of skills and abilities. Standards at the end of Year 2 are currently below average because of the high level of pupils with extra learning needs. The school recognised this and extra teaching support has been provided for these pupils every morning and the school's own data shows that they have made good progress. Caution is necessary when evaluating test results because of the small numbers in each year group. Nevertheless, because there are improvements in attainment at the end of Reception and in the provision in Key Stage 1, there is an upward trend in national test results, particularly in writing. A broadly average proportion of pupils achieve the better-than-average Level 3 by the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 6, current standards are average in English, mathematics and science and pupils have made good progress. There is a rising trend in national test results at the end of Key Stage 2 and the strongest subject has been science. In English, standards in reading are much stronger than writing because there has been a successful focus on improving reading skills and pupils do not have enough opportunities for extended writing. On the evidence of national data, the progress pupils make in Key Stage 2 has been around the top 20% of schools nationally over the last three years. There is no difference in the standards reached by boys and girls. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language also make good progress.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

The pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school. This is evident in their exemplary behaviour and the excellent attitudes they have towards the school and learning. Pupils know that staff will listen and act where appropriate and, consequently, they feel extremely safe and secure in school and know who to turn to if they have a problem. Pupils

make an outstanding contribution to the school and local community through the work of the school council, the Eco group and the pupils who take on day-to-day responsibilities such as playground buddies. Pupils successfully raise money for charities, such as Cancer Care. Pupils know that eating healthily is highly desirable and that fruit and vegetables are paramount in this. Exercise is also seen as very important, with many enjoying their swimming lessons and the running club which is an out-of-lesson activity. They also have an exceptionally clear view on the importance of playing safely and carrying out various tasks in a correct and risk-free manner. Pupils particularly appreciate the work on cycling proficiency because many of them like to cycle in their spare time. The curriculum makes a strong contribution to pupils' increasing knowledge and understanding of the cultural diversity in British society. Pupils are proud of their school and know that it is giving them the opportunity to learn and develop the range of skills that will provide them with a strong foundation for future learning.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Effective teaching contributes significantly to the good progress made by pupils. Typically, well managed lessons enable pupils to learn without interruption and concentrate for long periods. The school diligently and effectively promotes pupils' learning of basic skills, such as reading, number and investigation. This is enhanced by the effective use of classroom displays to provide guidance and reminders, good questioning that challenges thinking and assesses learning and the appropriate use of partners to discuss ideas. Information and communication technology is used well to illustrate complex ideas. For example, in a Year 4/5 mathematics lesson about coordinates the graphics were used to illustrate tricky and challenging ideas and the use of the interactive whiteboard increased pupil involvement and, ultimately, their understanding. In the best lessons, there is a brisk pace and independent learning is promoted well. Questioning is incisive and stretches pupils. The teachers' very strong subject knowledge and understanding fosters enthusiastic learning and confidence. Occasionally, there are inconsistencies in the quality of the feedback given to pupils' work in their books. This means that pupils are not always totally clear about their achievements and what they need to do next. Pupils who find learning difficult are supported well by skilled practitioners.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum promotes pupils' personal development exceptionally well. The programme for personal, social and health education is a strength and successfully promotes positive attitudes and good life skills, such as teamwork and developing responsibility. Academic development is promoted well. The school rightly places a great emphasis upon the development of basic skills because they are at low levels when children arrive in school. However, evidence in pupils' books shows that pupils do not have enough opportunities to use and develop writing skills in subjects such as history, geography and religious education. Able, gifted and talented pupils are encouraged by effective links with outside agencies to increase their independence, for example, orienteering activities with the local cluster of schools and a summer school run by the local secondary school. Pupils benefit from a wide range of modifications to the curriculum, such as extra support for pupils with extra learning needs, in reading and mathematics. Pupils learning English as an additional language receive additional teaching from specialist local authority staff to improve their communication and literacy skills. The curriculum is enriched

very well during the school day and afterwards. For example, visits and visitors are carefully chosen to increase pupils' experiences, knowledge and understanding. In addition, opportunities for pupils include residential stays locally and in London.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Very effective strategies exist to monitor behaviour and attendance throughout the school and the learning mentors play an exemplary part in this work. Although attendance is broadly average the work being done to improve this could not be improved upon and there is clear evidence that this work is having an impact. Procedures to safeguard pupils meet current government requirements. Pupils work in a safe environment, with staff making every effort to ensure their well-being. Safety checks and risk assessments are regularly carried out. Pupils with extra learning needs are identified quickly and receive good individual support from the earliest stage. Very good links with external agencies also provide welcome advice and guidance for pupils and their parents, such as the support for pupils who are at the early stage of acquiring English as an additional language. New pupils are welcomed warmly and they quickly settle to school life. Parents are extremely satisfied with the way their children are cared for and pupils say they feel safe and secure in school. Procedures and practices to track academic progress are excellent.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The very good leadership of the headteacher enables staff to make a full contribution in this improving school. Priorities for improvement are clearly identified and understood because self-evaluation is rigorous. Consequently, there is a good capacity to improve further. Improvement planning is successfully shared with key staff and governors. However, some of the measures of success are not sufficiently precise. For example, where the priority is raising academic standards, data is not being used widely enough as an indicator of success. The work of the school is monitored very well. There has been a significant improvement in the way that teaching and learning are checked and this is a major development since the previous inspection. All activities are focused on lowering barriers to learning and, as a result, the school successfully promotes equal opportunity for all pupils. Moreover, there are robust and effective procedures to tackle any sort of discrimination. Community cohesion is promoted well. The work of the learning mentors is highly effective in this respect, for instance, in the way they have developed strong and productive links with the community police officers, Children's Centre and social services. Parents are able to seek advice and be guided to local services that will assist them. This is a much improved picture. Insights into global communities are promoted effectively through religious education, geography and personal, social and emotional development.

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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?	2
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?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
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

<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	3
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	2

## The quality of provision

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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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**

8 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Willow Lane Community Primary School, Lancashire,

LA1 5PR

I thoroughly enjoyed my time in your good school. I am most grateful for your warm welcome, courtesy and the help you provided.

What I really liked about your school:

- the effective work in the Reception class that fosters the good progress made by the youngest children
- the caring and happy atmosphere in the school and the way you support each other, particularly the older pupils helping the younger ones
- the good teaching and the strong teamwork of all the adults that puts your needs first
- the good progress that you make, particularly in reading and science
- the strong progress made by pupils who have extra learning needs
- the excellence of your behaviour and attitudes to school and work
- the excellent contribution you make as a school council and the contributions you make through your charitable donations
- the way that you all contribute to a safe and caring ethos in the school and the appreciation of this that is shown by your parents
- the very interesting range of activities that enrich your curriculum, including the overnight stays in Tower Wood and London
- the good leadership and management that ensures that the school continues to improve well.

To improve your school even more, I have asked your teachers to make sure that you become even better at writing. I have also suggested that they let you do even more writing in other subjects, such as history, geography and religious education. You can be a great help by always doing your best work, whether it is writing in English lessons or when writing in other subjects.

Good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

John Heap

Lead inspector