

# Oakwood Avenue Community Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	131372
<b>Local Authority</b>	Warrington
<b>Inspection number</b>	331270
<b>Inspection dates</b>	5–6 May 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	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.

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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)	400
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 Anne-Marie Berry
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Michael Jackson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 March 2008
<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>	Oakwood Avenue Warrington Cheshire WA1 3SZ

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	5–6 May 2009
<b>Inspection number</b>	331270

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

When Oakwood Avenue Community Primary School was inspected in March 2008 it was given a notice to improve and asked to address issues related to pupils' standards and achievement, the quality of teaching and assessment, and the impact of leadership and management. It was subsequently visited in November 2008, when it was judged to be making good progress.

## Description of the school

This is a larger than average primary school situated in an urban area of mixed social and economic circumstances. It has an enhanced provision unit in Key Stage 2 for up to 24 pupils with moderate learning difficulties. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below the national average. These children speak English fluently. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average. The proportion with a statement of special educational need is well above average, although most of these children attend the enhanced provision unit. A significant number of pupils join the school at times other than normal during the year. The school manages a popular before-school breakfast club. The school has been awarded the Healthy Schools standard.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement because it has tackled successfully all the issues identified at the last inspection.

In fact, such is the quality of the improvements brought about that this is now a good school in which the care, guidance and support it provides are outstanding. The school gives good value for money. The whole school has worked relentlessly to bring about rapid improvement under the expert leadership of the headteacher, who is very ably supported by the deputy headteacher and other senior leaders. The local authority has also provided valuable support, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 where a mentor headteacher has worked very effectively with staff to improve provision and raise standards. A strong sense of teamwork is obvious throughout the school. Parents are very happy with the education the school provides and many are lavish in their praise of its work. 'This is a first-rate school in which my children are making very good progress. They come home bursting to tell me all the exciting things they have learned during the day. I could not ask for more!' is a typical comment.

This is a highly inclusive school in which all pupils feel exceptionally safe and valued regardless of their ability or background. They are proud of their school and enjoy learning because, they say, 'Our teachers are great and make learning fun.' Attendance is improving. However, the school recognises that attendance levels could and should be even higher, especially for some pupils who are persistently absent. The school has fostered excellent relationships with parents who attend assemblies and the parents' café in large numbers. Close links with other schools, especially local secondary schools, enable pupils to feel secure and confident about moving on to the next stage of their education when they leave. Using data astutely to track pupils' progress, set individual targets and help pupils understand what they need to do to improve their work is now pivotal in driving up standards and achievement.

Teaching is never less than good; some is outstanding. Good teaching is supported by a good curriculum which meets pupils' needs and aspirations and adds extra enjoyment to their learning. Successful professional development and rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning mean that teachers understand fully what constitutes good teaching and, more importantly, how to translate this into classroom practice. Teachers have high expectations. They encourage pupils to be active participants in their own learning and to assess their own levels of success. As a result, standards and achievement are rising rapidly. In 2008 results in assessments and tests at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 rose significantly and were broadly average overall. Inspection evidence shows that the rising trend is set to continue. This represents good achievement considering pupils' generally well below average starting points. However, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher assessment levels in Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics is not yet as high as it should be. This is also true of the proportion gaining the higher levels in science tests at the end of Key Stage 2.

Bold steps have been taken to make leadership and management more effective. Dedicated leaders have been appointed in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 with the specific responsibility for improving standards. Managers at all levels say that they are now much clearer about their roles and understand that they are leaders and not just day-to-day managers. The good quality school development plan makes clear what the priorities are and sets measurable success criteria and timelines. This means that progress can be accurately

assessed and those responsible held more closely to account. The impact of positive leadership and management can be readily seen in rising standards across every aspect of the school's work. This is a clear indication that the school has good capacity to improve further.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills below those typically expected for children of this age. A significant proportion has skills well below age-related expectations. Children now make good progress because of good teaching and the wide range of appropriate learning experiences provided for them. Standards have improved considerably so that by the end of Reception, children's attainment is broadly in line with the national average. They make most progress in their personal, social and emotional development, their knowledge and understanding of the world and their physical development because these are a strong focus for learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Adults check on children's progress meticulously. The outcomes are used to plan activities matched to children's needs and abilities. Activities offer a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities. Children enjoy the stimulating outdoor areas, which encourage their exploration of the world around them and their physical development. The Early Years Foundation Stage environment is attractive and safe. Children play and learn together harmoniously; they show good levels of respect for others. Children are very health conscious; even the youngest can explain that, 'Fruit and vegetables are good for you.' Leadership and management are good. They have improved with the appointment of a dedicated Early Years Foundation Stage coordinator who has the necessary focus, enthusiasm and time to tackle the issues identified at the last inspection. The early impact is already obvious in rising standards.

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

- Increase the proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels in assessments and tests in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1 and in science in Key Stage 2.
- Improve attendance.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils make good progress and achieve well to attain broadly average standards at the end of Key Stage 1. Standards rose significantly in 2008, especially in reading and mathematics, although less so in writing. The school is working hard and successfully to arrest previous underachievement and increase the relatively low proportion of pupils who attain the higher levels in Year 2 assessments in reading, writing and mathematics. In Key Stage 2 standards are on a rising trend. In 2008 standards and achievement rose sharply in English and mathematics as seen in the results in Year 6 national tests, which were broadly average. Challenging targets were exceeded. Inspection evidence shows that the upward trend is set to continue and that the 2009 results are likely to improve even further. While higher-attaining pupils achieve well in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2, the school is aware of the need to match this achievement in science. All groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make good progress and achieve well.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good. They know the difference between right and wrong and behave sensibly in lessons and around school. They are polite to visitors and keen to talk about how much they enjoy school. Attendance levels are rising but too many pupils still miss school too regularly. The school's exceptionally caring ethos supports pupils in developing high levels of respect for others and tolerance for those who are different or disadvantaged. Relationships are strong and founded on mutual trust and respect. Pupils' understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles is good. They are able to speak with confidence about which foods are good and which are best avoided. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities in the school by becoming, for example, playground leaders and school ambassadors. They value the school council as a forum for discussion and improving their environment. By the time they leave school most pupils have developed into confident and articulate young people ready to take full advantage of the next steps in their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teachers prepare their lessons very well. They build into their planning a variety of activities designed to keep pupils interested and motivated to do their best. Teachers are particularly skilful in using assessment information to set tasks and activities that are closely matched to the differing needs and abilities of groups of pupils in their classes. Pupils are encouraged to be active learners. For example, they enjoy the opportunities they are given to act out poetry which enhances their learning. Most teachers are skilled at asking questions which make pupils think for themselves and give reasoned answers. Occasionally, however, questions are asked which are not sufficiently probing and elicit a simple yes or no answer. Teaching assistants play a very effective role in supporting pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities so that they make good progress. Teachers mark written work regularly. Their comments are consistently helpful in telling pupils what they need to do to improve their work.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school has placed a stronger emphasis on developing pupils' basic skills since the last inspection and this is paying dividends in starting to raise standards and achievement. Through the introduction of 'Big Write', for example, pupils are growing in confidence in developing their writing skills. The provision of small personal computers for all Year 6 pupils enables them to develop their information and communication technology skills at home as well as helping them with homework and research. The curriculum provides a good fusion between discreet subject teaching and themed topics which encourage pupils' learning across subjects. This adds to pupils' enjoyment and makes their learning more relevant and purposeful. Personal, social and health education is popular with pupils and makes a significant contribution to their awareness of safety and the importance of healthy lifestyles. A good range of enrichment activities including sports, the arts and educational visits help pupils develop into confident and inquisitive young people.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Care, guidance and support are the jewels in the school's crown. This is a school where every pupil is known and valued as an individual. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are in place and reviewed regularly. The school provides outstanding support for its most vulnerable pupils in the enhanced provision unit and nurture group. Here pupils work calmly in an exceptionally safe and stimulating environment. Links with outside agencies are very strong. They enable the school to call on a wide range of expertise to support pupils whenever the need arises. Parents comment very favourably on how approachable teachers are and how pleased they are with the excellent levels of care and support pupils receive. Procedures to check on pupils' progress are robust. The outcomes are used to identify any underachievement at an early stage so that it can be quickly nipped in the bud.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leaders and managers have been spurred on by the last inspection report. They have worked tirelessly to tackle the issues identified at that time. The vigorous and rigorous response has brought about rapid improvement. Procedures to evaluate the effectiveness of the school have been sharpened so that the school now has an accurate picture of what it does well and what it needs to do to improve. School planning is informed by seeking the views of a wide range of stakeholders including parents. Leaders and managers have a crystal-clear vision of where the school needs to be and how to get there; it is already well on the way. Planning is underpinned at every stage by the school's guiding principle of inclusion and treating all pupils equally. The school's impact on community cohesion is good. The school is especially active in the local community, where it hosts a variety of adult courses. The curriculum is also strong in broadening pupils' respect and understanding of world cultures and religions. Governors are very supportive of the school. They are now adding the necessary questioning to hold the school more rigorously to account for its work and standards.



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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?	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 <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

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<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>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
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

<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**

Inspection of Oakwood Avenue Community Primary School, Warrington, WA1 3SZ

Thank you for your warm welcome when I came to inspect your school recently. I enjoyed talking to many of you. What you told me was very helpful in enabling me to reach my judgements.

You will be pleased to hear that you go to a good school which provides outstanding care, guidance and support for you. Your school has improved in leaps and bounds since the last inspection because everyone, including you, has worked very hard to bring about the necessary changes. I was pleased to see the good progress you are making and how much you enjoy your learning. Your behaviour in lessons and around school is very good and you all treat each other in a kind and understanding way. It was good to see how well you join in lessons which your teachers prepare so well for you. You told us how much you respect the adults who work with you and how good your teachers are at caring for you and supporting you – I agree! I was pleased to see how much you enjoyed taking on responsibilities such as becoming school ambassadors and playground leaders. These opportunities help you develop as responsible young people so keep looking for ways to help your school grow and develop.

To make sure your school is even better in future, I am asking the headteacher and staff to do two things.

- Make sure that more of you get the higher levels in assessments in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 and that more of you gain the higher levels in science tests at the end of Year 6.
- Improve attendance.

I am confident that you will continue to work hard to make sure that your school continues to do well in future and carries on going from strength to strength.