

# Norden Community Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105774
<b>Local Authority</b>	Rochdale
<b>Inspection number</b>	336557
<b>Inspection dates</b>	15–16 September 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Gill Jones HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	411
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr S Haslam
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Linda Cotton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 June 2007
<b>School address</b>	Shawfield Lane Rochdale Lancashire OL12 7RQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01706 641013
<b>Fax number</b>	01706 712853
<b>Email address</b>	lcotton@norden.rochdale.sch.uk

---

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2009

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 18 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils, the community manager and a representative from the local authority. They observed the school's work, and looked at minutes of governing body meetings, school development planning, monitoring records, the school website and 67 parental, 100 pupils' and 20 staff questionnaires.

- the standards achieved by pupils and their progress
- the rigour of the school's self-evaluation procedures
- the provision for the most vulnerable pupils.

## Information about the school

This is a larger than average sized primary school situated in the semi-rural town of Norden. The majority of pupils attending the school live locally, but an increasing percentage travel from the nearby town of Rochdale. The percentage of pupils entitled to a free school meal is below the national average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds has increased since the last inspection and now represents nearly a quarter of the school population. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average. The percentage with a statement of special educational need is higher than average. The pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage are in separate Nursery and Reception classes.

This is a community school which provides activities for the local community. It has achieved a number of awards which include; Healthy School Status, Eco Schools, Sport England and the FA Charter Mark. There is onsite childcare provision for pre- and after-school care. This provision was inspected separately and the report for this can be found on the Ofsted website.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

### Main findings

Norden provides a satisfactory quality of education. Some aspects of its work are good. Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Parents say their children enjoy school and behaviour is good. The pupils are very appreciative of the wide range of sporting activities provided by the community manager and are proud of the trophy cabinet displaying the shields won by school teams. However, since the last inspection the standards reached by pupils in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 have declined. Some pupils do not achieve their potential. In 2009, the school's own data from the national tests for 11-year-olds show that standards increased significantly to above average. Pupils' progress, from their average to above average starting points, is now satisfactory overall and early indications are that the school has arrested the decline.

Inspectors observed a range of lessons across the curriculum. Most were good and a small proportion were satisfactory. Information about pupils' progress is used effectively. However, staff do not always capture what pupils have learnt during the lesson effectively enough to plan the next steps in learning. This slows pupils' progress overall. Marking provides praise and encouragement. However, it does not yet give clear guidance to pupils on how to improve their work. The curriculum places an appropriate emphasis on practising the basic skills but it does not make full use of the school's diverse population or local area in subjects such as geography and religious education to promote community cohesion better.

Most pupils who completed the questionnaire for inspectors say they feel safe in school. However, a very small proportion of those who spoke to inspectors indicated that they feel their concerns are not always taken seriously by all staff. This view is shared by a small minority of parents. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and are aware of potential dangers. The pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are confident in school and are making good progress. Staff have excellent relationships with the individual pupils they support. Overall, the school provides a good level of care, guidance and support.

The senior leadership team have secured good improvements in the last academic year. This is linked directly to the ambitious target setting and robust tracking of individual pupils' progress, which is led and managed effectively by the deputy headteacher. The drive for raising standards and improving the outcomes for pupils is shared by all staff and they are working effectively as a team. However, improvement since the last inspection has been held back by the poor quality of school improvement planning. There are inconsistencies in action plans and the quality of self-evaluation is weak. Some statutory documentation is incomplete. The safeguarding of pupils' health, safety

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

and well-being is of a satisfactory quality, but a very small minority of parents report a lack of response from the school to parental concerns. Governors support the school well and provide a good level of challenge. However, their effectiveness is limited by the quality of information they receive from the school. Given the rapid rise in standards, pupils' better achievement and the drive from staff to secure improvement, the school has a satisfactory capacity to sustain improvement and provides satisfactory value for money.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Raise the standards and achievement of pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 by:
  - ensuring that the tracking of individual pupils' progress continues to be developed and monitored assiduously
  - improving pupils' progress in lessons by checking regularly what pupils have understood in order to plan the next steps in their learning
  - improving the marking of pupils' work so that they know how to make progress.
- Improve the curriculum by:
  - using subjects such as geography and religious education to explore the diverse nature of the school community and develop community cohesion.
- Improve the quality of self-evaluation by ensuring that:
  - the priorities for the school are outlined clearly in a plan which focuses on
- improving the academic and personal development outcomes for all pupils
  - action plans are linked to the priorities in the improvement plan and that staff apply the agreed format consistently
  - the governing body is provided with sufficient information to enable them to evaluate the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels in improving outcomes for pupils across the school
  - regular reviews of procedures to protect the health, safety and well-being of children take place and that views from all members of the school community, particularly the pupils, are sought and acted upon
  - all statutory documentation is complete and that the governing body continues to work with the local authority School Improvement Partner to carry out a thorough check of school procedures and management systems.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

Children begin school with levels of knowledge, skills and understanding that are in line with or slightly above those typical of three- and four-year-olds nationally. They settle

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

quickly into Nursery and Reception and make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Since the last inspection, the standards reached by seven-year-olds in reading, writing and mathematics have been broadly average. However, in 2009 there were improvements and teacher assessments show that this group of pupils achieved above the standard expected for their age and their progress was satisfactory.

The standards reached by 11-year-olds in English, mathematics and science have fallen since the last inspection. This indicates that the progress made by some pupils during their seven years at school has been too slow and not all pupils have achieved as well as they should. However, in 2009 the school's own data show the standards reached by Year 6 in the national tests improved to well above the provisional national average. The progress of this cohort of pupils was good. Staff acknowledge that this better progress needs to be secured across the school. Currently, pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Work in pupils' exercise books shows they are working at levels expected for their age. The progress made by pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good. Pupils who are from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve as well as their peers. Pupils say they enjoy their lessons and are keen to learn. Although the inspection took place in the first few days of a new school year, pupils moved confidently and happily in their classrooms and around the school. They are polite and friendly to visitors and supportive of each other in lessons. Pupils respond well to teachers' questioning and in a Year 5 mathematics lesson were enthusiastically showing what they understood on the interactive white board. Younger pupils were enthused by singing songs and rhymes. The pupils who learn English as an additional language made rapid progress in their pronunciation and understanding of rhyme during the lesson. Where pupils' progress in lessons was slower, it was because too much time was spent on the management of pupils and tasks were insufficiently challenging. As a consequence, pupils did not learn as fast as they are able.

Pupils are keen to adopt healthy lifestyles and know about keeping fit. However, not all pupils choose healthy options. Lunchtimes are full of activity, with large numbers of pupils keen to take part in a wide range of coaching sessions, as well as enjoying the tasty meals provided by the cook. The eco council is active and playground buddies help to make the playground safe. Pupils take responsibility by running a healthy tuck shop, and school sports teams provide good opportunities for pupils to learn how to cooperate with each other. However, not all pupils have an equal opportunity to develop skills that will build their self-esteem. This is because the school does not yet evaluate this aspect of its work carefully enough. Pupils' attendance is average. The school has identified that this is caused by pupils who take holidays in term time.

Overall, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They show respect for one another and know the difference between right and wrong. However, their knowledge of other cultures and faiths is limited by the no better than satisfactory quality of the curriculum.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

### How effective is the provision?

Inspectors visited all classes in the school. Typically, teaching is lively and engages the pupils' interest well. Relationships are good and staff provide a good level of encouragement and support to pupils. Teachers plan their lessons well. However, not all staff check carefully enough what pupils have learnt during the lesson. For example, in a lesson where pupils were asked to use their thumbs to show what they had understood, some of the more timid pupils were not confident enough to do this in view of the teacher or assistant. This means that planning for the next steps in pupils' learning is not always accurate enough. Teachers make good use of the data about pupils' progress. Staff appreciate the regular meetings to discuss how well individual pupils are progressing and what, if any, additional provision needs to be put in place. Staff are unanimous that these meetings, led and managed by the deputy headteacher, have been the key factor in raising pupils' achievement.

All the procedures to care for pupils' welfare are in place. Pupils move sensibly around the school and are aware of those who use walking frames and wheelchairs. Teaching assistants, who are well led and managed, provide an excellent level of care towards individual pupils. Carefully designed and closely monitored programmes of work enable the pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to make good progress.

The curriculum places a good emphasis on the basic skills and pupils have the opportunity to learn a modern foreign language. Lessons observed in English and

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

mathematics show that the basic curriculum is appropriate to pupils' needs. Evidence provided to the inspection team about the curriculum by senior managers was limited. However, information provided by the community manager shows that this partnership enriches the school curriculum. It provides a good range of sporting activities enabling the pupils to achieve well. Some parents commented that religious education is mainly Christian in nature. This was demonstrated by some of the pupils who had little knowledge of other cultures, geography and faiths.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The senior leadership team works together effectively. They provide a clear drive to raise pupils' achievement across the school and expectations are high. The introduction in September 2008 of a more rigorous analysis of pupils' progress by the deputy headteacher has been the key to securing improvement. The impact of this is demonstrated in the higher standards and better progress made by pupils in 2009.

Staff report that they enjoy working at Norden. Relationships are good and the school is a cohesive community. Parents are satisfied with the quality of information they receive from the school though some would appreciate more information on their child's progress and a faster response to parental concerns. The school makes good use of its community status and pupils benefit from the wide range of activities and enhanced facilities, such as the public library and the community police office on site. Parents appreciate the before- and after-school care clubs and pupils benefit from being able to take part in extra-curricular activities. However, the school has not developed partnerships outside its own community to improve the quality of education it provides. The school recognises that it is a diverse community; however, it does not evaluate the impact of its work against the progress and well-being of different groups of pupils within the school, so its procedures for promoting equality of opportunity can be no better than satisfactory.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors are limited in their ability to hold the school to account because of the poor quality of information provided by the school. Key documents which support school improvement were either incomplete or missing at the time of inspection, including some which are statutory. Governors are working well in partnership with the local authority School Improvement Partner to tackle these issues.



**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

Children start Nursery and Reception with skills and abilities that are typical and slightly above those of three- and four-year-olds nationally. Although the children had only been in school a few days at the time of the inspection, they had already settled well and were happy and confident to use all the areas of learning, both indoor and outdoor available to them. Children make good progress overall and reach levels that are above those typical of five-year-olds nationally.

Staff are imaginative in the activities they plan, making good use of assessment information and observation. During the inspection, children were heard repeating the class routines as part of their play. Relationships are good and staff manage the different personalities of the children well. The curriculum is appropriate, with a good balance between planned and child-led activities. An appropriate emphasis is placed on learning songs and rhymes, which helps those children who are learning English to make good progress. The arrangements for safeguarding the health, safety and well-being of the children are good. Children's welfare is promoted well and staff are sensitive to children's differing needs.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed. Parents report that arrangements for children starting school in Nursery and Reception are good. Staff are welcoming and effective at increasing children's confidence. Children are well prepared for the next stage in their education in all aspects of their learning.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**  
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

The inspection team received a relatively small response from parents and carers. They were generally very supportive of the school. Thirty nine per cent of the questionnaires received had additional comments. Of the 13% which were positive, typical comments include: the caring approach of teaching staff, the good behaviour of pupils, the clubs and community spirit, and the welcoming attitude of the school. Typical concerns include: lack of information regarding individual pupils' progress and targets, lack of communication and involvement with parents, lack of response to parental concerns, site security and meeting pupils at the end of the day, parking and access for disabled pupils, lack of challenge in the curriculum for more able pupils, awareness of the multicultural nature of the school population in designing the curriculum and the fall in academic standards.

Where inspectors agree with parents this appears in the main body of the report.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Norden Community Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 67 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 411 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	79	56	58	41	4	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	84	59	55	39	1	1	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	59	42	66	46	14	10	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	50	35	72	51	15	11	2	1
The teaching is good at this school	62	44	69	49	8	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	54	38	66	47	17	12	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	74	52	64	45	0	0	2	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	43	32	82	60	2	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	57	40	66	47	15	11	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	45	32	83	60	8	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	35	25	83	60	15	11	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	62	44	68	48	9	6	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	73	52	55	39	9	6	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
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.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



Inspection of Norden Community Primary School, Rochdale. OL12 7RQ

You may remember that I visited your school recently, with three other inspectors, to carry out an inspection. Thank you for talking to us and sharing information about your school and for completing the questionnaire. This letter is to explain to you what we found.

Your school provides you with a satisfactory education. This means that although it does some things well, there are other things that it needs to improve. We were impressed by the number of sparkling sports trophies you have won. Your community manager makes sure that you are provided with lots of interesting activities to keep you busy at lunchtimes and after school. The standards you achieve in your work improved in 2009 and we were pleased to see you working hard in all your lessons. Your behaviour is good and most of you told us that you enjoy school.

There are some things that your school could do better. We have asked your school to improve the following:

the standards that you reach in Key Stage 1 and 2 in English, mathematics and science  
the curriculum in religious education and geography so that you learn more about different cultures and faiths

the way the school checks on how well it is doing and plans to improve your learning.

Thank you for talking to us while we ate the delicious lunches provided by the cook and making us feel welcome. One of the inspectors was very pleased to be given a sticker! We wish you all the best for the future.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**