

Vine Tree Primary School

Inspection report

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 111143 |
| Local Authority | Cheshire East |
| Inspection number | 337627 |
| Inspection dates | 5–6 May 2010 |
| Reporting inspector | Nigel Cromey-Hawke |

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

| | |
|--|---|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 5–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 206 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mrs Elizabeth Warham |
| Headteacher | Mr Darren Locke |
| Date of previous school inspection | 22 February 2007 |
| School address | Danebank Avenue Crewe Cheshire CW2 8AD |
| Telephone number | 01270 661526 |
| Fax number | 01270 650367 |
| Email address | head@vinetree.cheshire.sch.uk |

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------|
| Age group | 5–11 |
| Inspection dates | 5–6 May 2010 |
| Inspection number | 337627 |

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.

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

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 11 lessons, observing seven teachers and all classes. They also held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils, and parents and carers. They observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation, including development planning, self-evaluation records, policies and performance data. Questionnaires from 46 parents and carers, 100 pupils and 14 staff were scrutinised.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- how well established and effective assessment and target-setting practices are to support good progress and learning
- how well the curriculum supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- given recent changes, how well focused and cohesive staff are in driving the school forward.

Information about the school

This is a primary school of average size. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage and there are very few who speak English as an additional language. The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The proportion eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The school has a wide variety of awards, including Healthy Schools and Activemark. The school has undergone major staffing changes since the last inspection, resulting in significant breaks in the continuity of learning for some classes. It has also undergone a complete change in its senior leadership over the last year.

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

Vine Tree Primary is a satisfactory school. It has some good features. One parent, reflecting a typical view, commented, 'I am very happy to send my child to Vine Tree. It has a brilliant atmosphere and all the teachers are very approachable.'

Recent challenges facing the school over staffing are being overcome and it is moving forward under the talented leadership of the new headteacher, staff and governors. In the recently restructured Early Years Foundation Stage, children make a sound start to their learning as a result of the satisfactory teaching, curriculum, and leadership and management. Assessment practice here remains inconsistent, however. Pupils' progress through Key Stages 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall and good in some areas, notably English and mathematics. Attainment by the time pupils leave in Year 6 is broadly average, and for some above average, but progress is variable in other year groups due to the previous staffing turnover. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory and, in some cases, good progress, as a result of the good support they receive.

Teaching is satisfactory, with some that is good. Some activities do not appropriately match pupils' needs, especially the more able, and boys' writing skills remain underdeveloped. The curriculum, which is satisfactory, has been improved to address past weaknesses in science. There are strengths in the provision for English and mathematics and in the use of the arts and sport to enliven learning. There is also an effective programme of personal, social and health education that promotes pupils' personal development well. The school recognises that some of its plans to develop community cohesion are not yet fully implemented and that pupils' understanding of the cultural diversity of the modern world is relatively weak. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall.

Pupils enjoy their time in school, behaviour is good and pupils say they feel safe and valued. There is a very positive atmosphere in the school, created by the good care, guidance and support provided. There is a strong focus upon pupils' health and welfare. Many of the governing body are newly in place and they are supporting the school with increasing effectiveness and rigour. Through its developing self-evaluation, the school has a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses and appropriate plans are in place to respond to them. As such, the school's capacity for sustained improvement is satisfactory.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the attainment and progress of all groups of pupils by improving the quality of

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

teaching and learning and particularly by:

- ensuring a better match of activities in lessons to pupils' needs, especially the more able
- continuing to develop writing skills, especially for boys
- Broaden pupils' understanding of and contact with the richness of the communities in the wider world
- Further develop assessment practices, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage, in order to track children's progress more accurately, to inform planning and to shape teaching and learning.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before the next section 5 inspection.

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

Achievement is satisfactory and attainment is broadly average. Learning is satisfactory in the majority of lessons and good in some. Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning and engage with it well as a result of the satisfactory and sometimes good teaching. Pupils acquire knowledge, develop understanding and learn and practise their skills satisfactorily. They are keen to succeed, mostly apply themselves well in lessons and often work at a good pace when provided with appropriate tasks and guidance. Attainment by the time pupils leave in Year 6 is broadly average, although in 2009 it reached high levels in English. Attainment is variable across year groups, reflecting differences in the quality of teaching and the legacy of a lack of continuity caused by previous staffing disruptions. The school's new leadership team is tackling this vigorously and most groups of pupils are now on track to meet, and some cases to exceed, the challenging targets the school has set. Weaknesses remain in some areas of boys' attainment, in writing and in achievement for the more able. Given pupils' starting points, this represents satisfactory, and in some cases, good progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory, and in some instances, good progress overall, as a result of the good support and guidance they receive.

Pupils clearly enjoy the majority of their learning and their behaviour is good. The school is a warm and harmonious community in which pupils say they feel safe and which they benefit from enormously. They respond by taking on a wide range of responsibilities, for example as members of the active school council, as monitors, whole school team captains and buddies for younger children. Their involvement in the local community is strong. The school places a high priority upon raising pupils' awareness of what it means to lead a healthy lifestyle. Their understanding of this is good, reflecting the school's awards. Attendance for the vast majority is good but satisfactory overall, being held back by the persistent absence of a small number of pupils. Together with the effective promotion of the key skills in language and the satisfactory use of information and communication technology (ICT), this means that pupils are prepared satisfactorily for the next stage in their education.

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 pupils' outcomes

| | |
|---|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 3 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attainment ¹ | 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 | 3 |
| The extent to which pupils feel safe | 2 |
| Pupils' behaviour | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 3 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attendance ¹ | 3 |
| The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 3 |

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is satisfactory. There is an increasing amount that is good. A specific programme to support the development of teaching has been introduced by the new headteacher. It is rapidly recovering lost ground in learning. In the best lessons good planning ensures that appropriate and varied activities are provided and that challenge from the teacher stimulates pupils' interests. Teaching in the older year groups is particularly strong, making good use of paired activities and often involving pupils explaining their learning to each other. New assessment systems have been introduced together with individual targets that pupils say they find useful, although these practices are not used consistently across all classes. Marking and feedback to pupils on their progress is variable, with some that is good. In the satisfactory lessons activities are not as well matched to pupils' needs, too much teacher direction limits the amount of independent learning and some of the more able pupils are insufficiently challenged. The curriculum is satisfactory. It has a clear focus upon literacy and numeracy. Previous weaknesses in science are being addressed through better curriculum planning. The curriculum is currently under review, with good provision in the arts, music and sport as

¹ 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

a result of effective partnership working with local schools. This promotes pupils' enjoyment and personal development well. The provision of extra-curricular activities is good and well supported by pupils. The school is aware from its own self-evaluation that coverage of different cultures is more limited within the curriculum and is pursuing an international school award. Pupils' understanding of the diversity of the world is underdeveloped at present.

The quality of care, guidance and support is good, bringing about significant improvements in attitudes and relationships for many of its pupils. Transition arrangements for pupils joining and leaving the school are good and the school works well with a wide range of agencies to support vulnerable pupils in their learning. Individual education plans reflect clear and appropriate strategies for supporting these pupils' needs. Teaching assistants are often very effective in their support of learning. The work of the learning mentor is especially valued by pupils, staff, and parents and carers and provides very good support for pupils' attendance and their personal and learning needs.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The recently appointed headteacher has a clear vision for the school and is driving improvement forward with determination and great skill. He communicates this ambition well to staff, parents and carers, and to pupils and this energy is beginning to be embedded at other levels in the school. Staffing has been largely consolidated. Subject leaders are taking an increasing part in monitoring their areas and accurate self-evaluation is providing the school with a good understanding of its strengths and areas that need development. Good plans are in place to address improvement. Safeguarding procedures are good, especially within the areas of computer safety and in the networking of local schools that provides alerts relating to safety in the community. The promotion of equal opportunities is satisfactory: all groups generally make satisfactory or better progress, reflecting the variable teaching provision. Partnerships with local schools and providers are good, contributing well to curriculum areas the school could not provide alone. Engagement with parents and carers is good, with many instances of changed school practices in response to communication with them. Community cohesion is good at school and local level. However, other than the effective link with North America, the school recognises that many of its planned actions have yet

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

to be fully realised and pupils' understanding of and contact with the wider world is satisfactory rather than good. Governance is satisfactory, with the recently reshaped governing body taking an increasing role in challenging and supporting the school's work.

These are the grades for leadership and management

| | |
|--|----------|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 3 |
| Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers | 2 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination | 3 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion | 3 |
| The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money | 3 |

Early Years Foundation Stage

Well thought out induction arrangements, including home visits, ensure that children and their parents and carers receive a warm welcome to the school. Children settle happily in the safe environment. The knowledge, understanding and skills that children enter the Reception class with varies widely from year to year, but overall is broadly typical for their age. Progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory, with children reaching broadly expected levels in their early learning goals by the time they leave. Progress in personal and physical development is good, with children able to play and work together well. Teachers communicate regularly with parents and carers and are well aware of children's interests. Welfare provision and care are good. Teaching is satisfactory, with a suitable range of practical activities that engage children's interests. There is a satisfactory balance of activities that children choose for themselves and those that are teacher-directed. The outdoor area is well resourced and used. Leadership and management are satisfactory, with staff training up to date and all safeguarding requirements met. Staffing has changed significantly since the last inspection and the school recognises that some of its practices, such as assessment, are not used consistently. As a result, staff understanding of some children's progress and

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

needs is weaker and planning for improvement in teaching and learning is not always as well-informed as it could

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

| | |
|--|----------|
| Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |
| The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers who returned the questionnaires are very happy with most aspects of the school and support inspectors' findings. The vast majority consider that the school provides a safe and caring environment for their children, and that it is well led and managed. Some commented very positively on the impact of changes introduced recently.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Vine Tree 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 46 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 206 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 30 | 65 | 16 | 35 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 32 | 70 | 14 | 30 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress | 23 | 50 | 21 | 46 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 29 | 63 | 13 | 28 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 2 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 26 | 57 | 19 | 41 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 24 | 52 | 18 | 39 | 3 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 25 | 54 | 20 | 43 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| 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) | 18 | 39 | 24 | 52 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 23 | 50 | 21 | 46 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 14 | 30 | 27 | 59 | 3 | 7 | 1 | 2 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 20 | 43 | 23 | 50 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 26 | 57 | 18 | 39 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 31 | 67 | 14 | 30 | 1 | 2 | 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

| Type of school | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) | | | |
|----------------------|---|------|--------------|------------|
| | Outstanding | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
| Nursery schools | 51 | 45 | 0 | 4 |
| Primary schools | 6 | 41 | 42 | 10 |
| Secondary schools | 8 | 34 | 44 | 14 |
| Sixth forms | 10 | 37 | 50 | 3 |
| Special schools | 32 | 38 | 25 | 5 |
| Pupil referral units | 12 | 43 | 31 | 14 |
| All schools | 9 | 40 | 40 | 10 |

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support. |
| 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.



7 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Vine Tree Primary School, Crewe, CW2 8AD

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave me and the team when we inspected your school recently. You were very friendly, polite and enthusiastic about what you do. You told us a lot of interesting things about your school and you are clearly very proud of it.

Vine Tree is a satisfactory school. The new headteacher, staff and governors are helping the school to improve. You get a satisfactory start to your learning in the Reception classes and this continues throughout the school, so that you reach broadly the same standards as other children your age by the time you leave in Year 6. In English and mathematics some of you do better. The teaching is satisfactory, with some that is good. You say you enjoy school and feel safe and valued because of how well you are looked after. Your behaviour is good. Well done! Your attendance is satisfactory but improving. The range of subjects you take is satisfactory, with a good focus upon the important areas of English and mathematics. Your information and communication technology skills are developing well. I have asked your headteacher to consider the following things that will help the school improve.

- Make sure that all your lessons are very effective and as good as the best.
- Help you to understand the cultures and communities of the wider world and to increase your contact with them.
- For staff in Reception to use what they know about how well children are getting on to plan activities that will help them to learn as well as possible.

You can help by telling your teachers how best you learn and improving your attendance even further.

I wish you the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Dr Nigel Cromey-Hawke

Lead Inspector

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. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.