

Murdishaw West Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111174
Local Authority	Halton
Inspection number	337633
Inspection dates	10–11 December 2009
Reporting inspector	John Dunne

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	171
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cllr John Stockton
Headteacher	Mr Christopher Bayne
Date of previous school inspection	7 September 2006
School address	Barnfield Avenue Murdishaw Runcorn WA7 6EP
Telephone number	01928 711254
Fax number	01928 710655
Email address	head.murdishawwest@halton.gov.uk

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	10–11 December 2009
Inspection number	337633

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 2009

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 13 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at assessment data, individual education and behaviour plans, case studies and monitoring and evaluation documents. Forty-eight parental questionnaires were analysed. Fifteen staff questionnaires and 92 pupil questionnaires were also analysed.

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

- the progress pupils are making and whether it could be better
- the effectiveness of measures put in place by the school to improve behaviour
- the capacity of leaders and managers at all levels to secure recent improvements in attainment
- pupils' understanding of diversity within the community and how well the school is promoting an understanding of groups beyond the immediate locality.

Information about the school

The school is smaller than average. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is approximately three times the national average. Most pupils are of White British heritage; a small proportion is from minority ethnic groups and none are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than average and is rising. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises a Reception class with continuous access to an open play area. The school is led by an acting headteacher who was appointed recently. The local authority replaced the governing body with an Interim Executive Board in September 2008. There is a separate nursery that is not managed by the school and which is inspected separately. The report can be found on the Ofsted website. The school has gained a number of awards including: Princes Diana Anti – bullying Award, Global Citizenship Award, Activemark and Healthy Schools Award.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

The school provides a good quality of education. It has gone through a period of instability which resulted in the progress dipping and attainment declining to a low level two years ago. Effective steps taken by the acting headteacher, with strong support from the local authority, have reversed this downward trend. Attainment has risen sharply and is now above average. Deterioration in behaviour has been stemmed and it is now good. A structured approach to assessing pupils' progress is being implemented but is not yet used consistently in all classes to support learning. However, the role of middle leaders is not clearly defined and their contribution to monitoring the progress of pupils is not as effective as it needs to be. Nevertheless, most pupils make good progress and achieve well.

The quality of teaching is good. Pupils enjoy school and the wide range of activities in which they get involved. Notable examples were the recent Christmas productions, which were also greatly enjoyed by the local community. Pupils feel safe and secure in this inclusive school and a high degree of attention is paid to ensuring their well-being. Effective teaching assistants, volunteers and others provide carefully tailored support to individuals who have disabilities or difficulties that might impede their learning. Leaders have innovative plans to link with other schools to extend pupils' experiences of a range of cultures. Currently, this area of provision is underdeveloped. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to engage with people from cultural and religious backgrounds not represented in their local community.

The positive changes have been very dependent on the acting headteacher supported by the assistant headteacher and the local authority. Together they have regularly reviewed the action plan for raising attainment to ensure outcomes for pupils improve. The skills of other staff in contributing to the school's management are underdeveloped, although they do contribute to an accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The school's capacity to sustain the improvement is therefore satisfactory.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of middle leaders and managers in monitoring and evaluating the school's performance by:
 - ensuring that their roles are clear and the methods by which they hold others to account are fully embedded
 - ensuring that assessment information is used consistently to monitor the progress of individuals and groups across the school.

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

- Strengthen the impact of teaching and learning by using assessment information in all classes to give precise support to all pupils.
- Improve pupils' understanding of the issues relating to living in a modern multicultural society by:
 - providing greater opportunities for them to engage with people from a wider range of cultures more regularly.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils behave well and show that they are keen to learn. In the majority of lessons, there is a sense of enjoyment and enthusiasm. Pupils' ability to work collaboratively and independently is well developed. They have good levels of concentration and complete challenging tasks diligently. In the small number of lessons where teaching is less effective, teaching lacks pace and pupils' concentration dips. Children enter Reception with skills lower than expected for their age and make good progress. On leaving Reception they reach levels which are in line with those expected. Due to good teaching, good progress has developed recently throughout Years 1 to 6. In 2009, attainment by the end of Year 6 was above the national average. All groups of pupils including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities currently achieve well.

Pupils enjoy their lessons. This is a major contributor to their good achievement. Pupils respond very well to the school's caring ethos that values each as an individual. They are taught well about recognising dangerous situations, including dangers relating to new technologies. They can explain the benefits of exercise and healthy eating. Pupils engage well with the opportunities to take responsibility and this contributes positively to their development as responsible young learners. Lessons and assemblies are effective in exploiting pupils' inquisitiveness, curiosity and wonder of the world. Pupils demonstrate good social skills and moral understanding in the way that they show consideration for others. Their understanding of people from different backgrounds, religions and cultures is not sufficiently developed because there are few opportunities for pupils to engage with culturally diverse communities. Pupils' attendance has improved and is now broadly average.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Teachers have a secure subject knowledge. Strong emphasis is placed on the basic skills in lessons. In most lessons teachers incorporate an interesting array of activities to keep pupils motivated and match different learning styles. In one outstanding science lesson, pupils were set complex practical investigations about electrical circuits and made rapid gains in learning. Questioning is often used skilfully to probe for meaning and identify and correct misconceptions. Teachers and pupils use new technology well to enhance learning. Teachers manage behaviour particularly well in lessons. In the small number of weaker lessons, teaching lacks pace and pupils' progress dips. Teaching assistants and volunteers make a significant contribution to the good quality of teaching and learning. Assessment information is generally used well to direct support for pupils but some systems for assessing pupils' progress are relatively new and not consistently used in all classes to further learning.

The curriculum delivers good outcomes because it is well planned and enrichment activities enliven learning. One particularly good example was seen when pupils were enthralled with the fascinating way a local businessman immersed them in the world of science and technology. Provision for science, information and communication technology, design and technology, and music is strong and, as a result, pupils achieve particularly well in those subjects. The delight on pupils' faces as they confidently sang songs from their Christmas plays was lovely to see.

Due to good care guidance and support and effective partnerships with parents, carers and a wide range of external agencies, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with identified barriers to learning make good progress both

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

academically and in their personal development. The school is working hard to improve attendance with some recent success.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The acting headteacher is ambitious for the school and communicates high expectations to staff, pupils and parents. Staff share the vision for improvement and work hard to implement it. Since taking up the appointment in January 2009 he has led the successful drive to improve behaviour, attainment, teaching and learning and attendance. The school is successfully managing a deficit budget. Much has been achieved in a short period but there has not been time to ensure that the leaders at all levels are fully effective in influencing improvements and monitoring the impact of the many new measures implemented. Middle leaders are committed but their role is only beginning to develop. There is still work to be done on improving their effectiveness in using assessment to gather accurate information about pupils' progress and using it to set targets for the whole school. Members of the Interim Executive Board know the strengths and weaknesses of the school, understand well the challenges it faces and are instrumental in setting and monitoring appropriate priorities for improvement.

Parents and carers are kept well informed about their children's learning. Many parents and carers expressed a high degree of confidence in the direction that the school is taking. Typical comments include, 'The new headteacher has made a huge difference to this school bringing discipline and excitement to learning.'

The school is proactive in encouraging pupils to appreciate similarities and differences within the community it serves, ensuring that there is no room for discrimination. Safeguarding procedures are rigorous and at the time of the inspection they met requirements. Pupils understand well how to keep safe including when using new technologies The school is effectively promoting community cohesion within the school and the neighbouring community but has had limited impact in promoting it more widely.

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	2

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	
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	2
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	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good gains in learning and development from entering Reception at levels below those expected for their age. They thoroughly enjoy the exciting range of activities provided across all areas of learning. They quickly settle into their new environment and become curious, independent learners. Children's understanding of how to stay safe and healthy is a strong feature of their development. Children are able to engage in collaborative play early on and all share and take turns well. By the end of Reception, children make good progress to reach levels expected for their age.

Adults involve parents in children's learning and, as a result, they are well informed about their children's progress and many become effective partners in learning. This positive partnership contributes well to children's good progress.

Effective teamwork ensures that children's learning and development are well managed. Assessment and planning go hand in hand so that learning is tailored to children's individual needs. Outdoor learning experiences are effective in promoting all areas of learning. Teaching is always at least good. This good provision underpins children's good progress. The recently appointed Reception teacher has had a significantly positive impact. Consequently, a committed team are well led and managed. Staff are highly motivated and demonstrate drive and ambition for improving standards of learning and welfare.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

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

Views of parents and carers

The large majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire feel that overall they are happy with their child's experience at school. This accurately reflects what inspectors found. A very small minority of parents felt that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour or that their children are not making sufficient progress. This is not the finding of the inspection which judges behaviour to be good and well managed.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Murdishaw West 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 48 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 171 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	25	52	20	42	2	4	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	21	44	24	50	3	6	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	22	46	24	50	2	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	19	40	20	42	8	17	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	17	35	30	63	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	14	29	30	63	3	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	17	35	26	54	5	10	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)	16	33	26	54	6	13	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	16	33	26	54	5	10	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	11	23	27	56	6	13	3	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	11	23	31	65	1	2	3	6
The school is led and managed effectively	18	38	28	58	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	20	42	26	54	1	2	1	2

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"> ■ 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.



14 December 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Murdishaw West Community Primary School, Runcorn WA7 6EP

I am writing on behalf of the inspectors who visited to inspect your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you all and seeing the good progress that you are making. Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us. We have judged that yours is a good school which is improving quickly.

You get off to a good start in Reception and make equally good progress throughout Years 1 to 6. We were impressed with the quality of your singing, your science and technology work and how well you use computers. Your teachers make your lessons interesting and you enjoy them.

Your school is putting on more extra activities and trips for you and you appreciate this. We were particularly pleased with how many of you have improved the way you behave and nearly all of you are growing up to be polite, very sensible young people. Everyone in the school cares for you and looks after you well. Adults in the school are good at giving extra help to those of you that need it.

Your headteacher and staff are doing an effective job. We have agreed with school on these areas which will make your school even better.

- To make sure that all school leaders play a full part in checking how well the school is doing.
- Make sure assessment information is used well in all classes to help you get the most out of your learning.
- To give you more chances to meet people from different cultures so that you get a better understanding of areas which are different from where you live.

All the best for the future!

Yours sincerely

John Dunne

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.