

# Locking Stumps Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	111204
<b>Local Authority</b>	Warrington
<b>Inspection number</b>	337639
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 September 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Peter Jones

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

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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 of pupils on the school roll</b>	299
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Ruth Agnew
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr John Littler
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 July 2007
<b>School address</b>	Glover Road Birchwood Warrington WA3 7PH
<b>Telephone number</b>	01925 819076
<b>Fax number</b>	01925 838863
<b>Email address</b>	lockingstumps_primary@warrington.gov.uk

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

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 16 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including the school improvement plan, records of pupils' progress and attainment, monitoring and evaluation documents and pupils' work. They analysed 152 questionnaires returned from parents and carers.

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

- the quality of pupils' standards and achievement, taking into account pupils' performance over the last three years and the performance of pupils currently in school
- the effectiveness of teaching and assessment in helping all pupils to understand their strengths and weaknesses and make improvement
- outcomes for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, the quality of spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, and the provision for the future economic well-being of all pupils
- the overall quality of teaching and learning and how this is checked and improved by the school
- the quality of the school's self-evaluation and how governors and other stakeholders effectively contribute to the process.

## Information about the school

Most of the pupils attending this larger than average-sized school in a residential area are of White British heritage from a variety of social and economic backgrounds. The school's numbers have risen by around 23% since the previous inspection in 2007. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is average and the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. Early Years Foundation Stage provision is provided in the school's two Reception classes. The school also offers a number of extended services through a partnership with two private nurseries on the school site and through its breakfast and after-school clubs run by a private provider. The school holds the Activemark and Basic Skills awards and has Healthy Schools status.

**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?**

**1**

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

**1**

## Main findings

Locking Stumps is an outstanding school. It has built well upon its performance since the last inspection. It has many significant strengths, including outstanding care, guidance and support, curriculum, and leadership and management that enable pupils to succeed academically and personally.

Inspectors were impressed by the exceptional quality of the relationships that exist between all members of the school community. These are the core of the school's sustained success. Pupils are extremely polite. They offer a cheerful welcome to visitors and show genuine care and consideration towards each other in lessons and on the playgrounds. Pupils with additional needs receive further appropriate support that helps them participate fully in school life. As a result, pupils feel happy and secure. Behaviour is exemplary at all times. Pupils say that bullying is extremely rare and quickly dealt with, often by themselves. They thoroughly enjoy all that the school offers and attendance is consistently well above national averages. All pupils are encouraged to take on responsibilities from an early age and there is a tradition of service to the school and to the wider community. Pupils grow into confident, articulate and tolerant individuals as they move through school. Indeed, pupils who have joined the school at different times lacking in motivation or self-esteem have seen their attitudes transformed by their experiences at Locking Stumps.

Children progress well in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This is the result of the good teaching children receive and the outstanding improvements made to the learning areas. In the rest of the school, the consistently good teaching and the school's outstanding curriculum ensure that pupils' overall achievement is outstanding. As a result, the standards reached by pupils leaving Year 6 are significantly above the national average. Teachers strive to improve their effectiveness and the match of work to the age and ability of individual pupils is generally very good. It is not always as effective in classes in Key Stage 1 and, as a result, progress is not as high for some pupils. Pupils are given excellent opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills and are encouraged to work collaboratively and independently. Pupils benefit from outstanding care, guidance and support. This ensures that as well as receiving any additional or specialist help they may require, they are provided with excellent advice about the next steps in their learning.

The effectiveness of the school's leadership and management is outstanding. The headteacher's view that there is always room for improvement is central to the school's work. There is a strong partnership between all members of the school community and a shared understanding that the school's consistent excellence needs hard work and vigilance if it is to be maintained. The quality of the school's strategic planning, informed

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by its rigorous self-evaluation, is of the highest calibre. The dynamic governing body makes an exceptional contribution to the school's performance. The school has demonstrated consistent success and has further refined its ability to analyse and respond effectively to factors identified by its powerful self-evaluation arrangements. As a result, it has outstanding capacity for sustained improvement.

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

- Ensure that assessment information gathered in Key Stage 1 is used more effectively to raise standards and achievement by:
  - matching the work set more closely to the needs and abilities of pupils.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****1**

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make outstanding progress. They respond well to the challenging and varied work provided in lessons. Pupils develop high concentration levels at a young age and learning is their priority. Progress is best in those lessons that carefully match tasks to pupils' age and ability and use strategies that ensure that pupils add to their existing skills and knowledge.

Pupils begin Year 1 with skills and abilities that are slightly above those expected of five-year-olds. They make good progress to reach standards in reading, writing and mathematics that are above national averages at the end of Key Stage 1. Since the last inspection, the trend in standards at the end of Key Stage 2 has been high, with outstanding progress maintained. Standards in national tests fell in 2008, as the cohort contained an unusually high number of pupils with additional needs, but these pupils still made outstanding progress in Key Stage 2. Standards in English, mathematics and science recovered very strongly in the 2009 tests to match the previous high levels. The inspection found that pupils currently in school are on schedule to reach the challenging targets that the school has set for them.

The school's high expectations and its determination to provide pupils with stimulating varied and exciting challenges have had a very positive effect on their personal development. Pupils are extremely proud of their school and contribute immensely to its success. The large, highly active school council typifies the energy and enterprise that is a hallmark of pupils' personal development. During the inspection its members led and presented a highly professional presentation to the whole school describing their roles and responsibilities. This level of skill and confidence is par for the course at Locking Stumps. This is largely the result of the school's outstandingly successful programmes and partnerships with organisations and individuals in its immediate and local communities. The school council presentation also featured singing of the highest standard from all pupils and highlighted the talents of the superb school choir. The impact of the school's enrichment opportunities, together with the very high standards in numeracy and literacy, mean that pupils are extremely well prepared for success in later life. Pupils show excellent awareness of the need to stay healthy and take exercise.

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They have excellent moral and social awareness and understanding of different beliefs, customs and cultures. The well-developed relationship with the local church enhances the spiritual development of all pupils.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

### How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is good with some outstanding features. Teachers create a stimulating learning environment, have good subject knowledge and plan lessons well. These aspects contribute significantly to the good progress pupils make. Assessment is used well to move pupils forward but there are some inconsistencies in its use in some classes in Key Stage 1. As a result, progress rates for some pupils are not as high. Support staff are well deployed and teamwork is extremely effective. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive sensitive and expert support that ensures that they make the same good progress as other pupils. The successful learning is built upon pupils' excellent behaviour and the outstanding quality of the relationships that exist in the school. Staff have high expectations of work and behaviour and most lessons are well paced and appropriately challenging. Pupils work hard in the stimulating

<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.

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lessons. They are motivated and engaged by a variety of appropriate teaching strategies that make effective use of a range of resources, including computers and electronic whiteboards. Pupils thrive on the opportunities provided to develop their independent working skills that characterise much of the teaching. Pupils are given very good advice about how they can improve their work and are becoming increasingly skilled in assessing their own learning.

The excellent curriculum underpins pupils' outstanding achievement and personal development. The strong links made between different subjects add an extra dimension of interest and relevance to lessons and pupils say that learning is fun and exciting as a result. There is a rich variety of opportunities for all pupils to extend their skills and experiences through participation in educational visits and the many extra-curricular clubs that the school provides. The school has forged many partnerships, including those with its local high school and church, the town council and the local rugby league team, as well as international links with a South African school. These have made an exceptionally positive impact on all aspects of pupils' learning and development.

Pupils are cared for extremely well in this inclusive, tight-knit community. The care that staff and older pupils show towards each other means they act as excellent role models for the youngest pupils. The school works well with families and many outside agencies to support all pupils, including those with additional learning needs or in challenging circumstances.

*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	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher, his senior leadership team and the school's governors work tirelessly and successfully to give pupils the very best. Their vision of continual improvement is shared by parents and carers, and the pupils themselves. The school has responded extremely well to the demands on its space and resources caused by the significant increase in the number of pupils since the last inspection. The culture of continuous self-evaluation among staff and governors means that the school's effectiveness is rigorously checked with the aim of raising standards and improving personal development. This is demonstrated by the recent review of assessment arrangements across the school that resulted in further improvements in tracking pupils' progress towards challenging targets. All staff are keen to take advantage of a comprehensive programme of professional development so as to improve their knowledge and expertise

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for the benefit of pupils. The school's promotion of equal opportunities and the way it tackles discrimination is outstanding. It is careful to ensure that all its pupils benefit as much as possible from the variety of experiences it provides. The school's steps to safeguard its pupils are excellent and meet current local and national requirements. The promotion of community cohesion is very strong at local and global levels. The school is aware of the need to develop national links with individuals and organisations that reflect a wider range of cultures and backgrounds. The excellent governors maintain close links with the school. They use their considerable skills and experience to support the school and also provide the level of challenge to ensure that it maintains and builds upon its effectiveness. The school uses its resources to enhance provision and to deliver high-quality outcomes for its pupils. As such, it provides outstanding value for money.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<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>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>1</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good and improving rapidly. Children receive a good start to their education and progress well. In previous years, children's skills and knowledge were below those expected for their age. Assessments indicate that this has changed in 2009 with children broadly in line with age-related expectations on entry to the school. By the end of Reception, they attain slightly above expected levels in all areas of their learning, most notably in their language skills and personal development. Since the last inspection, the school has made significant improvements to the indoor and outdoor learning environment, which is now outstanding. As a result, children have access to a wider range of experiences but it is too soon to see the impact



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of this improvement in terms of children's progress. Teaching is good and there is a good balance of teacher-led and child-initiated activities. These are well planned and purposeful and there are opportunities for children to explore and develop their ideas. For example, in one activity a group of boys successfully constructed a series of ramps out of bamboo guttering in order to roll a ball into a basket some distance away. Consequently, they worked with enthusiasm and sustained concentration. Leadership and management are good. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader has a clear vision of how to develop provision further and how to make it outstanding. She has ensured that all the welfare requirements are met and that children's progress is monitored closely. Staff have established excellent relationships with parents and carers and with outside agencies. These relationships contribute to the high-quality care that children receive.

*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 overwhelming majority of questionnaires returned by parents and carers were positive. Many parents and carers took the time to add comments such as, 'I have recommended this school to others and would do so again.' A very few raised concerns, for example about safety. These issues were investigated during the inspection and were very satisfactorily explained by the school.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Locking Stumps 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 152 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 299 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	216	76	67	23	2	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	237	83	49	17	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	181	63	102	36	2	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	190	66	93	33	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	221	78	61	21	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	199	70	81	28	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	199	70	84	29	0	0	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)	197	70	78	28	2	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	192	68	87	31	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	185	65	91	32	4	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	169	60	108	38	3	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	235	82	48	17	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	236	82	49	17	0	0	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.**



I am writing to thank you for being friendly and helpful when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed our visit very much. I would like to share with you what we found out.

You go to an outstanding school. You enjoy working very hard to reach high standards at the end of Year 6. The staff really want you to do as well as possible and they look after you and give you excellent advice about how to improve your work.

We were tremendously impressed with your behaviour and kindness towards your teachers and each other. We liked the bonds and friendships you have made with your community and with children in South Africa.

You told us that you feel very safe in school. You like to stay healthy and keep fit. You also told us how much you enjoy your lessons and the great variety of activities, visits and visitors that your school organises, particularly in relation to sport, music, drama and business. We will always remember your beautiful singing in assembly, led by your superb choir. Your school council does a fantastic job for you and has brought much new equipment into school. It is involved in many projects, such as working with the local council to find new uses for a run-down skateboard park.

We have asked your school to do something to make your learning even better.

- Make sure that those pupils in classes in Key Stage 1 always make the best progress by always being given work suitable to their age and ability.

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