

Ormskirk Asmall Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119314
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	339405
Inspection dates	24–25 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Marie Cordey

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	108
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Jim Riley
Headteacher	Mrs Brenda Golds
Date of previous school inspection	5 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited six lessons, and held meetings with the chair of governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation, including the school's updated self-evaluation evidence, the school improvement plan, and internal and external monitoring reports about the school's work. They also analysed the 27 questionnaires returned by parents and carers and those completed by pupils and staff.

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

- current evidence of pupils' attainment and achievement, especially in mathematics and for the more able pupils
- the extent to which pupils understand how well they are doing and how they can move their learning forward
- the rigour and effectiveness of leadership and management in improving the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes
- evidence to support apparent strengths of the school, especially in pupils' personal development and the quality of care, guidance and support.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average school. Fewer pupils than average are known to be entitled to free school meals. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The school has gained a number of awards including Healthy Schools and the Activemark for its sports provision. Staffing is now more stable, following the departure for promotion of two members of staff.

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

This is a satisfactory school with a number of good features which are reflected in the care and positive personal development of pupils. Behaviour is good throughout the school and pupils are very courteous and polite. This helps the school to be a happy place where each child is known by all staff. Parents and carers value the school highly and make comments such as, 'One of the things that is special about this school is the way it makes every child feel unique.' Pupils agree and their comments include: 'It is so easy to make friends here,' and 'The teachers do a good job and the pupils are very kind.' Pupils are committed to living a healthy lifestyle thanks to a focus placed by the school and parents and carers on healthy eating, and pupils enjoy the wide range of sporting opportunities that the school provides. The school provides good care, support and guidance to all its pupils, particularly those who have significant barriers to their learning.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make satisfactory progress from their broadly average starting points. Attainment is broadly average overall and above average in reading. The school has recognised that below average standards in mathematics and the achievement of the more able pupils in all subjects need to improve. Leaders and the School Improvement Partner have recently put in place a number of strategies to address these issues. These include more sharply focused lesson planning based on each individual's ability and progress, and higher expectations of pupils' performance. Although it is too early to judge the full effect of these actions, there have been some resulting improvements in the quality of teaching and in pupils' progress. Pupils have improved their attainment in reading and developed their speaking skills through a creative and exciting reading programme but there are still some instances where the most able pupils are not challenged to achieve their best because work is not sufficiently well planned to take account of their needs. Though they are neither consistent nor embedded, the school has satisfactory capacity to sustain these emerging improvements.

The best progress is seen in Key Stage 1 and in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where the teaching quality is mostly good. Close attention is paid to improving pupils' knowledge and understanding through interesting presentations and pupils' involvement in many well-planned activities. In addition, assessment information is used effectively to help plan lessons to match the needs and interests of each individual pupil, as well as to give pupils feedback so that they can learn from their mistakes and improve their work. This is not consistent throughout the school and many pupils are not aware of how well they are doing in their work or precisely what they need to do in order to improve it. Significant staffing turbulence has put a great strain on the school's leaders

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and the monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance has not been rigorous enough to rectify any underachievement. Staffing is now more stable and leaders are unequivocal in their drive to raise attainment for all pupils. This view is shared by all staff who endorse the school's actions and are committed to ensuring that these actions make a difference to pupils' outcomes.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise overall attainment and progress, especially in mathematics and for the more able pupils by:
 - increasing the proportion of good lessons, particularly in mathematics
 - planning lessons that are clearly focused on each individual pupil's aptitudes and interests
 - informing pupils about how well they are doing, as well as what they need to do in order to move their learning forward
 - rigorously monitoring and evaluating the school's work to ensure that swift actions are taken to remedy any underperformance.
- About 40% of the school's 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**

Attainment in English has been broadly average for the last few years. Standards in mathematics are below average. Science has been a high-performing subject over the years, although standards are currently average. A concentration on pupils' speaking and listening skills leads to imaginative and skilled writing which is improving to match standards in reading. Pupils' understanding and skills in mental mathematics and problem solving are weaker, though improving. For instance, in one lesson, pupils devised town plans of Ormskirk closely related to the real town. They used pen and paper, and wooden bricks to apply their mathematical skills and thoroughly enjoyed it. The more adventurous pupils used plastic cones to represent roads and came up with original ideas to ease traffic congestion. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress. The most vulnerable pupils make good progress as a result of the good guidance and support that they receive.

Good supervision and effectively organised activities involve nearly all pupils in physical activities in break and lunchtimes. 'Our school is safe' is a typical comment from pupils. They are knowledgeable about potential dangers and know who to turn to if they are concerned. Their contribution to the school and wider community is good and the school is well regarded in the local area. Pupils make a positive difference to school life through their many opportunities to take on responsibility. Playground leaders are proud of their role, especially when helping younger pupils. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, reflecting their concern for others. They delight in their links with

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schools in Kenya and Spain and enjoy the many opportunities to develop their understanding and awareness of different cultures and backgrounds.

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	2

How effective is the provision?

Strengths in the quality of teaching are evident in good relationships and the use of teaching assistants to support different groups in lessons. Pupils say that they are impatient to 'get going' in these lessons and are very eager to participate. Where teaching is less effective, teachers tend to talk for too long and so pupils are less involved and engaged. There are limited opportunities for pupils to develop and extend their thinking through discussion and by responding to challenging questioning.

The curriculum adequately meets the needs of pupils, including those who are most vulnerable. A strong focus on enrichment gets the approval of parents and carers, and pupils, who relish the depth and range of school lessons, such as the good programme of art and music. Provision for information and communication technology is improving and these resources are used effectively across all subjects. Pupils are independent and confident when using technology and their computer skills have improved because of

¹ 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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the school's effective strategies to broaden the curriculum.

The school works well with outside agencies such as speech and language therapists, educational psychologists and the educational welfare officer to support vulnerable pupils and to improve attendance. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the most of their opportunities because of carefully planned and sensitive intervention groups and individual support. In particular, the good-quality planning and reviews for those pupils who have the greatest need enable them to make good progress.

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?

Leaders, teachers and governors care about their school and are committed to improving standards. More stable staffing, clear direction and improving teaching are beginning to bring about improvements in pupils' attainment. Governors are actively involved in school life and are increasingly challenging the school's performance. Good partnerships, such as those in the 'Ormskirk Cluster' of local schools and with the local authority, make a positive contribution to pupils' academic and personal development. Schools share good practice in teaching and provide helpful support by sharing resources. The school's satisfactory promotion of equality of opportunity is based on respect and value for all people as individuals and the disparities in the attainment of different groups are beginning to narrow. The school's procedures to tackle discrimination are thorough. Safeguarding procedures are rigorous and effective. The promotion of community cohesion is good, especially in the school and local community and its environment. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

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 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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children join the school with skills that are broadly in line with expectations for their age. They settle down well because of the school's good preparation for children's introduction to school life. They make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning and good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Consequently, by the time they leave the Early Years Foundation Stage their skills are broadly in line with those expected for their age.

A broad range of indoor and outdoor activities encourage children to explore and enjoy their learning. They quickly become more skilful in linking sounds and letters and relish playing and learning using role play. Some of the independent activities chosen by children are then led by adults, reducing children's opportunities to explore and develop their own ideas and interests.

Leaders and managers accurately identify the need to involve the whole Early Years Foundation Stage team in planning more activities to stimulate children to think for themselves and to reflect each child's interests. Teaching is satisfactory, overall, and includes good teaching, especially when stimulating story reading and exciting presentations motivate children to learn. Children are well cared for, and welfare, health and safety requirements are fully met.

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

The large majority of parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire are happy with the school's provision. All parents and carers agree that their children

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enjoy school. There were a very small number of concerns from parents and carers about how well the school informs them about the progress of their children and about pupils' behaviour. Inspectors agree that pupils are not sufficiently aware of how well they are doing in their work or what their targets are. Pupils' behaviour is good and pupils know who to turn to if they have any concerns.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ormskirk Asmall 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 inspector received 27 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 108 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	17	63	10	37	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	18	67	9	33	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	9	33	14	52	4	15	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	12	44	14	52	1	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	13	48	13	48	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	13	48	10	37	2	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	56	11	41	1	4	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)	11	41	15	56	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	12	44	15	56	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	12	44	11	41	3	11	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	11	41	14	52	1	4	1	4
The school is led and managed effectively	17	63	10	37	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	20	74	7	26	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">■ 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.



27 November 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ormskirk Asmall Primary School, Ormskirk, L39 3PJ

It was delightful to meet you all when we visited your school recently. You gave the inspection team a very warm welcome and we were pleased to listen carefully to what you had to say. You told us about how much you enjoy school, especially the many sporting activities, your art work and your music. You choose to live healthily and we were impressed with your attitudes to keeping fit and eating sensibly. Thank you very much to the pupils who showed us round the school. You gave us lots of helpful and very interesting information. You enjoy the chance to hold positions of responsibility and the playground leaders make a good job of looking after younger pupils. Children in the Reception class settle down well and are made to feel very welcome by you all.

You enjoy your lessons, especially when you have the chance to discuss your thoughts and develop your ideas. This helps you to produce satisfactory work in most subjects. Your work in mathematics and for those of you who are quick to learn has not improved as much as it has in your reading. Well done for your good standards in this subject!

We have asked your school to plan lessons to raise your standards. Some of you are not sure how to make your work better and so we have asked your teachers to let you know about the different ways that you can improve it. We would also like there to be more challenging work for those of you who learn more quickly, as well as more of the good lessons you enjoy so much. Your school leaders are going to check how you are doing and then plan actions to make sure that all of you achieve as well as you can.

Your headteacher and all your staff are working hard to make your school better. You can help by working hard too. I wish you every success for your future.

Yours faithfully

Marie Cordey

Lead inspector

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