



Norley CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 111249
LEA Cheshire
Inspection number 278635
Inspection dates 15 February 2006 to 16 February 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Frank Carruthers CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Hough Lane
School category	Voluntary controlled		Norley
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Frodsham, Cheshire WA6 8JZ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01928 788471
Number on roll	65	Fax number	01928 787554
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs M Stewart
Date of previous inspection	4 October 1999	Headteacher	Mr R Shenton

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an additional inspector.

Description of the school

This small, village school is housed in a modern building set in spacious grounds and situated in an area of above average social and economic advantage. The attainment of children on entry to the Reception year varies from year to year and ranges from average to above average in most years. There are three mixed age classes. No children on the current roll are from minority ethnic heritages and none has learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school has achieved the Artsmark (Gold) Award and will become part of a federation of two schools in September 2006.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. Children achieve well and standards, though they vary according to the nature of the small year groups, are often significantly above average in Year 6. Children achieve best in reading and do well in writing. In mathematics, though standards are generally above average, achievement is satisfactory mainly because skills of problem solving are underdeveloped. The children's personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is excellent. Attendance and punctuality to school are excellent and the children's behaviour is outstanding. The quality of teaching and learning is good and leads to the good progress the children make. However, in mathematics, assessment information does not always translate into teachers' planning and so the needs of the more able children, especially in Key Stage 1, are not catered for. There is a rich curriculum offered and care, guidance and support for children are good. Provision for children in the Reception class is good and the children achieve well. Leadership, management and governance of the school are good. Self-evaluation procedures are thorough and accurate and agree with the inspectors' views. The school has improved well and has the capacity to improve further when it becomes part of a federation of two village schools. The cost of educating a child at the school is above average but is more in line with that found in small rural schools. The school gives good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- In mathematics, improve teachers' planning and their use of assessment information to provide greater challenge for children, in particular the more able. Give greater priority to improving children's skills of solving problems, especially in Key Stage 2.
- Make better use of learning objectives in lessons and more reference to the children's targets in marking their work to further their awareness of what they are aiming for and how well they are doing.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement overall is good. Children make good progress in the Reception year and most reach the early learning goals expected of them in all areas of learning by the end of the year. Some are working above these, especially in personal and social skills and in early reading skills. Progress in Key Stage 1 is very good in reading, good in writing and satisfactory in mathematics. Standards vary from year to year in Year 2 assessments and are significantly better than average in most years. However, too few children reach the higher Level 3 in mathematics and this is because information on how well children are doing is not used enough in teachers' planning to give the more able children greater challenge in their work. In Key Stage 2, children achieve well in English. Any weaknesses in their writing are identified and improved through good teaching. Progress is satisfactory in mathematics and standards in the current Year 6

show signs of improvement. Staff are focusing on the children's skills of solving problems but the children are not yet using these independently and confidently in their work. In three of the last five years, standards overall in Year 6 tests have been significantly above average but they vary partly because of the nature of the small year groups.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children's personal development and well-being are outstanding. Attendance is above the national average and there have been no exclusions. Parents describe the school as having 'an excellent family ethos' with 'very high standards of behaviour' and these views are endorsed by inspection findings. Children enjoy their learning through a rich curriculum and a range of well supported after-school activities throughout the year. A safe and healthy lifestyle is actively encouraged and a good range of healthy eating options available at lunch and playtimes. Children are prepared to try new foods, encouraged by a healthy eating programme. The school promotes the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well. There have been significant improvement in children's cultural development since the last inspection as a result of effective cross-curricular planning for the arts and work in personal, social and health education. Topics such as Hinduism provide a focus for the whole school on a very successful multicultural project. Children are able to work effectively in different groupings throughout the school and benefit from the mutual care and support they provide for one another. The school council makes a very positive contribution to the school's ethos, providing information on road safety, help with playground games and excellent support for other children at lunchtimes.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good across the age range. Strengths of the teaching include the quality of relationships between children and staff, and the organisation of the mixed aged classes. Teachers and their assistants manage the children very well and use a variety of strategies to promote good learning. For instance, they vary their teaching styles to suit the children and bring in 'brain gym' activities to improve concentration. Staff have good subject knowledge and highlight links between subjects to make them more relevant to the children. A few aspects of teaching are underdeveloped, however. Information about how well children are doing is not used enough to promote challenge for the more able in mathematics. Teachers do not share lesson objectives sufficiently with the children to help them become more aware of what they are aiming to achieve in lessons. The marking of children's work in Key Stage 2 classes does not refer to the children's targets frequently enough.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The quality of the curriculum is good. It meets all requirements and has a particular strength in the rich variety of work in the arts, exemplified in the school's achievement of the Artsmark Gold award. There is a good variety of visits and visitors to school, as well as residential experiences and several extra-curricular activities that children attend regularly. All children have equal opportunities to take part in all subjects of the curriculum and to learn about a safe and healthy lifestyle through lessons in personal, social and health education and physical activities. The curriculum for children in the Reception year is good and is currently being extended to encompass better outdoor provision. Information and communication technology is satisfactory overall and is in the process of major development. Newly acquired interactive whiteboards and a bigger range of laptop and personal computers are adding significantly to the quality of provision in the subject.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Because this is a small school, staff know the children well and as a result, standards of care are good. All aspects of child protection and health and safety are given a high priority. There is a lively school council in place, which operates with a very good level of independence and the school responds readily to the views of the children. A 'buddy' system exemplifies the positive ethos of the school in which children help one another and cooperate exceptionally well. Parents and carers feel very welcome in the school and are strongly encouraged to be involved in their children's education. Good systems are in place to chart and predict the progress of children. These are used well to set targets for children in statutory tests but there are some shortcomings, for instance in how assessment information is used to plan work in mathematics and in how children's work is marked.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership, management and governance of the school are good and are key factors in its overall effectiveness. Processes to evaluate and monitor the performance of the school are clear and provide staff and governors with an accurate assessment of its strengths and areas to improve. The headteacher leads the school by example and has made an excellent contribution to curricular opportunities, especially in the creative and performing arts. Monitoring of provision, through lesson observations and scrutiny of children's work, is generally good, though it did not pick up the insufficient challenge for the more able children in mathematics. The school has good procedures to canvass the views of parents and has acted on their opinions to improve provision. Links with schools, especially the associated high school, contribute significantly to the smooth transition to secondary school, as well as to academic standards and to the curriculum;

for example, science, French and sporting activities. The governing body has a good overview of the work of the school and has improved its links with school since the last inspection. Of particular note is the good contribution that parent governors make to its work. For example, their dynamism has recently helped the governing body to respond constructively to the challenge of falling rolls and to drive the school forward. Improvement since the last inspection has been good and the school's leadership has the capacity to improve further as it embarks on a new chapter in its long history to become a federated school.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	1	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you very much for your help when I inspected your school. Please pass on my thanks to the other children I met and spoke to. I enjoyed my visit very much. Now I want to share with you what I thought about your school.

There are many good things in your school that you can feel proud of, for instance:

- the staff take good care of you all and teach you well
- I was very impressed with how polite and confident you all are, how well you get on together and look after one another
- you are doing very well in English, especially reading
- the staff provide you with excellent opportunities in the arts as well as the chance to enjoy activities after school and on trips.

There are some things I would like your teachers do better. One is to help you to do better in maths; another is to share the objectives of lessons with you more often so that you know what you are aiming for; and a third is to refer to your targets when they mark your written work so that you can see if you're achieving them or not.

With every good wish to you all when you join up with Kingsley St John CE Primary School in the autumn term.