

Davenham CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111387
Local Authority	Cheshire
Inspection number	288944
Inspection dates	21–22 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Graham Martin

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	252
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr G Smith
Headteacher	Mr P Hilditch
Date of previous school inspection	27 January 2003
School address	Charles Avenue Davenham Northwich Cheshire CW9 8JW
Telephone number	01606 42807
Fax number	01606 331293

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average sized school situated in a village community. It is a popular school that is frequently oversubscribed. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion eligible for free school meals is below average while the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is a little below the national average. Children are admitted to the Reception class from a number of pre-school settings. Having been listed for its success in the 2003 annual report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools, the school is now included on the Ofsted database of similarly successful schools. It has been involved in a national Sustaining Success Programme to network the local authority's most effective schools. Recently, it has been awarded an ActiveMark for its work on promoting healthy lifestyles and an Eco Schools Silver award for raising awareness of environmental responsibility.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school where, as soon as you step inside, you feel welcomed as part of its family. It offers outstanding value for money. The school's impressive family atmosphere, valued by pupils and parents alike, is an undeniable strength. As a result, pupils' excellent relationships with each other and with the adults who help them lead to outstanding achievement and well above average standards, both in academic learning and in pupils' personal and social development. Exceptional commitment and dedication to success by the headteacher and his leadership team represent an outstanding role model to staff and pupils. Learning is enhanced by pupils' exceptionally positive attitudes, supported well by teaching that is outstanding. 'Davenham school was the first and only choice for my child because of the excellent teaching.' was a typical view shared by many parents. Outstanding provision in the Foundation Stage enables children to learn rapidly and with immense enjoyment. A curriculum enriched by many varied and interesting activities provides exceptional opportunities for learning, adding significant value to each pupil's achievement. Pupils' exceptionally good personal development reflects the high quality of individual care, acknowledged by parents' comments such as, 'All schools should be like this, where children thrive because their interests are valued and nurtured.'

Pupils speak openly of their enjoyment of school, saying that this comes from, 'exciting and interesting lessons and clubs' and feeling, 'very well cared for'. They respond exceptionally well to extensive opportunities for developing their independence and their awareness of others. As a result their behaviour is outstanding, following their agreed 'seven golden rules'. Pupils' outstanding knowledge of how to live a healthy lifestyle stems from their interest in sport and awareness of how healthy food and harmful substances can affect their bodies. Pupils show genuine care and concern for the needs of others, teaching other children to play games considerately and helping each other to be better learners when work is challenging. The school's clearly defined procedures for appointing staff mean that national guidelines for safeguarding children are met.

Outstanding leadership by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and leadership team, with highly effective support from governors, enables the school to sustain the high quality of its effectiveness. The headteacher's astute recognition of individual staff skills enables them to work exceptionally well as a team. Staff with key management and administration roles provide particularly effective leadership. Outstanding relationships with the community make a strong contribution to the school's ability to keep up the best of its traditions while moving forward to meet the demands of 21st century education, although plans to improve the use of information and communication technology (ICT) are still to be completed.

What the school should do to improve further

- The school is aware of all areas for improvement and has clear plans to tackle them, including completing the work to improve ICT resources to support teaching and learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Standards are exceptionally high and pupils' achievement is outstanding, placing the school in the top 5% nationally for the value that it adds to pupils' learning. Children enter the school with skills similar to those expected for children of their age. Exceptionally good work in the Foundation Stage enables most children to reach the early goals for their learning by the end

of the Reception class. In Years 1 to 6 achievement is sustained at an outstanding level so that standards are well above the national average by the end of Year 6. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make exceptionally good progress because, after their learning needs have been assessed very early on, outstanding support ensures that they learn well. Pupils with particular gifts or talents are provided with outstanding challenges that enable them to practice their advanced skills and achieve their potential. The exceptional neatness and accuracy of the work seen in pupils' books shows the school's outstanding response to a concern raised in the previous inspection report.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

All aspects of pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development are outstanding. Parents' comments that their children 'continue to develop as well rounded individuals' exemplifies this. Pupils are extremely polite, articulate and confident and show great enthusiasm and support for their school. When asked if there was anything they would like to improve, the student council with one voice replied, 'Nothing!' Through the student council, the pupils play a full and active part in the life of the school. Their achievements include enabling pupils to sit together in the dining room, whether eating a packed lunch or a school meal, and improving the way the playground timetable is organised. Pupils know who to turn to if they are upset. Pupils commented that, 'If something happens on the playground, we know it will be sorted out fairly.' Pupils enjoy the school, they feel safe and attendance is well above the national average. Behaviour is exemplary: pupils treat each other with courtesy and respect. At lunchtime, junior leaders organise social games for infant pupils, demonstrating exceptional skills as young citizens, enabling younger pupils to play in a safe and secure environment. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay fit and healthy because numerous high quality sporting activities encourage this.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Teachers' planning is exemplary: learning objectives are specific and challenging. Exciting activities planned by the teachers take good account of pupils' different learning needs and interests. This is particularly evident in the current organisation for pupils in Years 3 and 4 who are grouped for literacy and numeracy to maximise their learning opportunities. Excellent subject knowledge and lively teaching ensure pupils quickly become interested and engaged in learning. This results in lessons of high quality that successfully meet the needs of all pupils. Pupils' consistently outstanding behaviour results in them showing exemplary attitudes in lessons, contributing to their progress. Teaching assistants and other classroom helpers are very well deployed to support learning. However, ICT is not always used effectively and opportunities are sometimes missed to use computers to support learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. Strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy enables pupils to develop a very firm grasp of the basic skills they need for future success. Opportunities for

learning in the Foundation Stage are outstanding, with evident improvements to the curriculum for the youngest children since the last inspection. The curriculum is broad, balanced and rich in variety. Art work throughout the school is of a very high standard and a range of opportunities exist for the children to embrace music, including the school band, choir and even ukulele playing in Year 2. A wide variety of extra-curricular activities ensure that children have the opportunity to develop new skills. The curriculum is brought to life by the extensive use of visits and visitors to provide an understanding of different cultures. Residential visits in Years 2, 4 and 6 contribute much to pupils' personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school's outstanding care guidance and support for pupils is the result of a very high level of commitment to the well-being of each pupil from all staff. This quality of care reflects the school's values and stems directly from the direction given by school leaders. This very successfully promotes pupils self-esteem, confidence and enjoyment. Detailed records enable staff to check pupils' academic, personal and social development closely. Pupils know their learning targets and work hard to achieve them. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified quickly and make outstanding progress due to the high quality support programmes that are put in place. Child protection procedures are in place and clearly understood by all staff. Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. Parents and governors speak very highly of the school's care for the community's children.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The consistently high quality of leadership by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and the leadership team ensures that exceptionally good teamwork among all staff leads to sustained high performance across the school. Staff enjoy working hard at Davenham School. For them, teaching is just as exciting, and as much fun, as learning is for the pupils. The school's outstanding capacity to improve is a reflection of this commitment by all staff, which helps to sustain the school's effectiveness at a high level. Parents value how approachable the headteacher is. The school has overwhelming support from parents, many of whom commented on the outstanding commitment of staff to their children's learning and care. Exceptionally strong partnerships within the community help the school in its work. The outstanding relationship the school has with its partners in the community, including parents, governors, the church and other local schools reflects the school's commitment to being a place where people can come together with one purpose, that of nurturing children as future members of their community. The school has evaluated its effectiveness well but knows that to sustain this effectiveness it must keep a watchful eye on all aspects of its work. It does this exceptionally well, using information from assessments to check on teaching and learning to ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they can. Governors provide much valued practical support for the school's work, strengthening pupils' understanding of community life.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall
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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?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Inspection of Davenham Church of England Primary School, Northwich, CW9 8JW

You all welcomed us very well when Mrs Coleman, Mr Martin and I recently spent two days inspecting the work of Davenham Church of England Primary School. We hope that having two 'Mr Martins' at the same time didn't confuse you too much! We really enjoyed our visit and seeing how wonderfully well behaved you are.

Thank you for all the little talks that we had. You really helped us to find out how well your school works. You told us that you think you have a very good school. I am sure that you will be pleased that our inspection found that your school is an outstanding place to learn.

You told us how happy you are at school and how well you feel looked after. Again, we agree with your opinion, you do have a school where you are all cared for equally well.

From what you said, you already know that you are very lucky to have a headteacher and teachers who give you lots of wonderful opportunities to enjoy learning and be successful. At Davenham School you learn the importance of being part of a community that works together to be successful. Part of that success is the high standards that you reach in English, mathematics and science. Please keep up this good work.

The teachers at your school know what they need to do to make sure this success carries on and your school keeps getting better. I hope that you will help them by continuing to enjoy learning and getting along together as well as you do.