

# Meadowside Community Primary and Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	110973
<b>Local Authority</b>	Warrington
<b>Inspection number</b>	337605
<b>Inspection dates</b>	1–2 July 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Denise Shields

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	226
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ms K Buckley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Meg Marshall
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 May 2007
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons or part lessons and these included the observation of 10 teachers. Meetings were held with staff, groups of pupils, governors and a representative from the local authority. Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised a range of documentation, including pupils' past and present work, assessment and tracking information, monitoring and evaluation records, and additional evidence of the support for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Inspectors also looked at whether the school meets statutory requirements with regard to safeguarding. A representative sample of questionnaires returned by pupils and staff and 67 questionnaires returned by parents and carers were scrutinised.

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

- the attainment, learning and progress of all pupils in English and mathematics to determine whether it is rising quickly enough
- whether pupils' learning targets and the Year 6 Learning Guide Project enables pupils to know how to improve their work
- whether the revised curriculum meets the needs and abilities of all groups of pupils in order to boost their progress
- the rigour of the school's arrangements to monitor and promote regular attendance.??

## Information about the school

This is an average-sized school. Most pupils are White British. Almost two thirds of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals and nearly half of all pupils are assessed as having special educational needs and/or disabilities; this is significantly higher than average. A much higher than average proportion of pupils have a statement of special educational needs. The school houses two designated provision classes for pupils with a range of learning, speech and language, emotional, behavioural and complex learning difficulties (totalling 18 places), serving all areas across Warrington. The school has achieved Investors in People and Healthy Schools Status and has received the Artsmark Silver, Activemark, Eco-Schools Bronze, International School and Nurture Group Quality Mark awards.

**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**

**2**

## Main findings

This is a good school. It has improved rapidly since the previous inspection. This is because senior and middle leaders have responded vigorously to the challenges faced and tackled urgent priorities successfully. Leaders have established a shared, clear vision among all staff for the school's future and acquired an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They rigorously evaluate the impact of actions taken to tackle key priorities. This has had a positive impact on outcomes for all groups of pupils. Areas for improvement identified at the time of the previous inspection have been addressed successfully. As a result, the school demonstrates a good capacity for sustained improvement.

Teaching is good. There has been a relentless focus on improving the quality of teaching and a number of outstanding lessons were observed during the inspection. The robust use of assessment information and the innovative arrangements to help pupils understand how to improve their work are key factors that have enabled leaders to overcome the legacy of past underachievement. Pupils' progress and enjoyment of learning is accelerating rapidly. Achievement is good. By the end of Year 6, attainment is broadly average in English, mathematics and science. Attainment in reading is a strength because reading skills are taught well. Pupils' writing skills are not as strong because they do not have enough opportunities to write in subjects other than English and there is no consistent approach to teaching handwriting skills. Pupils in the designated provision make good progress and achieve well in relation to their abilities, and often complex needs. This is because the good curriculum is tailored carefully to meet their needs and, where appropriate, pupils have regular opportunities to learn alongside their peers.

Meadowside goes to great lengths to involve the entire school community in its work. Relationships are strong. Outstanding care, guidance and support are at the heart of everything the school does. Those pupils whose circumstances make them the most vulnerable and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive superb help and encouragement, as do their families. Consequently, all pupils are safe, happy and ready to learn. The extremely positive responses from almost every pupil confirm this. Children get a good start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Indoors, learning areas are well resourced and this aids children's development. However, the outdoor area is not as vibrant as the indoor area and the range of resources restricts the opportunities children have to choose to extend their skills and knowledge outside. Excellent partnerships with schools locally, the local authority and with external agencies help to raise pupils' aspirations, self-confidence and the quality of their learning.

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

- Raise standards in writing by ensuring that:
  - pupils have plenty of exciting opportunities to increase their eagerness to write in all subjects
  - there is a consistent whole-school approach to teaching handwriting skills.
- By 31 March 2011, make better use of the Early Years Foundation Stage outdoor area by ensuring that:
  - there is a wider range of resources available, so that children can choose activities for themselves in all areas of learning outside.

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

Overwhelmingly, pupils say they enjoy their lessons and learning is now great fun. Almost all work hard and show good skills of concentration. Unanimously they say they learn a lot in lessons and they are not afraid to ask for help if they need it. Most work well with a partner or in a small group. Pupils' behaviour is good and they are keen to help and support each other. This has a positive impact on their achievement and enjoyment of learning. When activities are practical, for example when older pupils use the hand-held portable computers, their attention is captured; consequently, they become engrossed in learning and their progress is rapid.

In Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils' learning and progress, as observed in lessons during the inspection, are good because of the good teaching they receive. Some pupils make great leaps in their learning and have moved forward an entire National Curriculum level in a year, due to the wide range of well-targeted 'catch-up' and support programmes. As a result, the legacy of past underachievement is being overcome and pupils' progress is accelerating in all classes. Attainment by the end of Year 6, although rising rapidly, is broadly average because pupils are still making up lost ground in their learning, particularly in writing. Nevertheless, taking account of children's overall below average starting points on entry to the Nursery class, their achievement is good. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those in the designated provision make good progress and enjoy learning because of the sensitive guidance they receive from teachers and teaching assistants who help them.

Pupils make a good contribution to the school community through the school council, eco committee and responsibilities such as acting as playground buddies. Pupils say they feel safe and know there is an adult who will help them if they are troubled. Pupils have a good knowledge of how to live healthy lifestyles. Their awareness of other cultures is developed satisfactorily. Attendance is average. The introduction of rigorous arrangements to monitor and encourage regular attendance has resulted in a significant reduction in persistent absence.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
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>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

### How effective is the provision?

Good-quality teaching and careful and accurate assessment are key factors in the rapid and sustained improvement in pupils' learning and progress. Teachers make good use of assessment information to target individuals and groups in danger of falling behind. For the most part, work is precisely matched to the needs and abilities of the different groups of pupils. In the very best lessons teachers enthuse pupils through the use of very well-chosen resources and exciting tasks. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are high and very skilful questioning engages pupils' interest and rapidly extends their knowledge and skills. In most lessons, the use of information and communication technology is used well. Sometimes good opportunities are provided for pupils to talk in pairs: this successfully promotes speaking and listening. Pupils are actively involved in reviewing their learning targets and assessing their own progress; this is a real strength of provision. They say this helps them to understand how well they are doing. In all classes marking is helpful and provides constructive comments to help pupils improve. The revised curriculum is organised into meaningful themes which pupils say they enjoy. These modifications have had a positive impact on boosting pupils' basic skills, although improvements are less marked in writing because pupils have too few opportunities to practise their skills in lessons. Extremely good provision is made for the personal, social, emotional and health education of pupils. The range of activities beyond lessons, including visits and visitors, is good.

<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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Pupils benefit from high-quality care, guidance and support. There is exceptionally good help for individuals, for groups whose circumstances make them vulnerable and for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Notable strengths include the Sunshine Room, the work of the learning mentor and the Year 6 Learning Guide Project. These interventions and support are extremely effective for all groups, resulting in impressive improvements in their self-confidence and behaviour, increased motivation and greater access to the curriculum. Very robust systems are established to monitor and secure regular attendance. Arrangements to help pupils move from year group to year group and then onto secondary school are very good.

*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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Senior leaders have been relentless in their determination to improve pupils' attainment and the quality of provision for pupils. A robust system to monitor and evaluate the work of the school is well established and used effectively by senior and middle leaders to ensure that the high expectations set are achieved. All staff teams work together successfully to secure improvement. Staff value their relevant training and development, which is linked securely to the school's plans for improvement. Management systems to track the progress made by pupils over time have been refined and are easy to access and interpret. Consequently, senior and middle leaders are able to identify potential underachievement more rapidly in order to target improvement strategies quickly. The effective governing body holds the school to account and members of the governing body are not afraid to ask challenging questions. They monitor the quality of provision well. The school complies with statutory requirements for safeguarding, health and safety and child protection. Arrangements are planned well and permeate all aspects of school life. As a result, any concerns are swiftly acted upon and well-targeted support and guidance put in place for individuals.

Community cohesion has strengths in pupils' involvement in the local community but pupils' contribution to the wider and global community is less evident. Excellent partnerships, particularly with the local authority and external agencies, as well as with other schools, help to raise the quality of pupils' learning. These partnerships also provide plentiful opportunities for staff to undertake a good range of training in order to improve their expertise. Leaders have built good relationships with the vast majority of parents and carers. The learning mentor works very well with families to promote

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relationships, to encourage them to support their children's education and to clarify the importance of regular attendance. Good arrangements promote equality of opportunity and help the school to tackle any discrimination. A notable strength is the inclusion of those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those in the designated provision, in all aspects of school life. Many pupils often succeed at Meadowside when they have experienced difficulties at other schools.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Most children enter the Nursery class with skills that are at levels below those expected for their age, particularly in their early communication, and personal and social skills. Adults promote speaking and listening skills very well and so, consequently, children make good progress in this area. Their progress in early writing skills is not as strong. There is a very effective emphasis on personal and social education. As a result, children have very trusting relationships with adults, behave well, play happily together and enjoy learning. As a result of good teaching and learning, most children are working within the expected levels for their age by the time they enter Year 1. This lays a secure foundation for the development of children's future learning. Planned activities have a good balance between those children can choose for themselves and those led by an adult. Very occasionally, adults miss opportunities to intervene when children choose activities for themselves and this slows children's learning. Although the outdoor area is used continuously throughout the day, the range of resources is narrow and this holds back children's learning and progress if they choose to be outside. The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. Teamwork is strong.



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Leaders have an accurate view of what to do next, which informs effective plans to develop the phase further.

*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**

Inspectors received questionnaire responses from approximately one third of parents and carers. While the large majority of parents and carers indicate a positive view about all aspects of the school's work, a few also expressed concerns. Inspectors endorse the positive views. Inspectors found no evidence that the school did not communicate well with parents and carers and take account, where appropriate, of their suggestions or concerns. Inspectors found that the school is well led and managed, teaching is good and pupils make good progress overall, although their progress in writing is not as strong. Although a small minority of parents and carers consider the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour, the large majority expressed a positive view. Inspection evidence supports this positive view.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Meadowside Community Primary and Nursery 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 69 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 226 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	39	57	26	38	4	6	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	40	58	23	33	3	4	3	4
The school informs me about my child's progress	40	58	19	28	7	10	2	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	37	54	22	32	9	13	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	43	62	16	23	10	14	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	40	58	19	28	5	7	3	4
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	30	43	28	41	5	7	6	9
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)	29	42	28	41	5	7	3	4
The school meets my child's particular needs	33	48	27	39	9	13	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	26	38	22	32	13	19	8	12
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	43	27	39	5	7	7	10
The school is led and managed effectively	32	46	25	36	7	10	5	7
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	37	54	19	28	10	14	3	4

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.**



06 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Meadowside Community Primary and Nursery School, Warrington, WA2 9PH

Thank you for helping with the inspection and for being so polite and friendly.

Meadowside is a good school. These are some of the things I found out.

- I agree with all of you who told me that adults take excellent care of you and help you learn about healthy lifestyles and how to stay safe.
- also agree adults will help you if you are sad or troubled and the Sunshine Room is a lovely place to go if you need a little extra help and support.
- You told me that staff teach you well and lessons are now fun and you enjoy learning, I agree.
- I agree that teachers' comments in your books are very helpful and these, and your learning targets, help you to improve your work.
- You all try hard with your work and make good progress, especially in reading, mathematics and science. Your progress is not as strong in writing and I have asked your teachers to give you lots of exciting chances to practise your writing skills and to help you improve your handwriting.
- The children in the Nursery and Reception classes have a good start to their education. They have lots of equipment to choose from inside. There is not as much for them to choose from outside and so I have asked your teachers to provide more equipment to make it a more exciting place to learn.
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and other staff have worked tremendously hard to make lots of improvements to your school. I know you are proud of it and enjoy all the responsibilities that you have.

Thank you once again for being so helpful.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Denise Shields

Lead inspector

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