

Frodsham Weaver Vale Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111115
Local Authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	356866
Inspection dates	15–16 September 2010
Reporting inspector	Paul Bamber

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	110
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Nicholas Smith
Headteacher	Mrs Kerry Forrester
Date of previous school inspection	12 June 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Thirteen lessons were observed, involving five teachers. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, staff, parents and carers and members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked in detail at data regarding pupils' progress and attainment, at planning and at other documentation regarding safeguarding, meetings of the governing body and local authority reports. Pupils' work was analysed. Questionnaire responses from 19 parents and carers and those from staff and pupils were also analysed.

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

- Whether the school's evaluation of how good it is and the outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils correlate with its evaluation of provision.
- Whether the poor attainment of girls compared with boys, evident in 2009 national data for the school, was a blip or a trend.
- How effectively the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, especially those who are on the autistic spectrum, and those pupils from traveller families, play a full part in school life.
- How well the school promotes community cohesion.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average size school. Most of the pupils are of White British heritage. Very few are from minority ethnic backgrounds, and of these almost none speaks English as an additional language. Just under a tenth of the pupils are from Traveller families. A much higher than average proportion of pupils is known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is high, with some year groups having over half in this category. The school has resourced provision for up to seven autistic spectrum pupils, fully integrated into the mainstream, mixed-age classes. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is much higher than in most schools.

The headteacher was appointed in September 2009. The school shares its premises with a non-maintained nursery which caters for two-to-three-year-old children. This provision is managed by the governing body and was subject to a separate inspection last year. There is a Children's Centre on the same site which is also subject to a separate inspection. The school has the Healthy School's and Active School's award.

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. Effective leadership and management ensure that pupils make good academic progress, develop their personal skills well and enjoy learning. The school is being held in increasingly high esteem by parents and carers and the local community. An outstanding feature of the school's work is its promotion of equal opportunities and in its effectiveness in eliminating any discrimination. This is a harmonious community in which all its members are valued and respected, whatever their background or circumstance.

Most pupils achieve well from their very low overall starting points because they are taught well and have a relevant and interesting curriculum. A minority, however, still have difficulty acquiring some of the basic skills of English and mathematics and as a result, attainment is below average overall by the end of Year 6. More-able pupils in Key Stage 1 are not always sufficiently challenged. The very good teaching and support provided for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities ensures that they make consistently good progress in all aspects of their development.

There are outstanding aspects of care and support which make a significant contribution to pupils' good personal development. Pupils are confident and secure, behave well and take on responsibilities willingly and conscientiously. A small minority of pupils, however, still find it difficult to arrive on time in the morning and their late arrival sometimes holds up the start of lessons.

The new leadership team evaluates the school's strengths and weaknesses rigorously and mainly accurately. Focused on raising standards, it has a clear agenda for improvement. Staff and governors have welcomed and embraced the new initiatives that have brought a fresh purpose and impetus to the school's work and resulted in pupils' improving attainment and better achievement. The school has successfully focused its promotion of community cohesion on improving relations and contacts within its immediate locality but acknowledges that its contacts with diverse communities in the wider United Kingdom and abroad are tenuous at best. Given the improvements achieved since the last inspection and the clarity and purpose with which some recent underperformance has been successfully tackled, the school demonstrates a good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in English and mathematics, by:
 - enabling more pupils to punctuate and spell correctly, to follow grammatical

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rules and to write more complex sentences

- ensuring that pupils' mental mathematics is more accurate and speedier and that they are more sure of their basic number work
- more effectively challenging the more-able pupils in Key Stage 1.
- Enhance the promotion of community cohesion, by:
 - establishing closer links with diverse communities in the United Kingdom and abroad.
- Improve punctuality, by persuading the small minority of pupils who are persistently late to arrive on time in the mornings.

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

The school successfully achieves its mission that pupils will 'enjoy learning together'. Pupils achieve well and clearly enjoy their whole-school experience. They are attentive in lessons, eager to learn and to participate. All pupils strive to do well, respond positively to their individual learning and behaviour targets, and to teachers' guidance and advice. They particularly enjoy active learning and that which involves competition. Pupils eagerly seize opportunities to use information and communication technology (ICT) to support their work, for example, in art and design, to enhance presentation and in data handling. Their very warm relationships with each other and adults ensure that lessons are conducted in a positive and cooperative atmosphere.

Pupils make good progress having entered the school with skills that are much lower than expected. The poor performance of girls in Years 1 and 2 reported in 2009 was specific to that year and has, not been evidenced before or after. Pupils on the autistic spectrum make very good progress as a result of the excellent provision for them. Those pupils from Traveller families make good progress during their time in the school but those who have frequent, prolonged absences often fall behind their peers overall. The very few pupils who speak English as an additional language quickly settle and are well supported to make good progress. Some relative weaknesses in spelling, grammar, in calculating mentally and in consolidating basic number facts mean that overall standards in English and mathematics by Year 6 remain below average.

Pupils develop satisfactory skills to equip them for their future lives. Pupils feel very safe, most adopt healthy lifestyles, participating in up to three hours of physical exercise each week, and they eat sensibly. Over the past year, the increased links and involvement of pupils with the local community has added much value to their social, moral and cultural development. Their respect for and interest in different cultures enables pupils to acquire positive values and tolerance and prepares them soundly for life in a multicultural society.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	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
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?

The quality of teaching, assessment and support is good. Consistently good features of lessons are the positive relationships which exist and the close and genuine partnership between class teachers and learning support assistants. These two factors contribute substantially to the good progress made by all pupils, but particularly by those who experience more difficulties in learning or in conforming to the school's high expectations of them. Where teaching is at its best, learning is active, tasks match pupils' needs well, pace is brisk and a wide variety of stimulating activities and media are employed. Where teaching is occasionally no better than satisfactory, pupils of different abilities are required to do the same work for too long, causing some to mark time and others to struggle. Overwhelmingly, teachers make learning enjoyable, accessible and productive. Assessment, especially marking, is good and enables pupils to know how they are getting on and provides useful pointers about how they can improve. The continuing focus on improving pupils' basic skills in English and mathematics is slowly paying dividends but its impact lags behind the improved provision.

The good curriculum is well focused on pupils' interests and experience. It meets most pupils' needs well. There is considerable enrichment through visitors and visits, partnerships with sports providers, other schools and local services. Residential visits add strongly to pupils' confidence, self-reliance and cooperative skills. Within the good care, guidance and support pupils receive, there is some excellent provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those on the autistic spectrum or with speech and language difficulties. Highly trained staff in both of these

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areas, work most effectively to ensure the full integration of these pupils in lessons and in all aspects of school life, such as clubs, visits and performances. Staff work closely with external agencies to enhance the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those whose circumstances have made them more vulnerable than most and those from Traveller families. Parents and carers are delighted with such support and with the amount and quality of information they receive about their child's progress. Despite renewed efforts, strategies to eliminate a small minority's persistent lateness have yet to pay dividends.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

There is, energy and ambition evident in the school's work, which has led to high staff morale and improvements in many areas of the school's work. The headteacher has established a clear and shared vision at the heart of which is raising pupils' attainment and ensuring that they enjoy school. This has been achieved through perceptive self-evaluation of the school's performance, astute prioritising and pragmatic improvement planning. However, the school has underestimated the positive influence of its good provision on pupils' academic progress and on its overall effectiveness. The vision has been shared with pupils, parents and carers, staff and governors, together with the local community, all of whom have responded very positively. This has resulted in increased pride in the school by all of those involved in its work.

The governing body is keenly involved in monitoring the school's performance and in 'hands on' contact with the work of the school, contributing well to learning and acquainting itself with pupils' views through regular contact with the school council. The governing body has also ensured that safeguarding procedures fully meet requirements, that procedures and policies follow best practice and that the safety of pupils and staff is paramount within the everyday life of the school. The leadership team has been successful in implementing improvements to attainment in literacy, in tracking pupils' progress so that more precise targets and support can be provided for individual pupils, in teaching and learning and in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

As well as ensuring outstanding equality of opportunity, the school is very active in tackling any form of discrimination. Many parents and carers including those from Traveller families comment very favourably about this aspect of the school's work,. The effective partnerships established with a range of institutions enhance staff's

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professional development and significantly contributes to many aspects of the pupils' academic and personal development. There are strong local links with parents and carers accessing adult learning and recreation activities within school and pupils' participating in community events and immersing themselves in local culture and history. However, overall, the school's promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory because pupils have little access to or knowledge of communities beyond their locality.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Despite having a range of abilities, overall, three-year-old children enter the Nursery with skills that are very low for their age. They settle quickly because of a warm welcome, an effective partnership with parents and carers and enjoyable activities. They are taught and supported well, which enables them to make good progress in all areas of their learning. Even so, many enter Key Stage 1 with below to well below average attainment. Children quickly develop the ability to share, take turns and consider the needs and rights of others. They play happily together, start to attempt early writing and explore books. More-able children learn to count to 10 and to order objects. They know about types of foods and those which might help them to be healthy, have a growing understanding of personal hygiene, use ICT increasingly competently and enjoy acting out adult roles. The Early Years Foundation Stage unit is well laid out and enables children to move freely between activities both indoors and outside. Adults constantly model language well and engage children in conversation. There is a stimulating array of resources available which keep children interested. The very close partnership between the maintained and non-maintained nurseries ensures that provision is flexible and

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suited well to individual children's needs. Adults carefully and comprehensively observe and record children's development and use this knowledge to plan effectively. Good leadership and management ensure that children's outcomes are positive and lead to close teamwork.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

Around 20 % of parents and carers returned the questionnaire provided and a discussion was held with 10 parents and carers during the inspection. There was overwhelming support for the work of the school. Parents and carers are particularly pleased with the improvements made to the school's building, the in the way in which the local community is involved in the school, how safe and well behaved their children are, the quality of the information they receive and with how much their children enjoy school. Inspectors concur with the positive views of the parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Frodsham Weaver Vale 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 inspection team received 19 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 110 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	9	47	10	53	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	13	68	6	32	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	14	74	5	26	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	10	53	6	32	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	10	53	5	26	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	9	47	8	42	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	9	47	8	42	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)	5	26	11	58	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	8	42	8	42	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	6	32	10	53	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	10	53	7	37	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	9	47	7	37	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	11	58	6	32	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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">■ 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.



17 September 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Frodsham Weaver Vale Primary School, Warrington, WA6 7PZ

On behalf of the other inspectors and myself, I want to thank you very much for your very friendly and polite welcome when we inspected your school recently. Our job is to find out how good an education your school is giving you and to suggest some ways in which it could be better.

You go to a good school which does many things well. For example, it helps you to:

- make good progress in your work
- become sensible children, with good attitudes and who behave well
- enjoy your lessons and all the activities on offer
- all get on very well together
- understand and be involved in the local community
- have a great pride in your work and in your school.

All these things are because your school is well run, you have good teachers and adults look after you very kindly.

So what should be improved to make the school even better?

- You can still be helped to reach higher standards in English and mathematics.
- You can play your part in this by trying very hard to improve your spelling, punctuation and mental arithmetic.
- For the school to link up with children in schools in different parts of this country and abroad, to help you to better understand how they live.
- For the school to make sure that those of you who arrive late in the morning and hold up lessons a bit as a result, arrive on time. You can obviously help with this by making the extra effort to arrive a bit earlier.

Thank you again for the lovely welcome. We enjoyed our two days with you.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Paul Bamber

Lead inspector

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