

Ravenbank Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111006
Local Authority	Warrington
Inspection number	325269
Inspection date	2 December 2008
Reporting inspector	Michael Onyon

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	314
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs E Green
Headteacher	Mrs Avril Topping
Date of previous school inspection	9 November 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Pepper Street Lymm Cheshire WA13 0JT

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	2 December 2008
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: whether all pupils are achieving as well as they can; what opportunities pupils have to use their literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT) skills in other subjects; curricular developments; the impact on learning of the quality of pupils' personal development; and how well assessment information is used. Other aspects of the school's work were not inspected in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is an oversubscribed school of above average size. It is situated just outside the town centre of Lymm. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below average. Pupils are predominantly from White British backgrounds. The school has a below average number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school has achieved a number of awards including Investors in People, the Healthy Schools, Activemark and Artsmark (Gold) awards. It provides Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) education for children in Reception classes.

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 exemplary leadership and shared, high aspirations lead to excellent achievement. The school gives excellent value for money. The vast majority of parents are highly appreciative of the school's challenging, interesting and caring ethos. The views of many parents are summed up in saying: Ravenbank is a wonderful school. It offers an outstanding start to the children's future.' Parents praise all aspects of the school, including the leadership, the 'dedicated and motivated teachers' and the creative approach to the curriculum. Some parents and carers expressed a desire for the school to do more to seek their views, but the majority know that there are several opportunities to offer their suggestions.

The school was judged to be highly successful at the time of the last inspection. There have been excellent improvements since then, together with the maintenance of high academic standards. Pupils consistently reach well above average standards in Key Stage 1 and these high standards are sustained through Key Stage 2. In 2007 there was a slight dip in standards. The school recognised the reasons, put in place strategies to increase progress, and standards have risen as a result. The provisional results of the 2008 Year 6 national tests in 2008 indicate that three quarters of pupils achieved the higher level in English and science, with well over half achieving the higher level in mathematics.

A significant factor in pupils' high achievement is the excellent quality of teaching and learning. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and make lessons exciting and interesting so that pupils want to learn. They constantly challenge pupils and use assessment very effectively to ensure that work is well suited to pupils' different abilities. Teaching assistants are deployed very well to support pupils who need additional help and teaching assistants take a very active role in lessons. There is excellent teamwork between all the staff in school. Pupils are very well informed about the progress they are making and how to improve their learning. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is closely linked to clear expectations and is a strength in all areas of the school. Relationships are excellent so pupils approach work confidently and are eager to learn.

Complementing the excellent teaching and learning is an outstanding curriculum. It is varied and very stimulating, with lots of enrichment through visits, visitors, extra-curricular activities and practical work. The curriculum is carefully planned to ensure that pupils extend their skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT in other subjects, in order to give a clear purpose for learning. For example, some pupils offer constructive comments about their learning through contributions to online blogs on the school's website. Not all pupils are as confident in accessing the individual learning opportunities available through ICT in this way. Links between subjects are planned well and parents write appreciatively about the creative approach, 'Pupils' art work in the recent Da Vinci project, which included interpretations based on the theme of echoes, was fantastic.'

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. They thoroughly enjoy school and this is illustrated by their well above average attendance. Older pupils are very keen to contribute to the day-to-day running of the school. They help younger ones settle in and add their voice to decisions about how the school should be involved in the local community. Pupils' behaviour is excellent; they are confident and have high self-esteem. Across the school, pupils are very aware of the need to be safe and how to lead healthy lifestyles. The school has very successfully developed a range of responsibilities to encourage and challenge pupils. For example, the 'prefect' system encourages teamwork, there are frequent awards for 'star of the week' and

there is a regular weekly assembly to celebrate pupils' achievements. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They learn about other faiths and cultures and develop an excellent understanding of them, for example, as evidenced by their current themed work about Africa. They are very well prepared for their future economic well-being and they contribute strongly to the school and the local community.

Care, guidance and support are excellent and make a significant contribution to pupils' personal development and achievement. There are very close links with parents, many of whom are involved as regular helpers in school. Communication between home and school is very good. Support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is excellent and procedures for safeguarding children are robust. The school makes very effective use of its comprehensive systems for tracking and assessing progress to ensure that pupils achieve as well as they can.

Outstanding outcomes for pupils and excellent provision are the result of high quality leadership and management. The headteacher believes passionately in inclusion and implicitly in promoting, developing and maintaining core strengths in the school. The school is very much at the heart of the local community and has excellent links with other local schools and a partner school in South Africa. The headteacher is very well supported by the members of the leadership team, who have been instrumental in many positive changes. Leadership is actively encouraged at all levels so that all staff form a dynamic team, which is fully committed to raising standards and to improving provision. Governance is outstanding. Governors are at the heart of all that the school does and provide a considerable amount of expertise and support. The school is never complacent and everyone involved is constantly trying to find ways to improve. Clearly, the school has an excellent capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children enter Reception from a wide range of pre-school settings with skills that are broadly typical for their age. A combination of a caring, inspirational learning environment and outstanding teaching enables children quickly to become confident and articulate learners. They make excellent progress in almost all areas, so that by the time they leave the EYFS their skills are above those expected for their age in all areas but their writing. The school has identified this as an area for improvement and children's writing skills are now improving. Children are polite, cooperative and well behaved. They feel safe and secure, and confident that their opinion is valued. This is evident in their contribution to teachers' planning. The curriculum is extremely rich and exciting. This results in children's keen interest and a strong desire to learn. Children are well cared for and, as a result, they show care and respect for others. Leadership and management are outstanding. Since the last inspection leaders and managers have developed a strong team and who have continually improved provision. Notably there is now a high quality and very effectively used outdoor area. .

What the school should do to improve further

- Enable all pupils to use ICT more effectively to carry out individual research.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

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/or disabilities make progress	1

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	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 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

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Inspection of Ravenbank Community Primary School, Lymm, WA13 0JT

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave the other inspector and me when we inspected your school. We enjoyed the day with you immensely and only wished we had more time to see all the interesting things you are doing in lessons and in the after-school clubs. We particularly appreciated talking to many of you and hearing how much you enjoy school. Please thank your parents for sending in the questionnaire returns. We did have time to see the excellent examples of your art work on display around the school.

Yours is an outstanding school. You make rapid progress in your work and reach well above average standards by the time you leave. You have the personal qualities to be successful in life and the skills and knowledge to make the most of the next stage of your education. I was particularly impressed by how well you get on together and your concern for those less fortunate than yourselves. The way in which you work with and contribute to your local community and to communities further afield is excellent. Many of you told me how much you like school and that you know you are valued as individuals. You are very well cared for and supported. Your teachers and teaching assistants make lessons interesting and enjoyable and they are very thorough in the way they check your progress and help you to do even better.

Everyone in school is committed to giving you the best possible start to your education. There is one thing that I have asked the school to do to help with this. It is that they look at ways of helping you all to be able to look up information using ICT.