# Leftwich Community Primary School

Inspection report

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| **Unique Reference Number** | 111137 |
| **Local authority** | Cheshire West and Chester |
| **Inspection number** | 356868 |
| **Inspection dates** | 12–13 May 2011 |
| **Reporting inspector** | Jim Kidd |

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

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| **Type of school** | Primary |
| **School category** | Community |
| **Age range of pupils** | 4–11 |
| **Gender of pupils** | Mixed |
| **Number of pupils on the school roll** | 185 |
| **Appropriate authority** | The governing body |
| **Chair** | Michael Howman |
| **Headteacher** | Claire Harrison |
| **Date of previous school inspection** | 20 February 2008 |
| **School address** | Old Hall Road<br>Leftwich<br>Northwich<br>CW9 8DH |
| **Telephone number** | 01606 42849 |
| **Fax number** | NA |
| **Email address** | admin@leftwichprimary.cheshire.gov.uk |

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|---|---|
| **Age group** | 4–11 |
| **Inspection date(s)** | 12–13 May 2011 |
| **Inspection number** | 356868 |

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# Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 11 lessons, taught by 11 different teachers. They held meetings with pupils, including members of the pupil and Eco councils, staff, parents and carers, members of the governing body and the School Improvement Partner. They observed the school's work, and looked at school development planning, pupils' progress monitoring documentation, policies and practice in relation to child protection and safeguarding and reports written on behalf of the local authority. Inspectors also analysed 71 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, 13 completed by staff and 68 returned by pupils in Key Stage 2.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Whether the school is accurate in its judgement that pupils' progress is consistently good across the school.
- The challenge within lessons and whether it is good enough to enable pupils from all groups to reach the standards of which they are capable.
- The impact of the themed curriculum on pupils' enjoyment of learning and on the standards they reach in writing and mathematics.
- Whether assessment is used effectively as a tool to identify underachievement and to promote accelerated progress.

# Information about the school

This is a smaller-than-average-size school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and there are none at early stages of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average but there is a much higher proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs. It is a nationally accredited Healthy School, holding both Artsmark and Activemark and has the Eco School (silver) award. It has recently received the Primary Science Quality Mark.

A new headteacher and a new deputy headteacher have been appointed since the previous inspection.

Smallworld Pre-School Nursery operates on the same site. It receives a separate inspection and a separate report which is available on the Ofsted website.

**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 and improving school. Pupils have an outstanding awareness of what makes a healthy lifestyle and are actively involved in Eco activities and in a range of sports and games to keep themselves fit. Most parents and carers are grateful for what the school offers their children and the comment, 'Our sons and daughters enjoy school and the adults who work with them are warm, friendly and approachable' was typical of their comments.

Pupils generally enter the Reception class with below average age-related skills, particularly in communication, language and literacy. They make good progress and achieve well in all key stages and are now reaching broadly average attainment in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6. Standards in Key Stage 1 have improved year-on-year since the previous inspection and there is a similar picture in Key Stage 2. However, a below average proportion of pupils in the current Year 6 class is showing the potential to reach the higher National Curriculum Level 5 in mathematics.

Pupils enjoy school and feel safe within it because, one said, 'Grown-ups look after us and talk to us when we have a problem.' Indeed, the care, guidance and support pupils receive are good. As pupil and Eco councillors, house captains and playground leaders, pupils willingly take on responsibility within school and they organise a variety of events to raise funds for charity, to support the victims of Chernobyl, for example. Attendance is average. The school recognises that more liaison with families and a further consideration of how to promote good attendance are of the essence if it is to continue to rise.

Teaching is consistently good across the school but staff recognise that pupils do not always have sufficient opportunities to be independent in their learning. The themed curriculum ensures that pupils enjoy their learning and that they have opportunities to practise their literacy and numeracy skills in all subjects.

The school knows itself well. Inspirational leadership from the headteacher and senior team, proactive governance and good levels of teamwork amongst teaching and support staff ensure that school self-evaluation is accurate, taken seriously at all levels and that self-improvement is the order of the day. Attainment, good pupil achievement and a clear, shared vision for development demonstrate that Leftwich

Community Primary School has a good capacity for further improvement and that it provides good value for money.

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

- Continue to raise standards in English and mathematics by:
  - challenging more-able pupils in Key Stage 2 to reach the higher National Curriculum Level 5 in mathematics
  - ensuring pupils have sufficient opportunities to find things out for themselves and, therefore, take more responsibility for their own learning
  - sharing best practice in assessment in order to ensure that teachers plan lessons which meet pupils' different learning needs more closely.

- Raise the attendance levels of those pupils who do not come to school as regularly as they should by:
  - revisiting relevant rewards and consequences to maximise their impact
  - building on the already good relationships with parents and carers to reinforce their awareness of the importance of regular attendance.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils 2

Pupils enjoy learning and levels of engagement in lessons are good. They take their work seriously and are more than willing to show their assignments and talk about them to visitors. Moreover, they show immense pride in their work which is displayed prominently in classrooms and on corridors. Although some more-able pupils do not reach the higher National Curriculum levels in mathematics, the attainment and progress of all groups and in both key stages have improved since the previous inspection. Standards are broadly average by the time pupils leave and this demonstrates good progress and achievement from their starting points. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same good progress as their peers, as a result of the sensitive support they receive from teachers and teaching assistants. Standards in science are a particular strength and pupils in the current Year 6 class demonstrate an above average understanding of how water can affect life and make perceptive comments on the causes and consequences of acid rain and also of a Tsunami.

Pupils behave well, look after each other and are very proud of their school. They have a good awareness of what constitute safe and unsafe situations and comment on and explain with accuracy the possible dangers of using the internet. Their understanding of how to live a healthy lifestyle is outstanding: members of the pupil council are proactive in installing 'trim trails' in the playground and members of the gardening club grow a variety of vegetables and have recently built a greenhouse using recycled plastic. Librarians, class prefects and house captains support their peers well and encourage individuals to take a full part in everything the school has to offer. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and pupils have a keen understanding of cultures and religions which are different to their own. They celebrate a range of religious festivals and the strong links with schools in England and as far afield as Ndarugu in Kenya reinforce their local, national and global awareness.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

| | |
|---|---|
| **Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning**<br>Taking into account: | **2** |
| 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** | **1** |
| **The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community** | **2** |
| **The extent to which pupils develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being**<br>Taking into account: | **3** |
| Pupils' attendance[1] | 3 |
| **The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development** | **2** |

## How effective is the provision?

Warm relationships between adults and pupils, detailed lesson planning and good use of information and communication technology (ICT), by teachers and learners, are the key features of the consistently good teaching in both key stages. The best lessons are planned to meet the different learning needs of pupils closely, following accurate assessment of their successes and difficulties in previous sessions. The school recognises that this impressive practice needs to be shared more fully across the whole school. Realistic challenge for all groups of pupils, for example, in a thought-provoking Year 4 English session on ‘cliff hangers,’ enables pupils of all ability levels to work at their own pace and to identify key literary tools to ensure enjoyment in reading. On occasions, particularly in mathematics, more-able pupils are not challenged sufficiently to reach the National Curriculum levels of which they are capable. In addition, the school recognises that there are sometimes insufficient opportunities for pupils to work independently and take more responsibility for their own learning. Nonetheless, teaching has improved since the previous inspection and internal lesson observations give staff accurate advice, through the ‘Would have been better if...’ strategy, on how they can improve their practice. Assessment is good overall and identifies any possible underachievement with accuracy. There are examples of excellent marking, which also involves pupils reflecting on and evaluating their own work and that of their peers.

The curriculum continues to be under continuous development and review. The themed approach has developed well since the previous inspection and ensures that pupils are well engaged in their learning. As one pupil said, ‘Lessons are fun and we can see how different subjects are linked together.’ Furthermore, the advent of the new curriculum has also seen improvements in progress and attainment in both English and mathematics. The curriculum also has a positive impact on pupils’ personal outcomes. For example, they look forward to the residential visits when they can enhance their team-working skills and meet youngsters from different backgrounds. Indeed, there is a good range of enrichment activities and educational

[1]The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

trips, when pupils can reinforce their learning outside the formal classroom. In addition, art is a key element of the curriculum, is a most popular subject amongst pupils, and classrooms and corridors are adorned with paintings and drawings of a high standard.

Care, guidance and support are of good quality and the talented and committed team of teaching assistants, led by those with the higher level qualification, have a strong impact on pupils' progress, both personal and academic. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those whose circumstances render them potentially vulnerable, are identified quickly and supported well individually and through small groups sessions. Parents and carers pay tribute to the school's work in this area. 'All staff show a genuine willingness to provide support whenever and wherever it is needed' was typical of their comments. Induction procedures to the Reception class are good and are complemented by ever-strengthening links with the playgroup and children's centre. In addition, the school works closely with the neighbouring high school to prepare pupils in Year 6 for entry to the next stage in their education.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

| | |
|---|---|
| **The quality of teaching**<br>Taking into account: | **2** |
| 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?

Staff pay tribute to the good levels of teamwork in the school with comments such as, 'We are delighted to be part of a team in which everyone has the same aims and in which all our opinions are taken into account. We feel valued here.' The perceptive headteacher, ably supported by a well-qualified senior team, leads by example and ensures there is a shared vision for school development amongst both teaching and support staff. The governing body supports the school well and members are never afraid to challenge the leadership if it feels it is necessary to do so.

There are good links with parents and carers, who are also able to engage with teachers informally at the beginning and the end of the school day. The school leadership is aware, however, that these links need to be built upon, in order to facilitate the more regular attendance of the small percentage of pupils who do not come to school as regularly as they should. There are strong partnerships with a variety of outside agencies for the benefit of pupils and the family support worker is held in high regard by those with whom she works.

The school supports equality of opportunity well and challenges all forms of discrimination whenever they occur. Child protection and safeguarding arrangements meet requirements and the school recognises that record keeping must always be fully up to date.

Community cohesion is taken seriously by the school, and pupils are involved in a range of activities within the local area and further afield. The strong relationships with other schools allow pupils to engage with pupils from different backgrounds and their awareness of the global community is enhanced by the link with Ndarugu School in Kenya.

*These are the grades for the leadership and management*

| | |
|---|---|
| **The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement**<br>Taking into account: | **2** |
| 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** | **2** |
| **The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures** | **3** |
| **The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion** | **2** |
| **The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money** | **2** |

## Early Years Foundation Stage

This is a good Early Years Foundation Stage. Children’s skills on entry to the reception class are generally below age-related expectations, particularly in communication, language and literacy. Recently, however, these entry skills have begun to rise. All groups make good progress across the year and achieve well in all areas of learning. Children behave well, enjoy the setting and there are warm relationships between children and adults and between the children themselves. Children play and learn happily together.

Teaching is good and children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning. There is a good balance between child-initiated and adult-led activities and children are keen to explore and to find things out for themselves. Ongoing assessment of children’s progress is good and staff are looking at ways to ensure that assessment guides planning even more closely.

The setting is led and managed well. Staff are well qualified and have a good understanding of early years education. For example, they continuously introduce new strategies to improve both provision and practice. There is a clear and shared vision for the development of the area and a strong sense of purpose among all adults. Children’s induction into the Reception class is managed well and the school works closely with families to ensure that their children are prepared well for their new experiences. Parents and carers are involved closely in their children's learning.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

| | |
|---|---|
| **Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage**<br>Taking into account: | **2** |
| 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 in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |

## Views of parents and carers

The response rate from parents and carers to the Ofsted questionnaire was above the national average for primary schools. A very large majority of those who responded were satisfied with their children's experiences at the school. Almost all agree that the school keeps them safe. One stated, 'We are very pleased to send our children to Leftwich; they feel safe and happy there.' Most were of the view that the teaching is good, that their children make enough progress and that the school meets their particular needs. A very small minority do not agree that the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors examined the concern and found behaviour and behaviour management to be good. A small minority expressed the opinion that the school does not take sufficient account of their suggestions and concerns. Again, inspectors considered this and, although they found that the school's engagement with parents and carers is good overall, they judge that the school could liaise more with families, particularly in relation to pupils' attendance.

# Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Leftwich Community 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 71 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 185 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 36 | 51 | 32 | 45 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 47 | 66 | 22 | 31 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress | 27 | 38 | 38 | 54 | 5 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 29 | 41 | 38 | 54 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 31 | 44 | 37 | 52 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 31 | 44 | 36 | 51 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 28 | 39 | 37 | 52 | 2 | 3 | 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) | 29 | 41 | 33 | 46 | 4 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 30 | 42 | 35 | 49 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 1 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 23 | 32 | 36 | 51 | 5 | 7 | 1 | 1 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 27 | 38 | 29 | 41 | 6 | 8 | 2 | 3 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 35 | 49 | 31 | 44 | 5 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 37 | 52 | 27 | 38 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 1 |

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 all 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

| | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Type of school | Outstanding | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
| Nursery schools | 46 | 48 | 6 | 0 |
| Primary schools | 6 | 47 | 40 | 7 |
| Secondary schools | 12 | 39 | 38 | 11 |
| Sixth forms | 13 | 42 | 41 | 3 |
| Special schools | 28 | 49 | 19 | 4 |
| Pupil referral units | 14 | 45 | 31 | 10 |
| All schools | 10 | 46 | 37 | 7 |

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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. Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

# 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: | 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.<br>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.<br>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.<br>■ The quality of teaching.<br>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.<br>■ 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.**

16 May 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Leftwich Community Primary School, Northwich, CW9 8DH**

Thank you for your warm welcome when we came to inspect your school last week. You were very friendly, polite and helpful. I promised to write a letter to you to tell you about what we found and I have kept my promise.

Leftwich is a good and improving school. Your teachers teach you well and you are making good progress in your studies. Your behaviour is good and you feel safe in school because the adults who work with you are always there to help if you need it. You have an excellent understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle and you are very skilled indeed at growing vegetables in the school garden and in the greenhouse you built out of recycled plastic bottles. You enjoy the many opportunities to take part in after-school activities and trips. Your teachers and teaching assistants look after you well and make sure that all of you can take full advantage of everything the school has to offer you.

As you know, we came to Leftwich to help your headteacher and all the other staff to make the school even better. We have asked them, therefore, to challenge even more those of you who sometimes find the work easy, especially in mathematics, so that you can reach your targets. We have also asked them to give you more opportunities to find things out for yourselves and to make sure that they work out exactly how well you are doing so that they can plan lessons which are just what you need to make the best progress you can. Finally, I think the school should keep trying to improve the attendance of those of you who do not come to school as regularly as you should. You can obviously play a big part in this.

Thanks again for being so kind to us. Please keep working hard and looking after each other.

Yours sincerely

Jim Kidd
Lead Inspector

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