

Lacey Green Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111010
Local Authority	Cheshire
Inspection number	325271
Inspection dates	10–11 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Aelwyn Pugh HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.
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)	215
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr P Smith
Headteacher	Mrs L Dooley
Date of previous school inspection	February 2006
School address	Barlow Road Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 4DP
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Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector. The inspectors visited 21 lessons and held meetings with the headteacher, staff, groups of pupils and the chair of governors. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including: teachers' planning and assessment files, the school development plan, assessment information, pupils' books, and 60 responses to the questionnaire sent to parents and carers.

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

- the extent to which the school has succeeded in maintaining the judgement of outstanding made at the time of the last inspection
- the extent to which the strategies implement by the school have succeeded in raising the overall standards of teaching from good to outstanding
- the impact of the strategies adopted to raise standards in reading across the school
- the sustainability of the most recent improvements in standards at the end of Key Stage 1.

Information about the school

Lacey Green is an average sized primary school, situated on a former council estate in Wilmslow. It draws its pupils from a wide area, as well as the immediate neighbourhood. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is higher than the national average. The school provides extended services before and after the teaching day and hosts a privately funded care provision that is the subject of a separate inspection. Very few pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds, although the proportion has increased considerably in the last two years. The school holds the Artsmark Gold, Healthy Schools, Active Schools and International Schools (Foundation) awards and has recently received the Dyslexia-friendly award.

Inspection judgements

Grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness

1

Capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Lacey Green is an outstanding school. No visitor could fail to be impressed by the high quality of the environment; the impeccable behaviour of the pupils; the mutual respect and care that all members of this very happy community show for each other; and the high aspirations and pride in personal achievement engendered in every child.

Achievement is outstanding. The pupils enjoy their lessons and make very good progress as they move through the school. Those with special educational needs make particularly good progress because of the very high quality of the extra support they receive. For several years the standards that pupils attain at the end of Key Stage 2 have been above average, and well above average in mathematics and science. Standards in writing need to be raised further. The school has already identified this and is implementing a rigorous programme for improvement, the effects of which can clearly be seen in the progress of current pupils.

Teaching is typically good. However, there is also outstanding teaching. The fact that this exists at crucial points in the school has ensured that dips in past performance have been rectified and that results are on course to improve further. Assessment is highly effective and pupils of all ages have a very clear understanding of what their targets are, how well they are progressing towards them and what they need to do to improve their work. Throughout the school, pupils of all levels of ability approach their work with tremendous enthusiasm and a clear determination to succeed.

An undoubted strength of the school is the wide, varied and very high quality curriculum that it offers its pupils, both within and beyond the teaching day. The range of specialist expertise within the staff is used very effectively and supplemented by regular contributions from visiting artists, drama, dance and sports providers, as well as parents and other members of the community. As a result, the pupils have access to a rich array of activities. A particularly impressive element is the way that the school monitors the rates of participation, consults with those who are not involved in any activities and works with them to provide alternatives. As a result, 98% of the pupils regularly take part in one of the school's clubs. The unremitting focus on gaining externally accredited 'quality marks' ensures that provision in these areas is of a consistently high standard.

The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. The

teaching they receive motivates the children so that they make rapid progress, particularly in communication, language and literacy and in personal, social and emotional development.

The headteacher provides very strong leadership and is very well supported by the deputy headteacher. The leadership team is being further strengthened through the establishment of key stage leaders, a well judged development that allows for greater delegation of responsibilities. The senior management monitor provision very carefully and have a strong awareness of strengths and areas for further development, as is reflected in the accuracy of the school's self-evaluation. The governors provide very good support and safeguarding procedures are very effective. The school has outstanding capacity to develop further because senior managers have succeeded in maintaining its many strengths and have very well thought through plans for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on the outstanding teaching that exists at several points in the school to ensure that all pupils, particularly the most able, are consistently challenged to improve and to be actively involved in their own learning.

How good is the overall outcome for individuals and groups of pupils?

1

Pupils' attainment is high. Results at the end of Key of Key Stage 2 have been significantly higher than average in mathematics and science for several years. The school's own data show that they were average in 2008 because of the high proportion of pupils with special needs in that particular cohort. Similar reasons account for the two-year drop in standards at the end of Key Stage 1. In both cases, the school had anticipated the situation. Examination of tracking data and samples of children's work indicate that the recent improvements at Key Stage 1 are set to continue and that standards in the current Year 6 accord with the school's traditionally high performance at Key Stage 2. Observation in the classrooms showed that pupils have a highly positive approach to their work and clearly enjoy their learning. As a result, they are making very good progress. The consistent and very high quality support for pupils with special needs ensures that they make outstanding progress.

Pupils told inspectors that they felt very safe, confirming the result of the school's own survey. They are very keen to pursue healthy lifestyles and the proportion regularly taking part in physical and sporting activities is very high. By assuming roles of responsibility and through their charitable activities, pupils of all ages make a valuable contribution to the school and the wider community. Attendance is good and improving. Their highly developed interpersonal skills, self-reliance and academic success prepare them well for the next stage of education, although they would benefit from further experiences of managing money. Pupils' responses through art, music, extended writing and collective worship show that their spiritual and cultural development is well developed. They also have a highly developed sense of social

and moral responsibility.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	1
How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning?	1
To what extent do pupils feel safe?	1
How well do pupils behave?	1
To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles?	1
To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community?	1
Pupils' attendance	2
How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2
What is the extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	1

The quality of the school's work

Teaching is typically good. Teachers have secure subject knowledge, plan their lessons carefully and make good use of questioning to check on pupils' understanding and to help them develop it further. In some cases, however, the work does not provide sufficient challenge for the most able pupils. On the other hand, several examples of outstanding teaching were seen where pupils of all abilities were stretched and were given ample opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning in an active and stimulating environment. Assessment is highly effective and pupils of all ages have a very clear understanding of what their targets are, how well they are progressing towards them and what they need to do to improve their work. This reflects the high level of support, guidance and care that the school provides for its pupils. The rich and varied experiences they receive through the very broad curriculum make a major contribution to pupils' development.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

High quality teaching and purposeful learning	2
Effective assessment	1
An appropriate curriculum which meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, provision through partnership with other organisations	1
Support, guidance and care	1

¹ Grades for attainment are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; 4 is low

How effective are leadership and management?

Leadership at Lacey Green Primary School is outstanding. The senior management team and governors have a very clear ambition to ensure high standards in all aspects of the school's work. This is clearly shared by the staff and is reflected in the pupils' attitudes and approach to learning. Through careful tracking and considerable investment in additional support, the school ensures that pupils of all abilities and backgrounds make very good progress. Very careful thought has been given to providing excellent male role models. As a result, boys readily take part in dance and drama, as well as in sports. The school has very effective safeguarding procedures and works very closely with a range of agencies to ensure the safety of more vulnerable children. There is a very clear sense of community within the school and close links have been forged with the wider community as well as with children in countries abroad. The school is also reaping the benefits of the contribution of the recent increase in the number of pupils from minority ethnic communities. However, there is further work to be done to ensure that pupils have a clear understanding of the diversity of communities within the United Kingdom. The school recognises this and has recently established links with an inner city school with a very diverse pupil population.

These are the grades for leadership and management

Communicating ambition and driving improvement	1
Promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination	1
Ensuring that safeguarding procedures are effective	1
Ensuring that the governing body provides effective challenge and support so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities are met	1
Promoting the school's relationship with parents and carers, including their involvement in decision-making about matters relating to learning and well-being	2
Developing partnerships with other providers, organisations and services	1
Ensuring the school contributes to community cohesion	2
Deploying resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are outstanding. The children are thoroughly involved in their learning, relate extremely well to adults and their peers and they show high levels of independence and persistence. The quality of provision is outstanding. The environment is very well organised and provides the children with exciting opportunities for learning both inside and outside the classroom. The teaching motivates the children so that they make rapid progress. Their progress is very carefully and regularly assessed and their welfare is rigorously monitored. Leadership and management are outstanding.

How good are the outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1
What is the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1

How effectively is the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
Overall effectiveness: how well does the setting/school meet the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1

Views of parents and carers

Sixty questionnaires were returned to the inspectors by parents and carers. The vast majority of those who responded were very satisfied and happy with the school, seeing it as very caring and supportive. There were no particular trends in the small number of criticisms received. However, 10 per cent of respondents stated that the school never, or only occasionally, kept them well informed about their child's learning. Given the fact that the school holds regular parents' meetings and communicates with families in a variety of ways, it is unclear what the reason for this criticism is. The senior managers recognise that they will need to investigate it further.

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. In 2007-8, 15% of schools were judged to be outstanding.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. In 2007-8, 49% of schools were judged good.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. In 2007-8, 32% of schools were judged satisfactory.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. In 2007-8, 5% of schools were judged inadequate.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
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.
Achievement:	an overall measure of the pupils' success in their academic learning. The term combines attainment and progress. Pupils might make good progress, for example, but if their attainment remains low, inspectors may judge that their achievement is only satisfactory.
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.



12 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lacey Green Primary School, Wilmslow, SK9 4DP

You are very lucky. You go to an outstanding school. Why is it outstanding? Mr Gill and I think that it is for these reasons.

- You all behave beautifully all the time.
- You all help and respect each other.
- You all work very hard and enjoy your lessons.
- Your teachers also work very hard. They know you all very well and they make sure that your lessons are interesting.
- You have lots of clubs and activities that you can go to during and after school and most of you go to them.
- The school building is spotlessly clean and the displays are colourful and interesting.
- Mrs Dooley, Mrs Jones and all the staff want the very best for you. They take great care of you, check on how well you are doing and are always looking for ways of making the school even better.
- You told us both how much you enjoy coming to the school and how very proud of it you are.

We have asked Mrs Dooley and the staff to keep up the good work and to make the lessons even more exciting than they are now. We know that you will help them with this.

One of the things we noticed about Lacey Green was the way that the older children always help the younger ones. Could I please ask the older children to read this letter to the younger ones and help them to understand it?

Thank you for all your help during our visit. We will always remember coming to your school and wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Aelwyn Pugh
Her Majesty's Inspector

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