

Havannah Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111044
Local Authority	Cheshire
Inspection number	288839
Inspection date	27 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Delia Hiscock

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	129
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Wendy Osbaldestin
Headteacher	Mr M O'Donnell
Date of previous school inspection	5 February 2001
School address	Malhamdale Road Congleton Cheshire CW12 2DF
Telephone number	01260 275820
Fax number	01260 297754

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This popular school serves a semi rural population with some features of economic disadvantage. A broadly average proportion of pupils take up free school meals; the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also average. There is a smaller than average proportion of pupils of minority ethnic heritage, a tiny number of whom are learning to speak English. The school is much smaller than average but has increased in numbers in recent years. The school has gained the award for basic skills and sports ActiveMark.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Achievement is exceptional in this outstandingly good school that includes everyone in its work. Pupils really like it, including those who have transferred from other schools. Parents too say how pleased they are with their children's education. One parent summed it up: 'Havannah is a friendly, welcoming school, which delivers stimulating and interesting learning which has motivated my children to learn.' This is largely because of the excellent quality of pastoral care that fosters the well-being of each child and values what they say. One of the school council said: 'We are the voice of the school.' Pupils know how to have their say because there are lots of posters and messages around the school walls that explains this to them. These features contribute to pupils' outstanding personal development and are why they feel secure and very well supported. The pupils grow up to be caring and kind individuals who listen to others, who recognise the skills of their classmates and whose behaviour is excellent.

From their entry in Reception to the end of Year 6, the pupils of all backgrounds, including those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make an exceptional rate of progress. In the Foundation Stage, pupils make a really good start because provision is flexibly tailored to the profile of each group and features lots of exploratory, practical activities. This is how they reach broadly average standards at the end of their Reception Year. Good progress continues throughout Key Stages 1 and 2, so standards are consistently above average at the end of Key Stage 2. The upward trend in attainment is particularly pronounced in Years 3 to 6, and evident in the 2006 national test results in science in which pupils attained an exceptionally high standard. Almost all pupils with learning difficulties attain what is expected of all pupils at the end of Year 6. The school's very challenging performance targets are consistently met.

This is because the winning teaching and learning formula is outstanding in quality. It includes streamlined approaches, very effective setting arrangements and penetrating use of assessment information that accelerates the pace of progress for all pupils. Exciting use of information and communication technology (ICT) adds to the pupils' huge level of enjoyment and increasingly high expectations of themselves. The curriculum is tailored well to pupils' needs, and nurtures pupils' understanding of the lifestyle choices and the skills they need for the future. Because staff work very well together and know the pupils really well, there is a genuine family ethos in the school. The checks made on pupils' progress are thorough and intervention is powerful in supporting any child who seems to be standing still in their work. There are also lots of links with external agencies to deal with specific needs. Pupils are encouraged to do their best and they are very well guided to understand how to improve their work.

The quality of leadership and management to bring this about is exceptional. Staff, pupils and parents say that the new headteacher, just three months into his post, has made a good start to his work. School evaluation is thoughtful, forward thinking and continues to steer the momentum of development to sustain success. To make further improvements, leadership considers this to be an opportune time to widen the range of activities for pupils who are gifted or talented. Governance is insightful and informed, regularly and correctly challenging the school: 'Why, when, how, what's it going to cost and what will be the effect?' They recruit and invest in people very well and the school develops them remarkably well. This is the result of a prime culture for professional development and is the main reason why the school has exceptional capacity to move forward. The school provides exceptional value for money and has made really good improvements since the previous inspection.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop provision further for pupils who have talents or gifts.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Achievement is outstanding. This is because pupils gain the basic skills and self-confidence as learners very successfully as they move up each year. In Years 5 and 6, these skills become firmly established. Some of the pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities make astonishing progress as they overcome barriers and realise their potential.

Children enter their Reception Year with varying, but mainly below average, stages of development particularly in language skills. They make good progress to attain standards on entry to Year 1 that are broadly average. To meet the needs of the different cohorts of pupils, provision features lots of small groups and lots of valuable conversation and fun. This boosts the quality of learning so the rate of progress gathers momentum.

At the end of Key Stage 1, standards fluctuate between average and above average because very small numbers in some year groups mean that data is unreliable. Nevertheless, the school actively pursues any concerns it might have that pupils could attain more. Progress gathers momentum in Key Stage 2 and is at times, exceptional in pace. This is reflected in the school's regular placement in the top ten per cent nationally for progress in these years. The result of this is consistently above average standards that continue to rise. In the 2006 national tests, for example, three quarters of the pupils attained the higher Level 5 in science, reflecting exceptionally high attainment. The school's challenging targets for performance are met because they are meticulously tuned to reflect the personal needs of each pupil, the expected impact of additional support, as well as their progress and potential.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The exceptional quality of relationships, the family ethos of the school and the ways through which pupils have a say all contribute to pupils' exemplary behaviour and the kindness they show to others. They benefit hugely from some excellent models of support that develop their self-esteem, confidence and their ability to reflect on the world around so positively. Equally, pupils are very motivated, really enjoy the activities provided, and seize the chances they are offered because they recognise that the school is doing so much to help them. This is why they themselves contribute positively in return. They understand that diet and lifestyle choices make a big difference to their health and are particularly energetic in their take up of sporting activities. Pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT prepare them very well for their economic futures. Their refreshingly positive approach to life and learning enables them to respect others, whatever their background, heritage or culture, reflecting their very strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The outstanding quality of learning for pupils is brought about because teaching is considered, planned very well and hugely evaluative of its impact. The shared teamwork of staff, including

teaching assistants, teachers and volunteers, ensures highly effective teaching and support for small groups of pupils. These layers of support also help to tackle any learning or catch-up needs that are more difficult to address. Learning is bolstered by the really good relationships, the use of specialist subject knowledge and approaches that help pupils to understand how to improve their learning. Above all, incisive use of assessment and some exciting activities linking different subjects help to accelerate learning and make it fascinating at times. Pupils know clearly what they are learning, how to improve their work and for the most part, what they need to learn next. This is how they mature into conscientious learners, who listen, discuss and present their learning in a variety of ways.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Pupils' needs are met exceptionally well through the flexible range of activities provided. Teaching arrangements for mixed aged classes are particularly effective in meeting individual and additional needs. There is also a plentiful array of educational visits, creative and thought-provoking activities, and a good range of extra-curricular activities. Provision for personal, social and health education is excellent and its day to day messages touch the life of each pupil so they know that they matter. The Foundation Stage provides pupils with a really good start and features lots of practical activities and lively conversation. Excellent links with other schools and with the on site pre school provision in particular make transition smooth for pupils. Although current provision for the more able pupils is robust, the range of activities to promote pupils' talents and gifts more fully is less developed.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Pupils are told that they have the right to achieve, enjoy their education, feel safe, say what is important to them and make a difference. The school does this really well. There is exemplary support for all pupils including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There is early identification of additional needs and thorough checks on their progress. This prevents failure and fosters growing independence. This high quality support is much valued by parents. At the hub of the school's work, assessment systems are powerful tools that track progress and help to lever up attainment. Pupils know how to make their work better and increasingly, they understand what to aspire to. The requirements for care, safety and child protection are all in place, including those for risk assessment. The school is not complacent and is revising procedures to make further improvements.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The highly effective leadership and management team has pupils' personal development and well-being uppermost in its work. Despite recent changes in leadership, including a new headteacher, the pupils and parents have found this transition seamless and positive. The very welcoming ethos of the school and steely systems of support and pastoral care continue as a matter of routine. Parents agree and as one commented: 'Havannah. promotes a caring, loving environment for the children to learn, it is a happy, fun place to be.' It is the school's long standing investment in its leaders and staff, borne out in the exceptional quality of their professional development, which pays dividends in pupils' achievements. Staff know pupils

very well and ensure that they make exacting progress. This occurs because there is extensive monitoring and analysis of performance. Accountability for each pupil's progress is part and parcel of the professional debate. Leaders have improved many of the structures and systems to refine the information they need to improve provision and communicate with all to bring this about. This is why evaluation is perceptive. It is currently undergoing a process of review as the headteacher gets to know the school even better. He has recognised the need to further develop the range of activities to widen the scope of achievement for pupils who are gifted and talented. In this school, everyone wants to do the best for the pupils, and although they have very effective skills to do so, they use those of external agencies and partners where they can. Governance plays its part with tenacity, vigilance and questioning. As one governor said, 'We are like terriers in our determination to do the best for our school.'

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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
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 the 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

¹ Grade 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.

Annex A

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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Inspection of Havannah Primary School, Congleton, CW12 2DF

I really enjoyed my visit to your school because there were lots of memorable things going on that will remind me of you. These include the energetic activity on the playground equipment and the excellent way that you behave towards others. You were very courteous as well, during lessons and around the school. I was really pleased to hear what you had to say. I agree with you when you say that you feel that you are listened to and have a voice in what goes on. I am writing this letter to tell you that I found your school to be an outstanding one!

I think you know that everyone tries to make sure that you all do as well as you can and that you are really well looked after, just like your parents think too. I found also that the school helps you a lot to become sensible and caring youngsters who think about others and respect their rights and wishes as you would your own.

Your school is providing you with a super education and your new headteacher and the staff want to continue to do this. You may have some ideas about how it can get even better. When I asked, you found it hard to think of anything. I think you have lots of talents and the world of the future needs your skills. This is why I have asked the school to:

- develop even more activities that encourage the talents and gifts you might have.

Keep up your really good work! Perhaps you could use some of your budget for some equipment to encourage talent by buying lots of puzzles to help you to think!