

Ladybridge Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106054
Local Authority	Stockport
Inspection number	355880
Inspection dates	24–25 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Stephen Rowland

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	226
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Elaine Hindley
Headteacher	Mrs Cathy Lyall
Date of previous school inspection	11 June 2008
School address	Councillor Lane Cheadle Cheshire SK8 2JF
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They visited 18 lessons and observed the work of nine teachers. They evaluated the school's work, and looked at relevant policies, the school's development plan, records of meetings of the governing body, the school's monitoring records and analyses of pupils' attainment and progress. The 93 questionnaires returned by parents and carers were also analysed.

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

- How well the school is raising standards in writing in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- The degree to which the school is using tracking information to plan for progress.
- How well teachers use assessment to plan for lessons which match individual needs.
- The degree to which leaders and managers at all levels contribute to the school's development and improvement.
- The effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage in developing language and social skills.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils currently known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. A large majority of pupils is of White British heritage. The remaining numbers come from a variety of different backgrounds including White, Caribbean, African and Asian. A small proportion is at an early stage of learning English. The school operates a resourced base on behalf of the local authority. It caters for pupils with a variety of severe and complex learning needs, including some with medical needs. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those in the resourced base, is above the national average. A large number of pupils is admitted or leave during the school year. The school has its own part-time nursery. The school has Extended School status, Healthy Schools status and the Leading Parent Partnership award.

A Children's Centre, which is managed privately, operates on the same site. This is subject to separate inspection arrangements.

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. Its strong links with the local community and with families have allowed it to create an environment where all pupils are known and respected as individuals. Pupils say they feel safe and that if they have problems staff will listen to them and help. Inspection evidence shows that attainment is improving and is now near the national average. Pupils' achievement is good. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well and make good progress. Self-evaluation is thorough and honest. The issues raised at the time of the last inspection have been successfully tackled. The consistency of teaching and assessment has improved over recent years and this has brought about improving achievement. This, along with improving outcomes, demonstrates a good capacity for sustained improvement.

The school's resourced provision for pupils with a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities functions effectively and provides a broad variety of effective interventions to help learning. The Early Years Foundation Stage enables children to make a solid start to their school life. Children's progress is satisfactory, but there are some inconsistencies in the way in which children are encouraged to develop as independent learners. Staff observe and record children's progress but this process is not systematic enough. In the main school, teaching is often brisk and engaging. The school's focus on raising standards in writing has had an impact on achievement. In a minority of lessons pace can slow as a result of over-long introductions and explanations by the teacher. Also, occasionally, pupils do not fully understand how well they are doing and how they can improve. Pupils are very loyal to the school. They value the fact that pupils are treated as individuals and that the school works so closely with parents and carers. One pupil said, 'This is a good school. Everyone is respected wherever they are from or what they are like.'

Parents and carers almost always express very positive views about the school. Many of the responses to the questionnaire included very positive comments. One typical comment was: 'I feel the school always has my child's best interests as its priority.' Others referred to the school's work to teach pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. 'I have two autistic children at the school and I am very pleased with the progress they have made.'

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - – ensuring that children have frequent opportunities to select activities independently

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- – ensuring that adults systematically observe children and record children's progress so that they can plan for the next steps of learning
- – ensuring that there is more regular access to the outdoor area.
- Continue to improve the rate of pupils' progress by:
 - – ensuring that pupils have regular opportunities to work independently and to share their thinking with their peers
 - – ensuring that the intended outcomes of lessons are made consistently clear to pupils so that they can understand how well they have done and what they need to do to improve
 - – ensuring that lessons have a brisk and business-like pace so that pupils remain engaged.

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

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills which are generally low compared to those expected for their age. They make good progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 and evidence from lesson observations as well as from work scrutiny shows attainment by the end of Year 6 is now close to the national average. The school's tracking data show an improving trend and many pupils are now meeting the targets set for them. The school's work to improve the performance of boys in writing is having an impact so that the gap with girls' performance is closing. The improving trend in achievement is due to the focus the school has had on securing greater consistency in the quality of teaching and on its more effective use of assessment information. A wide range of interventions is employed to support those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and, consequently, they make good progress.

Pupils value the engaging lessons provided for them and are keen to learn. Their achievement is good. They make rapid progress when they are actively involved in learning. In an outstanding English lesson, for example, pupils had to move around the room from table to table to prepare an advertising campaign for a new healthy drink. They were constantly challenged to account for their ideas and had to work cooperatively and creatively.

Pupils say they feel safe and this view is strongly endorsed by parents and carers. Pupils of all backgrounds are made to feel welcome and the school has a strong sense of community. Behaviour is good and any concerns are dealt with swiftly and appropriately. Pupils are pleased to take on responsibilities to help with the running of the school. There is an active school council and many pupils contribute to keeping the school grounds neat and tidy. These roles help pupils to develop the skills they will need in adult life. Attendance has improved rapidly over recent years and is now broadly average. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong and relate very well to each other. They understand the cultural diversity of the United Kingdom and respect cultures which are different from their own. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is good and the majority of lessons are well-planned, brisk and purposeful. Questioning is skilful and pupils are frequently challenged to explain their thinking and to work with their peers to extend their understanding of the lesson's subject matter. Learning is active and enjoyable. In one good Year 4 English lesson, for example, pupils explored syllables and the structure of language through working together to construct haiku poems. Occasionally, the introductory phase of a lesson is over-long and pupils have to wait too long to become actively involved. On these occasions, pupils' interest wanes and learning is not as strong. Teaching assistants are deployed well to support learning.

The school has made great progress in its use of assessment to tailor work to meet individual needs. Teachers use their knowledge of what pupils know and understand to plan for a range of activities to ensure that pupils have appropriately challenging and engaging tasks to move their learning forward. In a minority of lessons, the intended outcomes are not made sufficiently clear to pupils so that, by the end of their work, they do not understand how well they have done and what they need to do to improve further. Also at times, pupils are not provided with sufficient opportunities to work independently and to share their ideas with their peers. Marking is generally helpful and purposeful and allows pupils to see what they need to do to master the next steps.

The school's curriculum is well-matched to the needs of pupils. There is an appropriate focus on the need to develop basic literacy and numeracy skills and this is having an

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impact on achievement. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used effectively throughout the school to support pupils' learning. Pupils benefit from a broad range of enrichment activities including a residential experience available for all in Years 5 and 6. The curriculum contributes well to pupils' personal development and well-being.

There is effective support for vulnerable pupils and for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The work of the school's learning mentor helps to remove barriers to learning and allows more children and their families to benefit from what the school has to offer. This work is also supported by a close collaboration with the Children's Centre. The school can cite a number of telling examples of how its support has enabled children to feel happy and confident in school. The school has also successfully improved attendance over recent years by means of a range of effective strategies. Individual targets are set for all pupils and these are shared with parents. The learning mentor and educational welfare officer carry out home visits if individual attendance causes concern. Good attendance is rewarded. There are now very few persistent absentees and pupils say that they understand how important good attendance is.

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?

The headteacher is committed to improving the school and communicates her vision well to all the staff. Under her direction the school has successfully developed strong links with families. This has meant a welcoming and open ethos in which pupils feel safe and valued. The headteacher is supported well by her senior staff and middle leaders who share a common sense of purpose and direction. Teaching is monitored and evaluated rigorously and support provided to ensure that good practice is shared.

The school evaluates its work honestly and thoroughly and has clear plans, which enable it to put aims into practice. Leaders and managers at all levels contribute actively to this process. The experienced governing body has a good knowledge of the school's strengths and priorities for further improvement. Governors are willing to question and challenge when needed.

Partnership with parents and carers are strong. Effective links with the Children's Centre provide good opportunities for families to be actively involved in their children's school life. A range of activities including mathematics classes for parents and their children help to break down barriers. The school benefits from partnerships with other agencies and individuals such as Resource Workers and the Continuing Education Service, which strengthen links with families and the support for vulnerable children. Discrimination of any type has no place at Ladybridge and all pupils are given an equal opportunity to

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succeed. There are robust systems to ensure that pupils are safeguarded and protected. This includes an appropriate focus on the suitability of staff and new appointments. The school functions very well as a community. The work the school has carried out to promote community cohesion is effective. The way the school functions as a community, and the number of active links with other schools, both in this country and abroad, demonstrate the success of the school's plans for this aspect.

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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
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

Children make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Many enter the Nursery with language skills which are well below those expected for their age. The development of these skills is a major focus for staff although the full impact of their work is yet to be fully realised. Children make satisfactory progress in developing social skills. They learn to share and to interact with each other. However, at times they are not given sufficient opportunities to make choices for themselves and this inhibits the development of their skills as independent learners. They behave well and know how to play safely.

Adults use observations to assess children's learning and to plan for the next steps. However, this practice is inconsistently applied so that at times planning for each child's progress is not sufficiently sharp. The quality of adult conversations with children is developing and this is enabling staff to provide better-focused interventions to guide children's learning. There is a stimulating learning environment with a good variety of equipment both indoors and out. However, at times children's access to the outdoor area is limited and this restricts the range of learning experiences available to them. Links with parents and carers are good, with many opportunities for them to take an active role in celebrating their child's achievements.

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The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage has been reorganised recently and self-evaluation is increasingly effective. The staff meet formally and review their progress towards agreed aims. Planning for improvement is thorough and clear. There is a growing sense of confidence and consistency, which is starting to have an impact on outcomes and provision.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

About 37% of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire, a broadly average rate of response for primary schools. A very large majority of the responses was very positive with many positive comments.

A very small minority of respondents felt that the school did not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors looked carefully at the way in which the school deals with unacceptable behaviour through discussions, including with pupils, observations in and around the school and by examining records of incidents. Inspection evidence indicates that the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ladybridge 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 93 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 226 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	65	70	26	28	1	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	60	65	31	33	1	1	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	62	67	27	29	1	1	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	61	66	28	30	2	2	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	66	71	21	23	3	3	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	61	66	27	29	4	4	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	50	54	41	44	1	1	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)	56	60	34	37	1	1	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	58	62	31	33	1	1	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	51	55	32	34	3	3	4	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	52	56	35	38	2	2	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	55	59	29	31	3	3	3	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	67	72	22	24	2	2	2	2

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 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 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.

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:	<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 pupils' 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.



28 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ladybridge Primary School, Cheadle, SK8 2JF

Thank you for making us so welcome during our recent visit to your school. We were particularly grateful to those of you who agreed to meet us during your lunchtime. Thank you also to those of you who completed the questionnaire.

Ladybridge is a good school. It has lots of good features and the staff work very hard to make it better. We were particularly impressed by how well you all respect each other and how everyone is made to feel welcome. We were impressed by how closely the school works with your families to make sure you get the most out of school.

You work hard in your lessons and make good progress. You learn a lot outside the classroom, for example on the residential trips. To make your lessons even better we thought that at times you could be given more opportunities to work with other pupils so that you can compare your ideas. Also we felt that, at times, the learning intentions you are given at the start of some lessons could be made clearer so that you know exactly what the lesson will be about.

We have also suggested some changes in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that children have more opportunities to learn independently and to have more access to the outdoor area.

You are rightly proud of your school. Please help your teachers by always behaving as well as you did during the inspection by trying your very best and by helping each other. Once again, thank you for your kindness and help.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Rowland

Lead inspector

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