

Whitehill Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106084
Local Authority	Stockport
Inspection number	355884
Inspection dates	28–29 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Andree Keddle

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 of pupils on the school roll	196
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Jude Wells
Headteacher	Miss Jill Connell
Date of previous school inspection	6 February 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 13 lessons, observed nine teachers and held meetings with groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, staff and the local authority advisor. They observed the school's work and looked at documentation including records regarding the safety and protection of pupils, school policies, the school development plan, reports from the School Improvement Partner, assessment data, pupils' work, teachers' planning and questionnaires returned from staff, pupils and 126 parents and carers.

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

- The achievement of all groups of pupils, especially boys, to determine whether teaching and the curriculum are ensuring that they make enough progress, particularly in mathematics and in Key Stage 1.
- The quality of teaching, to determine whether assessment information is used to move pupils on in their learning by ensuring that activities are well matched to pupils' skills and prior knowledge.
- The rigour and effectiveness of the leaders' systems to bring about improvement across the whole school.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average-sized primary school. Most pupils are White British and only a small minority of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average and the proportion of those having a statement of special educational needs is broadly average. The school has achieved Healthy Schools status and has the Inclusion Quality Mark and the Activemark.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Pupils make satisfactory progress and they leave at the end of Year 6 with broadly average standards. There is occasionally variation in the achievement of boys and girls, but there is no consistent pattern over time. Currently, pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 in mathematics is better than in English. The school's own data and pupils' work show increased progress being made and this is beginning to improve levels of attainment, particularly by the end of Key Stage 1.

Overall, teaching is satisfactory but inconsistent. As a result, the progress pupils make is variable across classes and subjects. Systems to collect and record assessment information are at an early stage of becoming embedded. Assessments are broadly accurate but the quality and quantity of evidence collected to support teachers' judgements varies. In pupils' books teachers' marking gives praise and encouragement, but guidance on the next steps to improve is not as frequent or consistent. In addition, pupils have few opportunities to make a response to the marking. The satisfactory curriculum is broad and balanced and is enriched by a range of extra-curricular clubs and educational visits, including the very popular Year 6 residential trip. Beautiful displays of pupils' work and photographs show the range of activities undertaken. However, the impact of the curriculum on raising attainment is yet to be fully realised.

This is a friendly and welcoming school and pupils say that they feel happy and safe. Parents, carers and inspectors agree. Staff care for pupils appropriately and place a high importance on safeguarding pupils. Pupils understand what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and they participate enthusiastically in regular physical activity during and after school. Pupils have a well-developed sense of community both within school and locally. They are active and successful fundraisers for a local children's hospice. Although most pupils say that they enjoy school, a minority of pupils do not attend regularly enough. The leaders' strategies have successfully reduced the percentage of persistent absentees and the overall attendance rate is improving over time.

The leadership team has a broadly accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and correctly identifies the priority areas for school improvement. For example, significant improvements have been achieved in pupils' reading skills due to specialised teaching. Pupils' books show that they are making increased progress over time and systems are in place to check on the progress of all groups. This demonstrates the school's satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement. Self-evaluation, however, is over-generous in some respects with regard to the school's performance and the use of summary data to evaluate pupils' attainment and progress is not fully embedded. Members of the governing body are supportive and give their time freely. However, the

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level of challenge is insufficient and the governing body is not effective in holding the school to account.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards of attainment and accelerate pupils' progress, by ensuring that:
 - teaching is consistently good throughout the school
 - lessons are challenging, engaging and are well matched to the needs of all groups of learners
 - pupils have more opportunities to evaluate the quality of their work against simple success criteria
 - teachers' marking gives clear and regular guidance to pupils as to the next steps to take in their learning
 - pupils have the opportunity to respond to teachers' marking
 - the accuracy and regularity of assessment is improved throughout the school, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Increase the effectiveness of governance by:
 - ensuring that members of the governing body hold school leaders to account more rigorously
 - increasing opportunities to evaluate summary data relating to pupils' attainment and progress
 - setting higher targets for the school's performance.
- Increase pupils' attendance rates by July 2012 by
 - creating a culture of high expectations of good attendance at school
 - focusing on the group of pupils whose attendance is just below appropriate levels as well as those pupils who are persistently absent.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Over time, pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning and this is improving. When pupils experience good teaching, well matched to their prior learning, their progress accelerates. In a lesson seen during the inspection pupils in upper Key Stage 2 made good progress in English through cooperative discussion and drama activities which made use of work done in the history topic on World War Two. The activities were clearly structured by the teacher and enabled the pupils to discuss and develop their ideas verbally before writing a dialogue. The interesting subject matter and well-prepared resources, including photographs, ensured that pupils were well motivated and interested in the tasks.

Where teaching is satisfactory pupils make less progress, often because learning activities are not challenging enough and teachers do not have high enough expectations of the quality and quantity of work that pupils should produce. Pupils' attention and

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concentration are not as good in lessons which are satisfactory rather than good. Progress for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is satisfactory overall, but there is evidence that this is good when pupils are engaged in sharply focused interventions which enable them to take the next steps needed in their learning.

Pupils' contribution to the school and wider community is good. They take on a range of roles in school and participate enthusiastically in activities within the local community. For example, pupils work on an allotment and they have successfully campaigned for a "clean up" operation through letters to local councillors and their Member of Parliament. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in various situations and talk about how role play in school has helped them to prepare to deal with possible situations beyond school. They are well aware of the dangers of substance abuse. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and feel that they can talk to any adult about concerns and worries that they may have. Most pupils do understand the importance of good attendance at school but a minority do not attend well enough. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory; they get on well together and understand the difference between right and wrong. Pupils' basic skills are broadly average and this, combined with improving attendance, provides a satisfactory basis for their future economic well-being.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
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	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

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

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How effective is the provision?

Teaching is satisfactory overall with a small minority of lessons being good. In the best lessons pupils make rapid progress as the result of a brisk pace in learning coupled with clear expectations from the teacher about the quality of work expected. Pupils are given clear 'steps to success' so they understand what to do and can evaluate how well they have done. In pupils' books, these 'steps to success' are often used as a checklist for pupils to work through as they complete their writing. In lessons where the teaching is satisfactory rather than good, pupils are not challenged to the same level and not given sufficient opportunities to apply their skills and knowledge and assess their own work. Although teaching assistants give effective support when pupils work in groups, they are not fully engaged with pupils in the early part of lessons when the teacher is teaching to the whole class.

The quality of the assessment information held as evidence of pupils' attainment and progress varies and systems to record the evidence are not fully embedded. Where assessment is most effective, pupils' work is marked in a way which clearly shows that they have met the criteria for each step in each assessment focus. Where assessment is not as robust, there is too little evidence in books of the pupils' working securely at the assessed level.

The satisfactory curriculum means that pupils enjoy their learning and in some classes good links are made between subjects. Educational visits are regular and provide memorable experiences for pupils. Good use is made of local visitor centres, museums and places of interest to enrich pupils' learning experiences.

Effective systems are in place to give pupils the support that they need, especially those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. There are appropriate transition arrangements to help pupils as they move to their next school. Measures are in place to monitor pupils' attendance and there are rewards which act as an effective incentive for the majority of pupils.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders have a satisfactory vision for improvement. Systems are in place to check on the progress that pupils make and to hold individual teachers to account but expectations and targets are not always set high enough. Recent improvements in teaching have ensured that pupils are making improved progress in their learning.

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Individual pupil assessment data are held by the school but this does not always inform governors sufficiently well. Despite committed support for the school, the governing body is not rigorous in holding the school to account and offers little challenge to its leaders. For example, summary data relating to pupils' attainment and progress are not always evaluated closely enough.

The school works successfully to form good relationships with parents and carers through good communication and consultation, such as the recent questionnaire on behaviour. Most parents say they are well-informed about their child's progress. Procedures to safeguard pupils are good and meet government requirements. Staff are well trained in child protection and very effective procedures are well embedded. The school makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion. Whilst it is a cohesive community itself, there is only limited evidence of its success in promoting community cohesion in the wider area. The school works well in partnership with other agencies which contribute effective support for pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school's work in promoting equal opportunity and tackling discrimination is satisfactory. Assessment information is collected and the progress of different groups of pupils is checked.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	4
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	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make satisfactory progress as a result of satisfactory provision and teaching. By the time they leave the Early Years Foundation Stage a minority of children achieve broadly average standards. There is a suitable balance of child-initiated and teacher-led activities which take place within the bright and stimulating learning environment. Teachers' planning responds to the needs and interests of the children. For example, recently, the role play café was changed to a beach shop at the children's request after a

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story they had listened to. Staff try to ensure that any specific needs are identified as early as possible. For example, some Nursery children have received extra support with their speech and language development. Procedures to ensure children's welfare are met.

Children play together well and enjoy supportive relationships with the adults who care for them. As a result, they grow in confidence and are happy, secure and increasingly ready to learn. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader has a clear vision for improvement and has supported and enabled staff to work together to support children's learning as a team. Procedures to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the provision are not yet fully developed. The collection of information and evidence about children's development is not fully embedded and recommendations from the local authority regarding this have yet to be implemented.

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

Most parents and carers are pleased that their children are happy, safe and enjoy attending this school. Inspectors agree with these positive views. A very large majority of parents and carers say that the teaching is good but inspectors' judgement is that teaching is satisfactory. A very small minority of parents and carers say that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors judge that pupils' behaviour is satisfactory and is managed appropriately.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Whitehill 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 126 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 196 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	90	71	35	28	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	92	73	27	21	4	3	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	77	61	41	33	7	6	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	75	60	42	33	6	5	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	82	65	41	33	1	1	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	76	60	37	29	9	7	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	73	58	42	33	7	6	3	2
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)	74	59	39	31	9	7	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	78	62	40	32	7	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	77	61	33	26	14	11	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	76	60	40	32	5	4	3	2
The school is led and managed effectively	81	64	36	29	5	4	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	89	71	32	25	1	1	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	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 are 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:	<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.



30 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Whitehill Primary School, Stockport, SK4 1PB

Thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave the inspectors when we inspected your school. Thank you for talking to us freely and giving your opinions in the questionnaires; you are clearly proud of your school. We were impressed with your friendliness and how safe and happy you feel in school.

You take on positions of responsibility in school and you make a good contribution to your local community. Adults in your school care for you and make sure that you have a good understanding of how to keep yourselves safe.

Overall, we judged that Whitehill is a satisfactory school. You reach average standards in your work as the result of satisfactory teaching. To help your school become even better, we have said that:

- senior leaders should help you to achieve higher standards in your work by making your lessons more challenging and giving you more opportunities to assess your own work
- governors should improve the way they check on how well the school is performing and set higher targets
- senior leaders and staff should ensure that those of you who do not attend school very well improve your attendance rates.

You can help by continuing to try your best, working hard and attending school every day.

Yours sincerely

Ms Andrée Kedde

Lead inspector

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