

Lum Head Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106093
Local authority	Stockport
Inspection number	377349
Inspection dates	22–23 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Kevin Johnson

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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	177
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	J Lowrey
Headteacher	H Smith
Date of previous school inspection	16 March 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors who observed 15 lessons and saw seven teachers. Meetings were held with groups of parents and carers, pupils, members of the governing body and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at national assessment data and the school's assessments, governing body minutes, evidence of the school's monitoring and self-evaluation, safeguarding documentation and samples of pupils' work. Also taken into account were 69 questionnaires returned by parents and carers as well as those completed by staff members and pupils.

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

- How successfully the school is tackling the difference between girls' and boys' attainment in English.
- Inspectors examined the effectiveness of the school's strategies to improve attendance.
- The inspection team assessed whether teaching promotes good progress for all pupils and particularly for those who may be considered to be potentially vulnerable.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average-sized primary school. Just over half of the pupils are White British with the rest representing a wide range of ethnic groups. Very few are at an early stage of speaking English as an additional Language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. A broadly average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The school has Healthy Schools status and holds Activemark. It has also achieved the International Schools and Recognising Diversity awards.

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

The impact of the headteacher's leadership since the previous inspection, and the dedicated work of the governing body and staff have successfully driven significant improvements in many aspects of the school's work. Consequently, this has moved from a satisfactory to a good school.

Excellent provision of care, guidance and support underpins pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral social and cultural development. Pupils make an exemplary contribution to the life of the school and are extremely knowledgeable about how to keep themselves and others safe and healthy. Parents and carers are very supportive and typically comment on, '...the caring and kindness demonstrated', and, '...the way children are encouraged to help one another'.

Improvements in the Early Years Foundation Stage mean that children's learning and development get off to a good start. They enter Reception class with broadly expected abilities for their age but lower in some communication skills and mathematical thinking. They make good progress and that continues throughout the school due to teaching that is, in the main, consistently good and at times outstanding. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because the additional support they receive is planned effectively and matched well to what they need to learn. Those who speak English as an additional language are also supported well and achieve as well as their peers by the end of Year 6. Attainment overall at the end of Key Stage 2 is above average and has been consistently so for several years. This represents good achievement from earlier starting points. Nevertheless, the school has recognised that attainment in English could be further improved by raising the quality of boys' writing to match that of girls.'

Leaders and managers are clear about their roles in driving improvement and raising standards. As a result, of robust self-evaluation, they have a very accurate view of the school's performance. This collective understanding enables them to identify priorities and take necessary action. Incisive checking of pupils' progress, and the opportunities provided for pupils to discuss their learning are important elements in ensuring that all make good headway. The school is highly vigilant in ensuring that pupils of all abilities and backgrounds have equal opportunities for success, and is vigorous in ensuring that there is no discrimination. The extent of the good progress

and improvement across all key areas of the school's work amply demonstrate the school's good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in English further by:
 - improving the quality of boys' writing throughout the school
 - improving the standards of handwriting and spelling
 - embedding consistently good speaking and listening skills in Key Stage 1 and for younger pupils in Key Stage 2.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils are mostly attentive and well behaved in lessons. They enjoy school and learn well, although occasionally some younger pupils do not listen as well as could be expected. Pupils are keen on practical work and respond well to the challenges of role play and work which requires independent investigation. This was extremely well demonstrated by Year 6 pupils when they slipped easily into the roles of villagers to debate potential developmental work on their 'village green'. Pupils work effectively with partners and in small groups, and eagerly contribute ideas to the lesson after testing them on one another. The speaking skills of older pupils are better developed for their age than those of younger pupils. They are very clear about their own progress and their ability with language, but often careless about how their writing is presented.

Progress has gathered much better pace since the previous inspection. The needs of all groups of pupils are met well. Those who join the school at the early stages of speaking English quickly gain ground and progress to at least expected levels for their age by the end of Year 6. Those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified quickly. Strong additional support, including that from external agencies when needed, is put in place. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is improving and it is generally above average overall with good improvement seen in writing. Above-average attainment at Key stage 2 is secured with virtually all pupils reaching at least expected progress in English and mathematics and considerable numbers achieving higher levels. The school is not complacent however, and is currently focusing on raising attainment in boys' writing.

Pupils are very mindful of others needs. They relate exceptionally well to one another, recognising the values shared by cultures different from their own. Pupils behave well around the school and exemplary behaviour in assemblies shows how well they adapt behaviour to different situations. They are very strongly opposed to bullying and racist behaviour and appreciate the caring roles of play leaders who help them to stay safe and maintain justice and fair play in the playground. Pupils' outstanding contribution to the school is also seen through the work of the very active school council and the 'green team'. The excellent Learning Association enables pupils to voice their views to staff and the governing body about how they learn best and how learning might improve. Links within the community are positive and reflect the caring, community spirit, which the school has developed. Pupils are fully aware of what it means to adopt a healthy lifestyle and regular exercise

routines. As part of an enterprising health-promoting project, pupils made healthy snacks and sold them in the tuck shop. Attendance overall is above average. Pupils' good and sometimes outstanding personal qualities and their competencies in literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT) are a good contribution to preparation for the next stages of their education and future careers.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	2
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
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	
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	2
Pupils' attendance ¹	
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Most lessons build well on previous learning because of teachers' good use of marking and other assessments to match work to pupils' varying needs. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and resources are chosen well to add interest and motivation. For example, in a Year 2 lesson some pupils were delighted to be able to use voice recorders to speak their sentences and use the play-back to help them when writing. Teaching assistants are well informed and their skilful management of individual pupils and groups makes a significant contribution to pupils' good learning. Teachers' expectations are generally high but the value of good handwriting is not clearly enough articulated. There is usually a brisk pace to lessons. In an outstanding lesson the teacher set the scene clearly with the opening remark, 'We are working at a pace this morning'. Pupils responded to the variety of approaches and built-in challenges with a great sense of urgency and enjoyment, which resulted in their excellent understanding and use of similes in writing. However, in a small number of lessons the teacher talks for too long. This limits the time for pupils to engage in practical work and, subsequently, their learning and progress in the lesson. Some pupils' tendency to call out and not to listen to others is not always managed as well as it could be.

The engaging curriculum helps pupils to achieve well. It is planned thoughtfully, linking subjects and taking pupils ideas into account. Writing across different areas of the curriculum to develop literacy skills is good. The creative element, linking art, music, religious education and cultural awareness is a very strong contribution to pupils' personal, spiritual development and enjoyment of learning. A good variety of

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

after-school clubs provides opportunities for pupils to nurture their sporting and non-sporting interests. Some provision, such as that for ICT is offered jointly with the secondary school and this approach is productive. Learning is further enriched by a calendar of opportunities throughout the year that helps pupils to develop their skills and aspirations and makes a positive contribution to their school and wider community.

Parents overwhelmingly endorse their children's view that they are extremely well cared for in school. Excellent attention is given to all aspects of care, particularly for those considered to be potentially the most vulnerable. The school's work with families has brought good improvement in attendance. There are very supportive arrangements for pupils and their parents and carers when joining the school and transferring to the next. The very large majority of parents and carers are happy with the information they receive about their children's progress and well-being. The outstanding guidance and support for pupils are rooted in the school's caring ethos and fulfilled in the quality of relationships and positive attitudes displayed by its pupils.

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	1

How effective are leadership and management?

School leaders, ably supported by a committed staff team, have a strongly shared ambition to improve the school further, particularly with boys' attainment in writing. Priorities, based on rigorous self-evaluation, are clearly articulated in the school's development planning. Effective monitoring and developmental support for staff have improved the overall quality of teaching and the curriculum and promoted pupils' above-average attainment.

There is a good range of expertise within the effective governing body. It supports and challenges well, in equal measure, and contributes significantly to planning with school leaders for continued improvement. Statutory duties are dealt with efficiently, including those for safeguarding. Policies and guidelines are fully understood by staff and pupils and safeguarding measures are checked systematically to ensure their continued effectiveness.

Leaders vigorously challenge all forms of discrimination and, with the school community, fully celebrate the school's rich cultural diversity. Pupils' progress is checked frequently to ensure none slips behind and that all receive, equally, the opportunities they need to achieve well. The governing body is currently monitoring the progress of some boys in writing to ensure that any attainment gaps are closed. Community cohesion is promoted well. Strong links with local community groups, including a neighbouring Jewish school, are supplemented by mutual exchange visits and sharing of information with a contrasting school in another town. Communication

with a school in Nepal also allows pupils to compare cultural lifestyles and to appreciate others’ contribution to the community in which they live.

These are the grades for the 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	1
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

Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children are welcomed into a friendly supportive classroom where they quickly gain in confidence and develop good levels of independence. They behave well and work amicably with others, responding well to adults in the classroom. Staff are watchful over children’s physical well-being and safety.

A well-planned curriculum gives children good opportunities for exploration and play across all areas of learning. Well-resourced activities challenge children well indoors and in the outside learning area. Because of careful analysis by staff of information gathered from observations, they confidently plan challenges that will take children to their next steps in learning and development. Basic literacy and numeracy skills are developed well within teacher-led activities and follow-up play. A child digging in the sand tray for plastic shapes was able to name correctly all those found and to show how two semi-circles (correctly named) make a full circle. There is good emphasis on letters and the sounds that they make, enabling children to approach early reading and writing confidently. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation stage are good. The phase leader is passionate about helping all children to make good progress. Teamwork, including working with parents and carers, is a strong feature in ensuring children’s progress. The leader is aware of the variation in children’s abilities on entering Reception and they are developing appropriate strategies to close gaps in progress, particularly with boys’ development.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage	2
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

A minority of parents and carers returned completed questionnaires. Of those, the vast majority are, overall, happy with their children's experiences at school. A few parents and carers, including those who contacted inspectors directly, raised concerns related to communications with the school and the management of behaviour. These concerns were discussed with school leaders and followed up during the inspection. At all times the anonymity of parents and carers was protected.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Lum Head 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 69 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 177 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	36	52	30	43	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	45	65	22	32	2	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	26	38	37	54	5	7	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	22	32	40	58	6	9	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	28	41	37	54	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	32	46	35	51	2	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	26	38	40	58	1	1	1	1
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)	22	32	36	52	7	10	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	17	25	46	67	3	4	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	39	28	41	11	16	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	25	45	65	3	4	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	26	38	39	57	2	3	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	29	42	37	54	2	3	0	0

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 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.



24 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lum Head Primary School, Cheadle – SK8 4RR

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave us when we came to inspect your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you, and we learned a great deal from our discussions. You are very well mannered and you speak very confidently about the things you enjoy. I have to say we agree with you because yours is a good school, which has improved well since it was last inspected.

You reach above-average standards in English and mathematics by the time you leave Year 6. Your teachers work hard and teach you well. There are exciting ways planned for you to learn and the grown-ups in school take excellent care of you. You are very willing to take on extra responsibilities to help your school run more smoothly and you certainly know how to keep yourselves safe and healthy. Well done, on your above-average attendance. That is very important so do keep it up.

Your teachers, parents and carers and the school's governing body are just as proud of your school as you are, so naturally they would like it to be even better. We have asked the school to raise standards in English even further by making sure that boys' writing matches the level reached by girls by the end of Year 6. To help that to happen we have asked teachers to concentrate on improving your handwriting and spelling in all classes and to make sure that in lessons, everyone listens and pays attention all of the time. You can help by continuing to work hard and always trying your very best.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Johnson
Lead inspector

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