

Mellor Primary School

Knowle Road, Stockport, Cheshire, SK6 5PL

Inspection dates 10–11 April 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Good 2
Achievement of pupils	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management	Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- During the inspection, pupils' behaviour in and around the school was exemplary and school records show that this is typical.
- Pupils have an extremely positive attitude toward learning because they really value their school environment, the staff and each other.
- Pupils feel safe in school because they know that they are very well cared for.
- Pupils enthusiastically contribute to the school community through their pupils' parliament.
- There is an outstanding programme for promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As a result, pupils are highly considerate and respectful towards adults and each other.
- Children get off to a good start with their learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage and continue to make good progress during their time in school.
- By the end of Year 6, standards attained in English and mathematics are higher than national levels.
- Pupils achieve well and the proportion of pupils making the expected rate of progress compares favourably with national figures.
- Teaching is good overall and some is outstanding.
- Teachers provide good written guidance and advice during lessons to help pupils to improve their learning.
- The headteacher is successfully driving forward school improvement. He is well supported by his staff team and a committed governing body and together they are maintaining the quality of teaching and working to improve still further pupils' progress.
- The curriculum meets the needs of pupils very well. The extensive outdoor environment enhances pupils' learning experience.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A small minority of teaching requires improvement and there is not yet enough that is outstanding.
- Teachers do not always provide more-able pupils with activities that challenge their thinking, especially in mathematics.
- Pupils do not always have the opportunity to explain and discuss their reasoning in mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 11 lessons, visited other activities and short sessions and listened to pupils reading.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, a parent, members of the governing body, and school staff.
- The inspectors took account of 52 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and two letters from parents. They also considered 15 staff questionnaires.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including the school's analysis of how well it is doing, the school development plan, pupils' progress information, checks on the quality of teaching, minutes of governing body meetings and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding. The inspectors also examined work in pupils' books.

Inspection team

Louise Murphy, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Elisabeth Fenwick

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well-below average. (The pupil premium is additional funding provided for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from services families and those children that are looked after.) There were no pupils known to be eligible for this support taking the end of key stage tests in 2012.
- The majority of pupils are from a White British heritage and all pupils speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- Mellor Primary converted to become an academy school on 1 October 2011. When its predecessor school, of the same name, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expected for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of teaching that is outstanding and thereby drive pupil progress at an even faster rate, especially in mathematics, by:
 - making sure that work set for the more-able pupils is always hard enough to allow them to make as much progress as possible
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to discuss and explain their reasoning in individual mathematics lessons and when using mathematics in other subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start in Nursery and Reception classes with skills that are typically expected for their age. They make good progress because of the robust focus on communication and language skills. The children benefit from the wide range of activities that they can access both in the classroom and outdoors. However, their skills in calculation are not as well developed as other aspects of learning. Children are taught well and move into Year 1 with skills that are slightly above the national average.
- Younger children learn effectively how to link letters and the sounds that they make (phonics). An average proportion of Year 1 pupils attained the expected level in the 2012 national phonics screening check. However, the school is ambitious and was not satisfied with this. A range of additional reading activities to support identified pupils to develop their skills and an enthusiasm for reading have been introduced. In the 2012 tests, almost every pupil achieved the expected level in reading and significantly more than the national average attained at the higher levels at the end of both key stages.
- Most pupils are positive about reading and one pupil remarked that she loves reading because, 'it opens up a whole new world.'
- Attainment in writing at the end of Years 2 and 6 is also above national levels. However, attainment in mathematics is not as strong because the curriculum does not yet provide enough opportunities for pupils to discuss and develop mathematical reasoning skills. The school recognises this and is beginning to tackle this issue.
- The proportion of pupils making expected progress in English and mathematics from their individual starting point compares favourably with national figures. The proportion making more than expected progress does not.
- Most pupils, including those who are known to be eligible for pupil premium funding, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make the same good progress. This demonstrates the school's commitment to equality of opportunity for all pupils.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is good overall and some is outstanding. Staff discuss learning and share ideas to help each other develop increasingly effective practice.
- Teachers use the school's comprehensive progress-tracking information to plan lessons. They also skilfully question pupils to assess their understanding. However, they do not always effectively challenge more-able pupils, especially in mathematics. Some pupils commented to inspectors that their work was too easy. Moreover, there are occasions when teachers do not insist on good presentation.
- The extensive and very well-developed outdoor forest and garden areas support pupils' learning extremely well. For example, younger pupils were stunned to see an alien knocking on their classroom window. They hurried outdoors to search for clues about the creature, where their language and communication skills were developed well through discussion. Moreover, the absolute delight and anticipation of communicating with the alien encouraged pupils to fervently investigate clues, thereby enhancing their skills of deduction.
- Teachers' marking has recently improved and now provides even better guidance to pupils. They are given time to respond to teacher comments during 'MAD' (make a difference) time when they have an opportunity to improve their work further.
- Teachers work really hard at making sure that lessons are fun and appeal to pupils' interest. As a result, pupils are able to take part in a wide range of stimulating activities that challenge them to think deeply. For example, pupils in Year 3 were learning about types of rock. To demonstrate the different characteristics, the teacher who was very well-assisted by a parent helper used chocolate to simulate rock features. The pupils were entirely enthused by the experience and

motivated to describe the diverse qualities of each rock type using appropriate vocabulary.

- Teachers make sure that pupils are confident in using a range of skills when reading unfamiliar words. Adults ask searching questions to encourage pupils to discuss the books they are reading and explain why they prefer particular authors.
- Teachers and teaching assistants who support disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding are well trained to provide for the individual learning needs of each pupil. They relentlessly encourage pupils to do their best.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- From an early age, young children learn to value each other and their stunning school environment. There is an exceptionally strong ethos of mutual respect throughout the school. A number of pupils agreed that they cannot wait to come to school and that they enjoy school because they 'feel part of it'. Above-average attendance reflects these highly positive attitudes.
- Pupils feel safe and learn how to keep themselves safe including when they are online and the very large majority of parents agree that their children are well cared for at school. Pupils' experiences are augmented through an impressive range of trips, before-and-after-school activities and the range of outdoor facilities, which they really appreciate and hold in very high regard. Pupils want their school to shine and the school choir and school orchestra practise regularly before school so that they can be their best.
- The pupil parliament representatives talked enthusiastically about their exhaustive range of responsibilities and the difference that they have made within school. Pupils were particularly proud of the 'seven habits of outstanding learning', which they developed following their own lesson observations and discussions with other pupils. The input that they are able to have on the day-to-day aspects of school life clearly has a very positive impact on developing their confidence and maturity.
- Pupils have an extremely good attitude toward learning and behave exceptionally well both in lessons and around the school. School records indicate that this is the norm. Pupils understand different forms of bullying and can explain the dangers of making friends through social networks and the potential impact of cyber-bullying.
- The curriculum allows pupils to develop their knowledge of business and enterprise skills to raise funds for school and for those less fortunate than themselves.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is a strong and ambitious leader who has a very clear view of the direction that he wants the school to take. He has accurately identified the school's strengths and areas for further development and created a committed and hardworking staff team. School leaders have demonstrated the skills and determination to improve the school further.
- School leaders check on the quality of teaching regularly and pupil progress is closely tracked to make sure that salary increases are awarded only when teachers help pupils to learn well. Teachers' professional development is linked to school priorities. For example, teachers are being trained to deliver the Level 6 curriculum so that all pupils can be well supported to achieve their potential.
- The curriculum meets the needs of pupils very well because it is developed specifically for Mellor Primary School and utilises the whole school environment and community. The school does focus on literacy and numeracy development but is also extremely keen to provide additional experiences. For example, the local lacrosse club supports the highly successful school team. Every learning challenge starts with a 'wow' experience and ends with a celebration to which parents are invited and which pupils are proud to deliver.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptional and supports pupils to make an excellent contribution to the positive atmosphere in school. Pupils are aware of different religions and cultures and are given ample opportunities to reflect on how to behave exceptionally well

and treat others kindly.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors know about the quality of teaching and the strengths and priorities of the school. This is because they are kept well-informed by the headteacher, they visit school as often as they can, receive presentations from pupils and canvass the views of parents. Governors attend training to further develop their expertise, including how to understand school performance data, so that they can continue to challenge and support the school effectively. The governing body has agreed to increase spending on staff and their training to make sure that those pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding continue to be effectively supported. Statutory duties including financial and safeguarding requirements are fulfilled. Governors understand the link between the quality of teaching and pupils' progress and make sure that teachers' progression through the pay scale is linked to how effective they are.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	137542
Local authority	Stockport
Inspection number	412517

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Academy converter
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	186
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andy Sokill
Headteacher	Jim Nicholson
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	0161 427 1052
Fax number	0161 427 3646
Email address	headteacher@mellor.stockport.sch.uk

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