



Adswood Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 106024
LEA Stockport
Inspection number 277471
Inspection dates 16 January 2006 to 17 January 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs Brenda McIntosh CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Garners Lane
School category	Community		Adswood
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Stockport, Cheshire SK3 8PQ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0161 483 5003
Number on roll	185	Fax number	0161 484 0532
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Dr K Fenwick
Date of previous inspection	19 November 2001	Headteacher	Ms K Conwell

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Adswood is a smaller than average sized primary school. It serves a community which is situated in one of the more disadvantaged areas of Stockport. The vast majority of pupils are from a white British background. When children enter the school in the Reception class, they have skills well below those expected for their age nationally. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average as is the proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A very small proportion of pupils are in the care of the local authority. The current headteacher was appointed in October 2005. The school has received a national award for its commitment to continual improvement in information and communication technology (ICT).

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. It judges itself effective and the inspectors agree.

Pupils are happy at school and enjoy learning in the vibrant, stimulating environment. Parents are very pleased with the education and the good level of care it provides their children. Pupils achieve well overall because of the good quality teaching and learning. Standards and achievement are improving but in writing are below those in other subjects. The curriculum is good. It stimulates pupils' interest, develops their independent learning skills and contributes to the exceptionally good progress pupils make in mathematics and science. However, the school is reviewing the curriculum to give sufficient time to the development of writing skills.

Leadership and management are good. The new headteacher has quickly ensured that the school is clear about the action needed to raise pupils' achievement in writing. The monitoring of pupils' progress and the use of assessment information to set individual targets are not rigorous enough to ensure pupils' good progress continues. In addition to this, pupils are not sufficiently involved in checking their own learning. Pupils' personal development is good and pupils behave well. The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Teaching is exciting and imaginative, helping children to make good progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported well and take an active part in school life. The school has moved on well since the last inspection, particularly in improving the quality of teaching and learning. The school has a good awareness of the correct priorities for further improvement. It provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and achievement in writing by making sure pupils have enough opportunities to develop their skills in writing for a range of purposes.
- Develop the tracking and monitoring of pupils' progress and use the information to set challenging individual targets.
- Involve pupils routinely in assessing their own learning so they have a clear understanding of the progress they are making.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good. Children enter the Reception class with skills that are much lower than those expected for their age. This is particularly marked in their speaking and listening skills. Although the majority will not meet the goals expected for their age at the end of the Reception year, the children achieve well because of the progress they make from starting school.

In Years 1 to 6 pupils make good progress. Standards at the end of Year 2 are broadly average. Pupils' test results in 2005 at the end of Year 6 showed that standards in mathematics and science were below average, but this demonstrated exceptional

progress for these pupils from their very low starting points at the end of Year 2. In 2005 pupils generally met their targets in reading and mathematics but missed those set for writing by a long way; the 2005 results showed a significant decline in writing standards. In the current Year 6, standards are broadly average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' standards and achievement in writing are improving at a good pace as a result of recent action taken to accelerate their progress.

Pupils make good progress in other subjects of the curriculum especially in the development of their ICT skills. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those children in public care make good and sometimes outstanding progress towards their targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school's judgement that pupils' personal development is good but also confirm there are some outstanding features. Pupils behave sensibly in lessons and around school, attendance is broadly average and punctuality is good. Pupils are polite and friendly and are more than happy to talk to visitors about how much they enjoy lessons and how safe they feel in school. They take full notice of the advice they are given on healthy eating and are grateful for the fresh fruit they receive each day.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is good and nurtured well through assemblies, the high quality of displays around school, and the creative curriculum which fuels pupils' appreciation of other cultures. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to life within the school community. For example, members of the school council are proud of the work they do to improve the school, in their words, 'for the little ones who need our help'. Older pupils take on many responsibilities around school and carry out their duties diligently. They demonstrate an enviable generosity of spirit and agree that there is minimal bullying or unhappiness because pupils enjoy each other's company and play together cooperatively. The school prepares pupils well for their future economic well-being and children speak enthusiastically of the many opportunities they have to use computers to assist their learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The school accurately judges the quality of teaching and learning as good with examples of outstanding practice in the Foundation Stage. In the best lessons, there is a hive of activity, high levels of engagement by pupils, work designed to meet individual learning needs and realistic challenge for pupils of different abilities. Teaching assistants play an important supportive role; pupils are encouraged to think for themselves and are treated with the utmost sensitivity by the adults working with them. As a result, they behave well in lessons and have real confidence in what they can achieve. For

example, in a Year 3 lesson, the pupils were fascinated by the robotic floor 'roamer' and were eager to use the computers to simulate its movements. The learning mentor works well with parents giving them effective guidance on how to support their children's learning at home.

Marking is good. Pupils like the 'three stars and a wish system' that compliments them on their work and effort and suggests ways in which they can improve their work. The school recognises that there is insufficient emphasis on pupils' involvement in evaluating their own progress and sharing this with the class at the end of each lesson. There is not always sufficient rigour in target setting for individual pupils, in order that their attainment and progress can be gauged exactly.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree that the school provides a good curriculum to meet the needs, aspirations and interests of its pupils. Pupils enjoy the thematic and active approach to learning, demonstrate real enthusiasm in their lessons and have a keen awareness of the different ways in which they learn. The school is now attempting to strike an even balance between this creative approach to learning and providing discrete opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in writing for a variety of purposes. Pupils enjoy the Fun Clubs on 'Funky Friday' afternoons and speak enthusiastically of the wide range of activities in which they can take part, from French to card making and from football to guitar. Information about the clubs is available on the school website, which also informs parents about educational visits and charity events. The half-termly enrichment days are a strong feature and Year 3 pupils found their helicopter model-making projects did much to reinforce their learning in science.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good care, guidance and support. Pupils are valued and treated with dignity and respect. Comments such as 'our teachers understand us and look after us very well' are forthcoming and pupils feel safe and happy in school. Arrangements for child protection and health and safety are good. Pupils are strongly encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles; they have many opportunities to take part in physical activity and eat sensibly. Although information about pupils' achievements is used well enough to guide pupils' learning, there is room for improvement in setting individual targets and involving pupils in assessing their own progress. Pupils in public care and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very well supported. Effective use is made of internal and external support, for example, to help pupils improve their behaviour. Recently introduced strategies to promote self discipline are helping to improve the behaviour of the few who need extra support. Pupils joining the school at times other than the usual entry into the Reception class settle quickly due to the support of a personal buddy and the welcome they receive.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The new headteacher has made a very good start in establishing a whole team spirit and recognising the quality and expertise of individual staff. For example, the role of the learning mentor has been reviewed already to ensure more pupils benefit from her help and guidance in supporting their learning. The headteacher has made it a priority to consult parents, pupils and staff indicating that their views are highly valued. Staff appreciate the open discussions and being consulted on a range of issues and this is contributing to high morale. There has been some good monitoring of performance in recent years, but mainly carried out by senior managers, and the action taken has led to improvements. For example, the good improvement in the quality of teaching and learning has helped raise pupils' achievement. The current headteacher is keen to improve the school's system of self review by distributing leadership responsibilities more and involving all staff in monitoring and evaluating the school's performance. A strength in the leadership of the headteacher is the vision and direction she provides in creating a caring, vibrant learning environment with a strong focus on pupils' well-being and raising standards. Recently introduced strategies to improve pupils' achievement in writing and their behaviour are already having a positive effect. Governors are supportive and have a good understanding of the school and contribute well to its successes. Financial management is good and funds are directed to the school's priorities for development. Good improvement has been made in the short time since the last inspection and the school is well placed to improve further.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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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?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you very much for welcoming us to your school. We really enjoyed ourselves, especially having the chance to chat with you.

What we liked about your school

- Your good behaviour and friendliness.
- Your enjoyment of learning and the strong contribution you all make to the school community.
- Your achievements particularly in mathematics, science and ICT.
- The way the staff look after you really well and make sure you have a safe, exciting place in which to learn.
- The enthusiasm of the school council in helping to improve the school.
- The way the school is led and managed and how your new headteacher has quickly settled and is getting to know you and your school very well.

To make things even better we have asked your headteacher and teachers to

- Improve your standards in writing and make sure you have enough opportunities to write in different ways such as playscripts, information reports and imaginative stories which we know you have made a start on already.
- Check the progress you are making in your work more closely.
- Give you opportunity to tell your teachers how well you think you are doing in your learning.