



# Mellor Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 106058  
**LEA** Stockport  
**Inspection number** 277476  
**Inspection dates** 13 June 2006 to 14 June 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mrs Sarah Drake CfBT Lead Inspector

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Knowle Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Mellor
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11		Stockport, Cheshire SK6 5PL
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 4271052
<b>Number on roll</b>	158	<b>Fax number</b>	0161 4273646
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Andrew Sokill
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	22 May 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Susan Pollard

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<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Mellor Primary is a small school that serves a village on the edge of the Peak District to the east of Stockport. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and all have English as their first language. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for a free school meal is well below the national average and below average numbers have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school achieved Investors in People status and the Healthy Schools standard in 2004.

## 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 that provides good value for money. It has an accurate view of its strengths and areas for development, which is based on very careful analysis of pupils' achievement and standards. Pupils make good progress overall and reach well above average standards by the end of Year 6, especially in mathematics and science. This is due to their excellent attitudes to learning, the rich and varied curriculum, strong assessment procedures and good quality teaching. Teachers carefully plan interesting activities for pupils and make good use of information and communication technology (ICT). However, their expectations of pupils, particularly the most able, are not always high enough to ensure that they make the best possible progress. Standards and quality in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory. These youngest pupils are diligent learners and the curriculum covers all the required areas, but too often tasks are controlled by staff and the children have too few opportunities to work creatively and imaginatively. Pupils' outstanding personal development and excellent behaviour mean that the school operates as a happy learning community in which everyone is valued. Good quality care and support mean that pupils feel safe in school and grow in self-confidence. They have an unusually clear understanding of how to improve their work. Partnership with parents and outside agencies enhances the provision well. Good quality leadership and management, with outstanding focus and direction from the headteacher and deputy, have helped the school to make good progress over recent years. All staff are very clear about what is expected and are increasingly consistent in their practice. There is good capacity to improve further.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that planning and teaching in the Foundation Stage capitalise fully on pupils' interests and provide sufficient opportunities for them to enjoy learning through experimentation.
- Raise teachers' expectations and level of questioning, particularly of more able pupils, to help them make even better progress in their learning.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good and standards are well above average by the end of Year 6. Most children join the Nursery with skills that meet or exceed those expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage so that they enter Year 1 with above average skills in all areas of learning. Through Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils' progress is good overall although more able pupils, of whom the school has a good number, are capable of moving forward at an even faster rate. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress due to the high quality support that they receive.

In the 2005 tests, Year 2 pupils reached above average standards in writing and mathematics and well above average levels in reading. Year 6 pupils' performance in

mathematics was exceptional, with almost twice the national average gaining the higher level. Science standards were well above average, while those in English were above average. The school greatly exceeded its targets and redressed the downward dip seen in the 2004 results. Current standards are at least above average, including for ICT, and pupils are on track to reach their targets in this year's tests. The school has taken effective action to improve the quality of pupils' writing in response to its analysis of prior results.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral and social development, are better than the school judges them to be. They are outstanding and underpin all its work. As one parent commented, 'My children are always enthusiastic about school and motivated to learn.' Pupils' excellent attendance and behaviour, from the Nursery upwards, confirm their eagerness to make the most of what the school offers and establish very good habits for their future life. Pupils have a sensitive awareness of others' needs and great willingness to be of help, which means that very strong relationships abound. They collaborate very well when, for example, developing a dance routine or brainstorming ideas, and evaluate each other's work positively but honestly. A happy, community atmosphere pervades the school in which pupils carry out their responsibilities calmly and efficiently. The school council leads pupils' generous fundraising activities and has decided which would be the safest 'trim trail' to install in the grounds. Pupils have a keen awareness of healthy living and, for instance, of the need to recycle paper or conserve water. They talk about their school being 'fantastic' and 'brilliant' and are appreciative of their good fortune. Their cultural awareness is good, helped by the links that younger pupils make with a school in a very different area from their own.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. A strong commitment to capturing pupils' interest and good use of ICT stimulate them to work hard and sustain their concentration. They are eager learners. Teachers have good subject knowledge, plan their lessons rigorously and use the excellent relationships very effectively to manage behaviour. In outstanding lessons, they capitalise fully on all pupils' potential, leading to rapid progress. Crystal clear explanations, a quick-fire pace and challenging questioning, prompt pupils to think hard and stretch themselves to produce high quality work. However, some teaching lacks vision. Insufficiently high expectations, of more able pupils in particular, mean that they do not always make the progress of which they are capable. Staff provide Foundation Stage pupils with structured, progressive activities that meet their needs but these are often overly adult-directed so the pupils lack opportunities to explore their world themselves and think

imaginatively and creatively. Teaching assistants provide high quality, well planned support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Rigorous marking, assessment and monitoring procedures underpin pupils' good achievement. For example, the 'page to mark' system for pupils' writing provides space for helpful comments, made by teachers or by pupils for themselves or their writing partners, and for the writer to redraft their work. Teachers closely track individuals' progress in most subjects and have good knowledge of who could be doing better.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good. It matches the needs of all pupils and the school has put to good use its thorough research to ensure that pupils gain and apply new skills in a logical and progressive manner across all subjects. Themed units, such as The Caribbean or Invaders, bring learning to life for pupils and help them to make links between subjects and see their relevance. The recent focus on ICT development has reaped rewards in terms of the range and quality of hardware and software. Pupils' rapid progress in this subject is a direct result of the good input across a range of subjects as well as in discreet lessons. The curriculum promotes pupils' personal, health and emotional development very well. As yet, the planned outdoor curriculum for the Foundation Stage does not fully extend and enhance the indoor activities on a larger scale, in all areas of learning. Educational visits, visitors, links with the sports club and high school, all have a positive impact on pupils' enjoyment and achievement.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school provides good quality care, support and guidance. Pupils make comments such as, 'You always feel safe here' and 'Teachers always find new ways to help you learn in a fun way', which exemplify their high levels of trust in staff and each other. Parents praise the school's high levels of care. They and their children find all staff extremely approachable and say that any concerns are dealt with swiftly. Support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including good liaison with outside agencies and parents, is very strong. Child protection arrangements are robust and vulnerable children who, for whatever reason, are at risk are quickly identified and well supported. There are rigorous procedures to ensure health and safety. For example, the discovery of fungus among the bark chippings led to immediate action. Playtime supervision is satisfactory. Good arrangements help smooth transition between classes and into secondary education. Regularly reviewed targets and, in some classes, weekly reflections on learning ensure that pupils understand clearly how to improve their work. However, more able pupils do not consistently receive sufficient guidance to help them achieve at the very highest levels.

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## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Together, the headteacher and deputy provide outstanding leadership that ensures all staff are clear about what areas need to be developed and are guided about how to bring about improvement. They have introduced increasingly rigorous assessment of pupils' work and analysis of data, which means that areas of relative weakness, such as pupils' writing or the provision for ICT, are pinpointed and effective action taken. This increasing focus on promoting academic progress has in no way detracted from the school's strong commitment to helping pupils develop as well-rounded, self-confident individuals. Subject leaders are beginning to take increasing responsibility for monitoring provision and standards in their areas, including the assessment of pupils' skills in foundation subjects. Their role is developing well and consistency of practice is supported by the helpful documentation and procedures developed by a senior teacher.

Annual variations in pupil numbers mean that management has to be nimble and swiftly responsive to change. Development planning is comprehensive and firmly based on accurate evaluation of the current position. The school runs smoothly and financial management is good. Governors have a good understanding of the school's needs and fulfil their role of critical friend well. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good. With the strong systems now in place, a good team spirit among staff and highly focused leadership, 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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	1	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	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	1	NA

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	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

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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 in such a friendly manner to your school. We enjoyed our visit and agree with you that Mellor is a good school. We liked many things about the school and would like to share with you those that particularly pleased us.

- You are really enthusiastic about learning and you work hard.
- You are helpful and very considerate of other people's needs.
- Your excellent behaviour and attendance mean that you do not miss out on what you should be learning.
- You make good progress and many of you achieve well above average standards of work by the end of Year 6.
- Your teachers organise interesting things for you to do, make good links between subjects and use ICT well to help you enjoy your learning.
- They take good care of you and help you to understand clearly how to improve your work.
- Mrs Pollard and Mrs Beddows are extremely good at working out what improvements are needed and helping all staff put them into practice.

This is what we have asked the school to do next to make it even better:

- organise well planned activities for Foundation Stage children that help them learn by experimentation both inside and outside
- make sure that all your teachers really challenge you to make the excellent progress of which you are capable.

This means that your job will be to continue to enjoy finding out about and doing new things and working really hard.