



Lum Head Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 106093
LEA Stockport
Inspection number 277485
Inspection dates 22 May 2006 to 23 May 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Jon Lovgreen CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Troutbeck Road
School category	Community		Gatley
Age range of pupils	5 to 11		Cheadle, Cheshire SK8 4RR
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0161 428 7992
Number on roll	197	Fax number	0161 491 6802
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr J Lowrey
Date of previous inspection	20 September 1999	Headteacher	Miss S Offord

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Lum Head is an average-sized primary school serving an area with predominantly private housing. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below the national average. A third of the pupils, well above the national average, come from minority ethnic backgrounds. A higher than average proportion, now over a quarter, speak English as an additional language (EAL) and some of these pupils are at an early stage of learning English. Attainment on entry to the school is average, as is the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD). The school has an Investors in People award, and is a 'Talking Partners' pilot school and part of a Network Learning Community with four local schools.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Lum Head School has a clear understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Inspectors agree that it is a good school where pupils make good progress. The quality of leadership, the regularity and quality of assessment, and the quality of guidance are strengths. Pupils come from a very wide range of backgrounds and the school is successful in creating a warm and welcoming community where harmony, courtesy and respect are valued by all. Behaviour is very good because the care and nurture of the pupils lies at the heart of all the school seeks to do. As a result, they develop into mature, sensible and thoughtful young people. Almost all, including those with LDD and EAL, make good progress. In some situations more able pupils are not stretched enough and the school is aware of the need to work at this. Good provision leads to brisk progress in the Reception class. Standards are above national average by the end of Year 6. Year on year pupils are making increasingly good progress because of the effective teaching they receive. They respond well to the widening range of teaching styles and the excellent assessment system. Class and group discussion is a central feature of the school's teaching strategy but sometimes it lacks focus. The good curriculum is balanced and flexible, with a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Given the progress pupils make and low costs the school provides excellent value for money. Its response to the issues from the last inspection, the range of initiatives successfully introduced, and the quality of its leadership confirm that it has outstanding capacity for improvement. The school has the confidence of parents and makes very effective use of partnerships with other institutions.

What the school should do to improve further

To improve standards further the school should:

- provide greater challenge for more able pupils in lessons, through homework, and in curriculum plans
- ensure that pupils always understand what they are supposed to be learning in group work and class discussion so that they stay attentive and learn quickly.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good, pupils consistently reaching standards which are above national average by the end of Year 6. Standards have risen, apart from 2005 end of Year 2 results which were below average, especially in reading and mathematics. Staffing changes resulted in a lack of clarity about pupils' standards and potential in Year 2 last year. Careful analysis and moderation, and more varied teaching styles have remedied this. Children join the Reception class with average standards but a significant minority lack confidence in using language. Good progress sees most attaining or exceeding the goals expected of them by the end of the year as their confidence to use spoken English increases. Firm foundations are set for future learning and social development so that children go forward as confident learners. Results in national

tests at the end of Year 6 show that pupils are attaining above average standards, and making good progress, notably in English. The school is quick to respond to issues so that boys and girls are now doing equally well in English, mathematics and science, and there is some increase in higher levels. Some more able pupils do not reach their potential because teachers do not always set the sort of work which will challenge them fully. Pupils with LDD and EAL make good progress because they get good, sensitive help and support.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. They behave very well and become increasingly confident, polite and helpful in their work and play. The majority show a real willingness to get involved in lessons and take pride in the quality and appearance of their work, seen both in books and files and in the displays of their work. Willingness to work in groups and wait for their own turn at things shows pupils' good social development, which is helped by visits, and taking part in events and competitions. Pupils know how to make healthy choices in the food they eat and the exercise they take, and are happy to explain them. Spiritual and cultural development is good. Vibrant displays reflect pupils' awareness of beauty and the richness of other cultures, and they have valuable opportunities for spiritual reflection during assemblies and Circle Time. They develop a commitment to racial equality, which is clearly seen by the way they work and play together. Special responsibilities for the older pupils, such as being play leaders for younger ones, give them an understanding of contributing to the community. The school council helps pupils develop insights into how society and democracy operate. Attendance is satisfactory, but is beginning to decline because some parents too readily take family holidays during term time. This slows the progress their children make.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils move smoothly between activities because teachers plan lessons well. The most effective lessons are lively, with pupils understanding exactly what they are doing and why. Clear explanation and precise vocabulary help pupils to understand and explain ideas such as 'palindromes' and 'partitioning' in mathematics. Teachers share their enthusiasm so that pupils relish moments such as 'Zooming in to see our school from space!' using the interactive whiteboard. In an outstanding lesson on The Railway Age pupils showed mature responsibility to their groups ('I've had an idea . . . what do you all think?') and a skilled grasp of how to present findings to the class. In some lessons, teaching is less effective than it might be because pupils are uncertain how group work or class discussion fit in with the purpose of the lesson. As a result, learning becomes vague, pace slows, and inattention can result. In some lessons, teachers miss good

opportunities to push for more from the most able pupils, relying on group work alone to meet their needs.

Assessment is now a strength, allowing underachievement to be quickly spotted and dealt with. Detailed, regular marking and exact improvement targets help pupils understand how to do better and their responsibility to do so. Teaching assistants provide quality support, being involved in lesson planning and guiding pupils very effectively. Some homework does not make sufficient demands on more able pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The broad, flexible curriculum meets pupils' needs well. It is well planned so that they build skills and knowledge quickly. A good Foundation Stage curriculum has a rich range of experiences, giving children a really good start. There is good provision for literacy and numeracy, with specialist teaching in years 5 and 6. Planning for information and communication technology (ICT) is good but there are barely enough suitable computers because some are too old. The school remedies this by working with a secondary school to which all Year 5 pupils go for a weekly ICT lesson. Other notable features of the curriculum include support and coaching for EAL pupils, and the focus on languages including spoken English, French, German and Latin. The curriculum meets the needs of those with LDD very successfully. They are involved in all the school has to offer. Planning to make sure that more able pupils are pushed to reach their full potential is not consistent enough. A notable curriculum feature is the wealth of opportunities for physical education both within and beyond the school day, which teach pupils the importance of staying healthy and being safe.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

This is a school where all pupils are known, cared for, and encouraged. Good arrangements for health, safety and individual welfare needs see pupils happy to come to school. They trust the adults in school because, 'They really care for you and look after you whenever you need help.' There are clear procedures in place to protect pupils, and risks are assessed to ensure that pupils are safe. Pupils say that misbehaviour and bullying are very rare and quickly dealt with. There is careful attention to settling in new pupils and preparing older ones for the move to secondary school. Guidance provided for pupils in their learning is excellent but some teaching underestimates what the ablest pupils are capable of. The school is confident that it is now preparing pupils better for the tests taken at the end of Year 2. Pupils are very aware of how to improve their work because targets are provided for them all in each subject. However, they are not sufficiently encouraged to look back at past targets to make sure that they still meet them or exceed them. Pupils with EAL are well supported as are those with LDD. The school works effectively with outside agencies to provide extra help and guidance for those needing it. The pupils from both these groups make good progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is well led and managed. The outstanding leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher encourage and enthuse staff to try new teaching techniques, and to become confident but self-critical. There is exemplary commitment to training and staff development. Direction is clear and ambition high. The school has a precise understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Monitoring of lessons and pupils' progress is systematic and shows that much is expected of both teachers and pupils. There is open debate about what works and what needs improvement. As a result the school has the confidence of parents, standards continue to rise, and there is outstanding capacity for further improvement. The school's vision and its response to parents' views could be made clearer to parents. Subject coordinators readily accept their responsibilities and carry them out effectively. Leadership of the Foundation Stage is also effective. The development plan carefully and thoroughly lays out the future direction of the school. Whilst valuable, it does not yet provide as sharp a view as it could of what the school should achieve each year. The budget is carefully managed. Staff are very well deployed and the limited money for resources is thoughtfully spent. Value for money is excellent. The governors are committed, well informed, and fulfil their responsibilities satisfactorily. Although able to question the school and advise about its direction, they do not yet play a full part in stimulating its progress.

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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	1	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	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

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	2	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	2	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	1	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	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	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

As you know we recently visited your school to see how well you are doing and whether Lum Head is giving you the sort of education you deserve. We would like to thank you for the way you made us feel welcome, and were so willing to talk to us and explain what you thought about the school.

We agree with you that Lum Head is a good school. We particularly liked the way in which you are learning to get on together, showing respect and kindness to one another and to other people in the school, including visitors. You behave well, and understand the importance of talking about your ideas before writing or performing. Teachers are good at giving you a variety of interesting things to do in class and are always looking to make lessons even better. You are very clear about where you need to improve your work and how you can do this because of the detailed marking teachers do, and the targets they give you to work at. The headteacher and deputy check on your progress regularly and in detail, so that they are very clear about what is working well in school and what needs to change.

To make your school even better we have asked teachers to:

- make sure that in lessons, homework and the planning of topics there is enough to keep those of you who find work easy working really hard
- be clearer in explaining whilst you are doing class discussion or group work (both of which you do a lot) what you should be learning and how you can best show that you are making progress with it.

You can play your part by asking for help or extra work when you need it, and by making sure that you understand what you should be learning when doing an activity. We hope that you will continue to succeed, and will enjoy the rest of your time at Lum Head.