



Didsbury Road Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 106098
LEA Stockport
Inspection number 277486
Inspection dates 21 June 2006 to 22 June 2006
Reporting inspector Ms Joyce Taylor CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Didsbury Road
School category	Community		Heaton Mersey
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Stockport, Cheshire SK4 3HB
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0161 4322240
Number on roll	442	Fax number	0161 4429956
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr T Walker
Date of previous inspection	28 February 2000	Headteacher	Mr T Kendrick

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This large school takes over half its pupils from outside the local area with an increasing number coming from areas experiencing disadvantage. An average proportion of the pupils are from different ethnic heritages. Almost all speak English as their first language although a small number are at the early stages of learning English and at home most of these pupils speak Urdu, Farsi or Arabic. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is lower than average. Fewer pupils than average have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. However, the proportion having statements of special educational need is higher than in most schools. The school has gained the Healthy Schools Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Didsbury Road Primary School is a good school with outstanding features and it provides good value for money. Since 2002, attainment on entry has fallen to below average because an increasing number of the pupils come from areas experiencing high levels of social and economic difficulty. However, effective strategies introduced to support pupils with learning or behaviour difficulties ensure they achieve well across the school. Teaching is good and sometimes outstanding. As a result, the current Year 6 pupils are reaching above and sometimes well above average standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. Year 2 pupils are reaching average standards, they have made good progress from a below average starting point. Leadership and management are good, although some subject coordinators have infrequent opportunities to check on the outcomes of their hard work. Information collected from the evaluation of both standards and the effectiveness of new initiatives, is not always recorded systematically enough for the school to use this data readily in planning the next steps. Pupils' personal development is outstanding and better than the school's judgement; care is good. Excellent links with other schools and professionals provide wide ranging opportunities for the pupils. Outstanding provision for children in the Foundation Stage ensures they learn well and sometimes very well.

The school has made good progress since the last inspection and there is a good capacity for further improvement. Although the school's judgements of these two aspects are over estimated, the school managers have a clear grasp of the strengths and areas needing improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the systematic recording and analysis of information showing how well the pupils have done so it can be used more effectively in their next learning steps.
- Ensure subject leaders check on the outcomes of their initiatives.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good. They enter the Nursery with average or above average attainment. However, when they move to Reception additional classmates join them from a wide range of different settings, lowering the overall attainment to below average. By the end of Year 6 the pupils reach high standards and in 2005 exceeded the targets set for them. Pupils are meeting the more challenging targets set for 2006. Over the past two years, although standards have dipped at the end of Year 2, reflecting the below average attainment on entry, the pupils achieved well. This year, in writing and mathematics, the proportion of Year 2 pupils reaching above average levels has risen.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well. Those identified as having particular gifts or talents sometimes make exceptional progress. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve well and some, who are taking part in a new scheme to promote their learning, have made outstanding progress. Vulnerable pupils are given very effective support and make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Provision for personal development and well-being is outstanding. The school's judgement of good rather than outstanding was due to the school's over emphasis on the importance of some minor areas for improvement. Pupils really enjoy school and their attitudes and behaviour in classrooms are excellent. Sometimes a tiny minority of pupils cannot keep up these high standards at playtimes. Pupils say they feel very safe and secure and their high levels of confidence ensure they can approach any adult if they have problems or difficulties. They have an exceptional understanding of healthy lifestyles. Attendance is above the national average and punctuality is good.

Pupils are very keen to take on a wide range of responsibilities such as being playground friends or managing the school's 'healthy tuck shop'. The school council takes considerable responsibility for developments such as looking after the environmental area. In the Nursery and Reception, children take decisions about many aspects of their work. As a result, children's independence and self esteem are high and many display a far greater maturity than would be expected for their age.

There is excellent provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils show care and consideration for one another around school and discuss with an openness and considerable interest the differences in culture and beliefs of different ethnic groups.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good and sometimes outstanding. In the Foundation Stage, for example, staff's exceptional understanding of how young children learn, means that children show high levels of independence and make good and sometimes very good progress. Across the school, skilful teachers value pupils' ideas and encourage them to discuss their work. 'Go on,' a Year 3 teacher said to a lower ability pupil, 'tell me some more so I really understand'. In all classes, pupils contribute enthusiastically and knowledgeably. Teachers show an outstanding willingness to explore new ideas as a means of speeding pupils' progress. When using information and communication technology to broaden the curriculum, for example, teachers linked geography and personal development extremely effectively to the World Cup Football tournament.

Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and those who learn English as an additional language, are supported exceptionally well by highly skilled teaching assistants who contribute significantly to their good progress. Teachers use assessments well to plan work that matches the varying abilities of their pupils. Innovative marking systems are very popular with Year 6 pupils as they provide clear insights into their own progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and sometimes outstanding. It emphasises important skills, for example, thoroughly organising ideas before beginning to write, which enables pupils to make good progress. Provision for personal and social education is outstanding and equips pupils with effective basic skills for life. Excellent residential visits, for example, foster self confidence, teamwork and responsibility. Pupils are provided with excellent support and encouragement to adopt healthy lifestyle choices.

The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is outstanding and some aspects, such as independent learning, have been extended into Year 1. Pupils learn a great deal from themed activities, such as the recent Cultural Diversity Week. Excellent partnerships with expert coaches and local school networks provide a wealth of opportunities for extending learning, such as Irish dancing, lacrosse and joint school council work.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support for pupils are good. The most vulnerable pupils are very well cared for because all staff are sensitive to their particular needs. There are robust systems for carrying out safety checks. Child protection procedures are in place. Good pastoral care and guidance is provided, for instance, by allowing pupils the opportunity for quiet reflection about their relationships with others. Parents have confidence in the school and appreciate the efforts made to ensure pupils are safe and happy.

Good systems to assess pupils and to track their progress in English and mathematics are well established but are not so well developed in other subjects. Pupils' literacy and numeracy targets are reviewed regularly to maintain the right level of challenge. Some innovative practice, which involves pupils in assessing their own learning, is a strong and successful feature in Year 6.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and deputy know the school well and have a clear view of how they want it to be. Their strong focus on pupils' personal development ensures this aspect is outstanding and provides all groups of pupils with effective learning opportunities. Excellent strategies to train teaching

assistants in supporting vulnerable learners have led to outstanding progress for some of these pupils. The leadership team's effective reaction to the downward trend in children's standards on arrival in Reception led to the exciting provision now found in the Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and some Year 2 and 3 lessons. Very detailed data is collected to monitor the pupils' progress but this is not always analysed in a way that clearly identifies pupils' standards and some staff are unclear about how to use this analysis to plan pupils' work. Effective subject leaders have helped move the school forwards, for example, by providing new strategies using computer equipment that have led to pupils reaching high standards. However several subject leaders rarely check lesson plans or see the work in pupils' books to assess how well new ideas are working or if there are areas for further development. As a result, on some occasions, lessons provide satisfactory, rather than good learning opportunities.

Parents and pupils are very happy with the school. They feel it is friendly and approachable. Pupils have identified useful changes needed in the playground; the school's strong support of this initiative has resulted in outstanding playground resourcing for the younger pupils in particular.

Governors evaluate improvements and provide the headteacher and staff with strong backing. For example, the introduction of an excellent committee structure as a means of examining the work of the school in detail and in using their own professional skills and contacts to provide a richer curriculum.

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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?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	1	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

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?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	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	1	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	1	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	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

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 for your help when we visited your school earlier this month.

We very much enjoyed watching you work and talking to you in the classrooms and around the school. We think that your school is a good one and your headteacher and deputy are very clever at seeing what needs to be done to make your school better. Your teachers and teaching assistants work hard to see that your activities are interesting and good fun. We noticed how much you enjoyed your lessons and we were impressed with the way you are growing in confidence. You also told us that you feel safe and secure in the school and that your teachers are friendly and helpful. In Nursery and Reception, your teachers are particularly good at helping you do well in your work; they provide lots of exciting things for you to play with.

We have asked your headteacher and staff to carry on with their good work and we have suggested that they look at two areas to make things even better:

- to be clearer on how well you are doing and how quickly you are learning
- to help your teachers look back at their new ways of working to see how good they are.

You are enthusiastic about your school and we hope you carry on enjoying lessons and helping your teachers make Didsbury Road Primary School a happy and successful place for learning.