



Cheadle Catholic Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 106111
LEA Stockport
Inspection number 277489
Inspection dates 3 July 2006 to 4 July 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Ian Thompson CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Conway Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Cheadle Hulme
Age range of pupils	3 to 7		Cheadle, Cheshire SK8 6DB
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0161 4858733
Number on roll	312	Fax number	0161 4858733
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs A Wadsworth
Date of previous inspection	13 March 2000	Headteacher	Mrs A Cassidy

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This large school serves an area of social and economic advantage. Eligibility for free school meals is very much lower than usual. The great majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds; none is at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average as is the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational need. Over recent years, the school has gained the Investors in People award, the National Healthy School award and has had three School Achievement awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

The school's evaluation of its work generally matches inspection findings except that it takes too modest a view of how well it does. Inspectors judge the school to be outstanding because of the excellent quality of pupils' personal development and their exceptionally high standards. Pupils' achievement is outstanding overall including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school provides excellent value for money.

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. However, the limited facilities for outdoor learning and play in the Reception class put constraints on the curriculum and present teachers with challenges. These are handled very skilfully and effectively so that children still make good progress.

Despite this being larger than most infant schools, the headteacher and staff have been very successful in creating a warm, small school atmosphere in which pupils are confident that they are known and valued as individuals. As a parent said, 'it is more of a community than a school, which teaches our children far more than is on the curriculum - values, friendship and respect'. The school works hard to involve parents in their children's education and has gained their overwhelming support. Excellent care, guidance and support are provided for pupils, contributing much to their personal development and achievement. The school has first-rate links with other schools and outside agencies that help to support pupils and to ease their transition to the next stage of their education.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Although assessment is used well to monitor pupils' performance and to set targets, pupils' awareness of what they should do to improve is inconsistent. The curriculum is good and is enriched by a wide range of activities that extend pupils' learning.

Leadership and management are exceptional. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. She has developed a self-critical culture in which there is a constant search for ways to improve the school's performance. The result is that the school has made very good progress since the last inspection and has a clear capacity for further improvement. The well informed governors provide excellent support for the school and hold it rigorously to account.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils consistently know what they need to do to improve in all subject areas.
- Improve facilities for outdoor learning and play for Reception pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Children enter the Nursery with broadly average standards. They achieve well in the Foundation Stage because of good teaching and learning so that by the end of this stage of learning, standards are above average. The greatest gains are made in social learning and communication, which stand pupils in good stead for the rest of their time in the school. Progress in Reception is hindered by the lack of adequate outdoor learning facilities.

The majority of pupils achieve very well as they move through Years 1 and 2. Teachers' assessments at the end of Year 2 show that the school consistently maintains exceptionally high standards in reading, writing and numeracy. This represents outstanding progress from the average standards pupils have on entry to school. Work seen during the inspection confirmed the accuracy of teachers' assessments. Boys' achievement has improved and is closer to that of girls as a result of the school's successful efforts to adapt work and teaching styles to meet their needs.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are so well supported and their needs so well met that the majority make outstanding progress in relation to their starting points. Extension work for gifted and talented pupils and for higher attainers boosts their achievement so that their progress is also outstanding.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The school cautiously grades this aspect of its work as good. However, inspectors found it to be outstanding. Attendance is good. Pupils are thoughtful and considerate of others, adopt safe, sensible practices and have a superb attitude to learning. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent. Pupils are confident and courteous when talking to adults. They contribute well to school development through an active school council. Members spoke about their work to an audience at the town hall during the Healthy Schools award presentation. Pupils are aware of the need for a healthy lifestyle due to the sharp focus on this by all staff. The headteacher and bursar don their aprons at lunchtimes to encourage healthy food choices. Pupils' spiritual, social and moral development is exemplary, reflecting in many ways the gospel values that underpin the work of the school. Cultural development is greatly enhanced by visitors to school and educational visits out of school. Pupils are currently exploring the cultures of nations involved in the World Cup. They make a very positive contribution to their wider community, for example, through their charity work. Basic skills are learnt very well. Relevant role-play situations help to lay a strong foundation for future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding overall. Pupils say, 'our teachers make learning fun'. This motivates them to learn and raises their achievement significantly. The team of teachers and support staff work really well together in a very supportive atmosphere. Parents value the quality of teaching that challenges pupils and enables them to learn extremely well. Teachers use questioning and cross-curricular links to very good effect to help pupils make sense of what they are learning. Support staff, in partnership with class teachers, quickly identify and effectively support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Such care enables them to play a full part in the life of the school and they make excellent progress. Classrooms are effective learning environments because of the calm, consistent approach of staff and teachers' high expectations of work and behaviour. Lively displays celebrate pupils' work. The impact of regular monitoring of classroom standards is seen in the way teachers plan and evaluate their work. Classroom assistants make a significant contribution to pupils' learning by providing sensitive support in lessons and promoting progress in small groups. Excellent relationships are evident. Marking, although supportive, does not always tell pupils how to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum meets pupils' different learning needs well. The school ensures that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are able to benefit fully from the curriculum. The sensitive and effective ways in which this is done also help all pupils to become aware of the needs of others. The school has already identified the need for improvement in provision for outdoor learning and play for Reception children. Visitors are invited into school and a wide range of visits is arranged to enhance pupils' learning. Excellent partnerships support the school's mission to provide its pupils with the best educational opportunities to develop their skills. Pupils' personal safety and citizenship education are developed very effectively within the curriculum. The importance of staying safe and keeping healthy is a prominent feature, frequently raised in class or group discussions. Lively whole-school projects broaden the curriculum, stimulate pupils' interest and contribute significantly to their knowledge and understanding of the wider world.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school takes exceptional care of all its pupils. The support it gives reinforces pupils' academic, emotional and personal development very well. Pupils have a good understanding of their own needs and are clearly aware of their targets in literacy. What they are not so clear about is what they need to do next to improve their work

across the curriculum. They trust staff and know who to turn to if they need help. There is very good support for them when they are upset or troubled. Parents and carers feel welcomed in the school and are strongly encouraged through parents' meetings and newsletters to be involved in their children's education. Very good, targeted help is provided for pupils who find learning difficult. The arrangements for settling pupils into school and their transfer to the junior school are very good. Child protection and health and safety procedures are very well established and there are excellent links with outside agencies, which give a range of supportive help to pupils. There are very clear arrangements in place for the early identification of pupils who may be in need of additional support.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher provides excellent leadership with strong support from managers at all levels. She has developed strategies that have led to continued high achievement and that maintain very high standards. A well designed system of monitoring standards across the school means that the headteacher has a very clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Detailed analysis of data enables targeted support to be provided to promote pupils' progress. The school improvement plan is an effective working document, centred on pupils' needs, that focuses sharply on how to manage improvement. Through clear communication of her vision, the headteacher has established high morale among staff who work well together with a common sense of purpose. Consequently, the school provides a supportive learning environment that enables pupils of all levels of attainment to participate fully in all that it has to offer. Curriculum coordinators play an effective role in monitoring and developing performance in their specialist areas. The governing body provides excellent support for the work of the school. Governors take an active part in all aspects of school life. They are very well informed about educational matters as a result of their training and regular contacts with the school. This enables them to hold the school rigorously to account and to evaluate robustly the impact of decisions, changes and spending.

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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1	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?	1	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?	1	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	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	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	1	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, a team of inspectors visited your school to find out if your school is giving you the education you should receive. Thank you very much for making us so welcome. We particularly enjoyed talking to you and finding out about what you enjoy. You are really proud of your school and rightly so because it is outstanding.

Some of the things we especially liked were:

- the excellent way that your headteacher and other adults look after you so well so that you work very hard and make outstanding progress
- your outstanding behaviour and your good attitude to learning
- the way your teachers make learning enjoyable for you
- how keen you are to take on responsibilities, help to make decisions about your school, and care about one another.

Miss Kenna, Mrs Hart and I were very impressed with what we saw. The adults in your school have already noticed what needs to be done to improve even further. We have asked them to make sure that Reception children have a better outdoor learning and play area and that all of you know exactly what you need to do next to improve your learning.

Thank you for helping us so much with the inspection of your school. We hope you will carry on enjoying learning and helping your teachers to improve Cheadle Catholic Infant School.