



Alderley Edge Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 111008
LEA Cheshire
Inspection number 278567
Inspection dates 11 January 2006 to 12 January 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs Jane Hughes CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Church Lane
School category	Community		Alderley Edge
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Cheshire SK9 7UZ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01625 582213
Number on roll	262	Fax number	01625 586788
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs A Turner
Date of previous inspection	18 January 2000	Headteacher	Mr C Perry

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 11 January 2006 - 12 January 2006	Inspection number 278567
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average school. It serves an area with favourable socio-economic circumstances and few children are eligible for free school meals. Fewer than average children have learning difficulties and/or disabilities although a small number have statements of special educational need. The small number of minority ethnic children includes some who speak languages other than English. The school has Investors in People, Department for Education and Skills Excellence awards and the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

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. Inspectors agree with all but one of the school's self-evaluation judgements, finding the 'satisfactory' leadership and management judgement to be rather modest.

Children enter the school with broadly average standards and they consistently reach well above average standards by the end of Year 6. Standards in the Foundation Stage are good. Throughout the school, the children achieve well overall: their achievement is very good in Key Stage 2. Children like school and attendance is high. Their attitudes to learning and their behaviour generally demonstrate well developed levels of self confidence and maturity. Parents say that their children 'have an excellent start to life at school'. Children enjoy high levels of pastoral care with an increasing emphasis placed on the well-being of the 'whole child'. Teachers encourage children to be creative. The rich curriculum offers new skills to explore and equips children with a real love of, and enthusiasm for, music. The local community values the school which rightly enjoys a strong reputation. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak a language other than English receive high quality support and achieve as well as other children.

Senior managers are accurate in their analysis of the school's strengths and development priorities. Staff, governors, parents and children create a strong team as they work towards the common purpose of encouraging well rounded, lifelong learners. The school has successfully addressed the issues raised by the previous inspection and there is good capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

Raise standards of pupils' work in Key Stage 1 by:

- introducing a system for monitoring and evaluating children's progress more effectively
- ensuring children develop a clear understanding of how to improve their learning by being involved in assessing their work and setting targets for themselves.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children achieve well overall and very well in Key Stage 2. By Year 6, children's attainment is much higher than average. 2005 test results confirm that children reach standards well above the national average in English, mathematics and science. Children in Key Stage 2 in particular respond with determination to challenging targets set by teachers. These spur them on to make impressive strides in their learning. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, particular gifts and talents, and children from different minority ethnic groups achieve equally well.

Children start school with average skills. In 2005, children made satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage. Most children attained the expected standards. Organisational and staffing changes are ensuring better provision and higher standards because children are more interested in the planned activities. 2005 data showed that children's attainment by the end of Year 2 was broadly average. However, some Level 3 writing test results were not included in this analysis. The school recognised that achievement in Key Stage 1 needed to improve and took remedial action. Open plan teaching areas were remodelled. Children now have separate classrooms which provide more purposeful learning environments. These important changes are resulting in considerably better achievement than previously. Standards are already rising in Years 1 and 2.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children's personal development and well-being are good. They really enjoy coming to school and their self-confidence blossoms. They develop respect for others' cultural differences and know the difference between right and wrong. Children understand the simple school rules and are well motivated by the rewards system. Children are courteous, friendly and behave well. Rare incidents of unacceptable behaviour are dealt with effectively. Children respect their teachers, want to please them, and understand that they are at school to learn. As a result, they attain the skills required for the world of work. Playing in, or singing along with, the orchestra allows children to experience the uplifting tingle of rousing music. Attendance is good.

Children learn to work safely and to value features of healthy lifestyles through an effective programme of personal, social and health education. Children appreciate the freshly cooked lunches. They say 'school dinners have really improved recently; they're home cooked, proper food, not just heated up pizza'. They also enjoy the physical challenges of residential trips and sports activities.

Children contribute well to school life through the effective school council. They learn to listen to others and discuss points constructively. They recently raised funds for additional playground equipment which provided good teamwork opportunities and enhanced their future social and workplace skills.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good with some outstanding features. The highest quality lessons, for example in Year 5 and 6 mathematics, stimulate and challenge learners because teaching is tightly structured to match children's needs. As a result, children thrive and make exceptionally good progress. Children generate ideas effectively with their 'elbow partner' and in small groups. This promotes their learning well, especially for those who need more support. Relationships between staff and children are strengths. Since September, children's learning in Key Stage 1 has improved with the

remodelling of the open plan classrooms. Children can listen and concentrate better. In the Foundation Stage, staff changes are improving the quality of provision by planning activities that really appeal to children of this age.

Teachers have a good understanding of children's attainment and what they need to improve further. During lessons, they regularly assess children's work and discuss how they might improve. Older children are also taught to assess their own work. However, how teachers track the progress of Key Stage 1 children over time is not well enough developed.

All groups of children, including those with gifts and talents or learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are effectively taught. They participate very well in lessons and other activities. Children's individual needs are effectively met, supported by high quality teaching assistants.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It is well matched to children's needs, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and meets statutory requirements. The strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy helps to maintain high standards by Year 6 and ensures children develop skills necessary for their future success. The curriculum is effectively organised so children build upon their skills and knowledge step by step. The opportunity to learn French and the rich variety of musical activities, particularly the stunning orchestra, help to stimulate children's enjoyment of learning. Most children leave school playing a musical instrument and reading music.

The wide range of other activities including visits and visitors into school enrich the curriculum very well. Tempting activities outside lessons are outstanding in range and quality and appreciated by older children. There is little provision for younger children. Numerous sporting opportunities, coupled with residential visits, help to develop children's physical and social skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support for children are good. Adults nurture children well and help them to feel safe. A strong ethos of care permeates all aspects of school life and children become confident learners. The vast majority of parents are highly supportive of the school and most are of the opinion that staff takes extremely good care of their children. They speak of 'the enthusiastic, caring and supportive atmosphere at school'. Arrangements for child protection are secure and known by staff. Close attention is paid to health and safety, and governors are diligent in their monitoring. Conscientious lunchtime supervisors, kitchen staff and caretaking personnel make strong contributions to the high quality pastoral care.

Children's personal development is monitored well. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress in their work are not sharp enough in Key Stage 1, although they are better

in Key Stage 2. Younger children do not have a clear enough understanding of how they could attain higher standards in their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the school are good, rather than 'satisfactory' as indicated in the self-evaluation. The strong leadership and management of the school assure its success. Parents, children and staff attest to the absent headteacher's commitment to children's well-being and success. The loyal staff team demonstrate unerring support for him. The newly appointed deputy headteacher fulfils the role of acting headteacher with the skill of a senior leader of many years standing. Her tenacious determination has ensured the school is operating effectively during the headteacher's absence, assisted by highly competent administrators and conscientious governors. The headteacher's leadership style is well embedded and staff have a clear understanding of priorities and their individual subject responsibilities. Nonetheless, a current school priority is to develop further the role of middle managers so they can participate more fully in the life of the school. The school enjoys supportive links with all its partners.

School self-evaluation is largely accurate and development priorities are clearly understood. Crucially, the school took significant action last year to completely remodel the Key Stage 1 teaching areas, replacing the open plan layout with individual classrooms. There were also some changes to teaching personnel in the Foundation Stage. Together, these successful changes have improved provision significantly in both areas of the school. Children's achievement is already improving in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.

Fully committed governors offer well informed support. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities well and are instrumental in enabling the headteacher to put his vision into practice. They are good custodians of the school's caring ethos, quest for improvement and financial security and have overseen good improvement since the last inspection. The school provides good value for money. There is clear capacity for further improvement.

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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	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?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	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	3	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

We were delighted to meet you during our recent visit. Thank you all for being so welcoming and telling us so much about your school. You had so much to tell us during our lunchtime chats which we particularly enjoyed.

There are many good things to be proud of in your school. Here are some we liked the most:

- all the adults look after you very well
- the older children take turns to play outside with the younger ones
- you work hard in your lessons and make good, and often very good, progress
- you all say how good the orchestra is and we agree - your playing of instruments and singing in assembly were truly uplifting
- your parents are very good at making sure you come to school every day and are very supportive of the school's work
- the school is a much valued part of the local community.

This is what we have asked your school to do now so it will be even better:

- look even harder at the information teachers collect about how well you learn in Key Stage 1 so you can become even more successful learners
- help those of you in Key Stage 1 to do even better by helping you to set your own targets and assess your own work.

Congratulations on the big part you all play in making your school so successful. Carry on working hard and enjoying school!