



# Mickle Trafford Village School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 111082  
**LEA** Cheshire  
**Inspection number** 278594  
**Inspection dates** 1 February 2006 to 2 February 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mr Paul Bamber 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>	School Lane
<b>School category</b>	Community		Mickle Trafford
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		Chester, Cheshire CH2 4EF
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01244 300348
<b>Number on roll</b>	154	<b>Fax number</b>	01244 300383
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr N Lewis
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8 November 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs S Raynor

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

This is a smaller than average village school with 154 children on roll. A higher than average proportion of children come from advantaged homes and the vast majority are from a white British background. The proportion of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is around the average. More children enter and leave the school during the year than is normal. All children in the juniors are taught in mixed age classes. The school is currently led by an acting headteacher.

## **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 with outstanding features. Whilst this judgement matches the school's overall view of itself, the school has underestimated the effectiveness of the children's personal development and the care, support and guidance provided, both of which make an outstanding contribution to children's achievements.

Overall, standards are high in English, mathematics and science at both key stages. Children achieve well. However, despite attaining above average standards, boys do not achieve as well as girls in writing at the higher levels in national assessments. Children make particularly good progress in Year 2, Year 4/5 and Year 6 classes. The quality of teaching is good, sometimes outstanding. However, some relative weaknesses in the Year 3/4 class result in children achieving satisfactorily, but less well than in other classes.

Children are very well cared for and supported. The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is good and children have a good start to their schooling. Close partnerships with parents, the community and other educational establishments contribute well to the children's achievements and good curriculum.

The school is well led, managed and governed. However, action planning could be sharper in identifying how children's learning should improve. The school is rightly popular, has improved well since the last inspection and has good capacity to improve further. It offers good value for money.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to improve the quality of more-able boys' writing.
- Ensure that in the Year 3/4 class, children's achievements and the quality of teaching match the consistently good standards that prevail in all other classes.
- Make action plans more specific in identifying what ways children's learning needs to improve and how that will be achieved.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Overall, children's achievements and standards are good. In national assessments children in Year 2 and in Year 6 reach high standards in English, mathematics and science. Achievement in reading is particularly high, but in writing, boys do not reach the higher Levels 3 and 5 in the same high proportions as girls. The school is aware of this and is taking effective steps to improve boys' writing. As a result of some outstanding teaching in the upper juniors, children's achievements in Year 6 have been significantly higher than average over the last two years. In the Year 3/4 class, where teaching is not so strong, children achieve satisfactorily. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well, most make good progress and achieve expected levels in the Year 6 national tests. The school sets itself very challenging targets and generally meets them. Significant improvements in standards in information

and communication technology (ICT) have been made since the last inspection and standards are now above average.

Children in the Reception class enter with broadly average skills, albeit with significant variations from year to year. They make consistently good progress and many enter Year 1 exceeding the learning targets set for them nationally. Children continue to make good progress in Years 1 and 2. Those children with special gifts or talents achieve well because of effective teaching and an enriching curriculum.

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

### **Grade: 1**

The school considers this aspect to be good, but inspectors judge it to be outstanding. Children enjoy coming to school and were heard to say 'people share things here and it is a fun place to be'. Children behave very well in lessons, in the playground and around the school responding to the high expectations which are prevalent. They are courteous to each other and to visitors. They work hard in lessons when they share and cooperate very well. The thriving school council provides children with excellent opportunities to take responsibility, to understand citizenship and develop skills for their future economic well-being. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Collective worship makes a strong contribution to their spiritual awareness and encourages the children to reflect on values such as fairness and cooperation and respect for other cultures.

Children understand the importance of healthy eating and the benefits of regular exercise. The school is accredited as a 'healthy school' by the local authority. The children's strong collaborative, numeracy and literacy skills equip them very well for later life. Attendance is above average. Children appreciate the importance of punctuality by arriving at school on time.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. There is some outstanding teaching that challenges children well, ensuring their good achievements and promoting high standards. Where teaching is only satisfactory, children make slower progress than in other classes.

Where teaching is outstanding or good, lessons proceed at a fast pace with challenging tasks being set and warm relationships established. In most lessons, teachers plan and assess children's work rigorously, matching tasks to their needs very well. Creative use is made of new technologies such as interactive whiteboards, computers and digital cameras to make concepts clear and to engage children's interest. Basic skills are very well taught, especially reading. This, together with the many opportunities provided for children to make choices in their learning and to work independently and cooperatively, ensure that they enjoy lessons and acquire essential life and work skills.

Experienced teaching assistants make effective contributions to children's learning, especially for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Assistants work closely with classroom teachers and their sensitive support ensures that children make good progress.

The quality of teaching for Reception children is consistently good, enabling them to achieve well in all areas of their learning, but especially in reading and in their personal and emotional development.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The school considers this to be good. Inspectors agree, but judge that there are some outstanding features. The curriculum is inclusive and is well matched to the needs of the vast majority of children, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with particular gifts and talents. It is effectively planned and organised so that children learn skills as well as factual knowledge. The strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy helps to maintain high standards. The well planned guided reading programme contributes very effectively to the high reading standards throughout the school. Provision in ICT is very good and it is used well in many curriculum areas.

Curricular enrichment is outstanding. Visits and visitors into school are excellent in both range and quality and stimulate the children's enjoyment of learning. The numerous sporting opportunities, in addition to the residential visits develop children's physical skills. The teaching of French, throughout the school and the many opportunities provided for the children to join in music and drama enhance their curriculum well.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The school considers this aspect to be good but inspectors judge it to be outstanding. This is a very caring school that provides a happy and secure environment in which children develop well. Children enjoy coming to school and feel safe. 'This school makes everybody equal and makes the best of people'. Staff know the children very well and thoroughly monitor their academic and social development, offering sensitive support. Children are aware of their targets and know what they have to do to improve. Child protection procedures are very well established and any children at risk are quickly identified and supported. The school works successfully with outside agencies to support vulnerable children. Health and safety routines and all risk assessments are firmly in place. Parents confirm that arrangements for children to settle into school and for the transfer of children to secondary education are very good.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The quality of leadership and management is good. Despite the current absence of a permanent headteacher, the school is strongly led and developments continue apace. Self evaluation is good, albeit modest in underestimating the excellence of children's personal development and well-being and the high quality of the care, guidance and support provided. An outstanding feature of management is the rigorous way that performance is monitored. This has made a very significant contribution to the high standards children achieve. The school has been effective in recognising relative weaknesses in boys' writing and in aspects of the teaching and children's achievement in the Year 3/4 class. Actions are being taken to address these issues, but their full impact has yet to be felt. Action plans are not specific enough about what improvements in children's learning need to take place.

Subject coordinators play a key role in monitoring and where necessary improving standards. There have been notable improvements in ICT and science since the last inspection because of the effective work of senior and middle managers. Equality of opportunity is rigorously and successfully pursued and children express clearly how this impacts on their achievement and sense of worth. The school's close partnership with the local community, other educational establishments and parents contribute well to children's excellent personal and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Provision for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is managed very well.

Governors support the school strongly. They are rigorous in their pursuit of best value for money, keep a watchful eye on standards and provision and have taken difficult decisions unflinchingly. The school has made good progress since the last inspection and has good capacity 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	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

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

<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>	1	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	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	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 for making us so welcome during the two days we spent in your school. We really appreciated the open and frank way in which you chatted to us and let us know so many interesting things about your school. We would like to share with you those things we thought were good about the school and those things we felt it could do a bit better.

What we liked most about your school:

- you do well in your lessons, especially in your reading, mathematics, science and information and communication technology
- the good teaching you receive
- the way in which you all get on so well together, care for each other and enjoy school
- your good attendance and that most of you arrive at school on time
- the many after school clubs, visits and visitors you have to help you learn more about the world
- the good start to school you have in the Reception class
- the lovely way you are cared for and supported by your teachers.

What we think the school could be doing better:

- boys who do very well in lots of subjects should be given more help to do just as well with their writing
- the school's action plans for the subjects you study should be clearer about what needs to be done and exactly what you need to do to improve.

Thank you for helping us with the inspection of your school. We hope that you continue to enjoy school and do well with your work and carry on trying really hard.