



Kettleshulme St James CofE (VA) Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 111459
LEA Cheshire
Inspection number 278705
Inspection dates 5 December 2005 to 6 December 2005
Reporting inspector Mr Terry McDermott CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Macclesfield Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Kettleshulme
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		High Peak SK23 7QU
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01663 732502
Number on roll	71	Fax number	01663 735281
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs B Adams
Date of previous inspection	18 September 2000	Headteacher	Ms Sandie La Porta

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This small Church of England Voluntary Aided school serves the village of Kettleshulme and surrounding areas, and because of its rural location parents sometimes find it difficult to get their children to school in winter weather. There are no children with statements though the number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. There are few pupils with a minority ethnic heritage, and very few who claim free school meals. Children from a nearby infant school join at the start of Year 3. A new headteacher has taken up post since the last inspection.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school's judgment that this is a good school with some outstanding features. It gives good value for money. The outstanding leadership of the headteacher is key to its success. She sets an excellent role model for children and adults alike. The school knows its strengths and weaknesses. It is now seeking ways to improve children's understanding of scientific enquiry.

Small numbers of children enter the Reception class each year. Others join at the start of Year 3. Their social, personal and communication skills are broadly average. By the end of Year 6 in 2005 standards were above average, with particular strengths in mathematics and writing, though not so well developed in science. Throughout Years 1 to 6 all groups of pupils make good progress.

The school encourages the personal development of children outstandingly well, who become confident, articulate and sensible young people, well prepared to move on to their next school.

The quality of teaching and learning are consistently good. Detailed planning ensures that work set closely matches the individual needs of each pupil. Children's progress is monitored regularly and accurately, but the school has yet to use this information to set specific targets for learning.

The curriculum goes beyond normal requirements and enriches the learning experiences of all children well. Children have many opportunities to take advantage of the wide range of community links on offer.

The school takes very good care of the children in its charge. Guidance is less well developed as children are not informed consistently enough about what they need to do to improve.

The areas for improvement identified at the last inspection have largely been remedied. Standards and achievement have been maintained at a good level. This underlines the capacity the school has for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

Continue to raise standards and achievement by:

- improving the information given when marking work so that children know what to do to get better
- continuing to focus on developing children's understanding of scientific principle.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school evaluation that overall standards are above average, and achievement is good. As a small school with only a few children in each year group the school recognises that it has to focus work closely to match the needs of individual

children. It does this successfully, and ensures that all groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with gifts and talents are able to make good progress.

Pupils made good progress to reach the results expected of them in the Key Stage 1 teacher assessments in 2005, though based on their prior attainment these were below average. In the Key Stage 2 tests in 2005 results were significantly above average particularly in English, representing good progress for this small group of pupils.

The staff work hard to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding, place support carefully, and then monitor and record the progress children make. The information contained in the recently developed tracking system has yet to be fully used to set appropriately challenging targets for individual children.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The children's personal development and well-being are outstanding. The children enjoy school. They say 'I like lessons' and 'I like helping the younger ones to learn a bit more'. They say they feel safe. Independence is promoted throughout with younger children making informed choices in lessons, and older children taking on particular responsibilities such as 'Road Safety Officer' or Librarian in school. The children say 'school is friendly and comfortable.' Children's attitudes to their work are good. They behave well in and around the school and respect each other. They report little bullying, and know what to do if they feel troubled. 'I know who to see if I get upset', said one child. Attendance is broadly average and the school works hard to improve it.

Children's spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is outstanding. The children spontaneously celebrate the achievements of others. They gladly share their feelings and thoughts and listen carefully to others. There are many opportunities to learn about other cultures and beliefs. The children show a keen concern for others, and are active in supporting exceptional causes, such as the Tsunami appeal.

Children contribute very well to school life through the school council. They make a special contribution to the local community.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The school evaluates teaching and learning as good throughout the school. Inspectors agree. Teaching is lively and interesting, and encourages children to think of 'why?' and to give answers in complete sentences, though sometimes they speak too softly for all the class to hear. Each of the three classes in the school has pupils of different ages. This requires detailed planning to ensure that work matches the need of each individual pupil. For example, in class 1, populated by children in Reception, Year 1, and Year 2, a good balance of activities ensured good progress in developing all round

literacy skills. The youngest made progress identifying letters correctly, Year 1 constructed sentences with full stops and capital letters, and Year 2 children read their own creative writing aloud. This clearly demonstrated the learning that had taken place both in the lesson and over time. This progress is now recorded in the school wide system for measuring and tracking children's learning using nationally recognised levels. Though teachers set academic and pastoral learning targets in consultation with the children, they do not yet use progress information to ensure the very best learning can take place.

All work is marked regularly, and celebrates the efforts pupils make. However the marking does not tell pupils with enough consistency what they need to do to learn more. The school gives effective support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, often through help from those with gifts and talents.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good, as the school suggests. It covers the required range of subjects for children in Years 1 to 6 and areas of learning for children in the Reception class. The curriculum is strongly enriched with visits, trips and visitors. For example, visitors share first hand experiences from the War, and work undertaken with the Embroiderers Guild, examples of which are in all corners of the school. The school uses contacts within various small school networks very effectively to ensure the children are not disadvantaged by the small size of the school. Activities in lessons and outside the classroom are well planned, and give children many opportunities to work collaboratively and independently.

The school has correctly identified an issue with the knowledge children have of scientific concepts. It is presently seeking ways to improve their investigative skills, and the understanding they have of scientific method and logic.

All groups of children, however, small these groups may be, are supported very well, and given tasks and activities well suited to their capabilities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support for the children are good overall. Parents are very supportive of the school and say that the school provides 'an educational environment which is stimulating, thoughtful and caring', indeed that it is a 'wonderful school.'

Care for the children is outstanding. Positive relationships built on the strongly Christian ethos of the school help the children to flourish socially. Consequently self-confidence grows and the children are keen to take on significant roles throughout the school. There are very good procedures in place for supporting children when they join school in the Reception year and Year 3. Older children are also very well prepared for their move to the high school. The staff know the children very well and have high expectations of them. Children often have targets to work towards, but these are not set consistently, nor are they linked to levels of work in most subject areas. Assessment

data is beginning to be used to keep a track of how well the children are doing and staff find this a useful tool. Health and safety issues are well addressed in the school. The arrangements for child protection are clear and links with support agencies and with other schools are strong.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school accurately judges leadership and management to be good. Led by an outstanding headteacher, a strikingly harmonious atmosphere is developing in which pupils are able to access all that the school has to offer. The headteacher makes the most of the different skills and abilities of all her staff.

Through shared responsibility, the whole staff team, including the governing body, are involved in moving the school forward. They are not afraid to try out new ideas that will further assist children in their learning. There is a growing sense of working for continuous improvement. As the headteacher said 'We know we will never be perfect, but we will never stop trying to be'.

The school evaluates its own performance accurately through a range of feedback methods. The opinions of parents and pupils are sought, and work is regularly marked. Shared observations of lessons ensure that the quality of teaching and learning are good. Communication between and with the many part-time staff is good, aided by using modern technology for sharing planning and performance information. The school has yet to link systematically the performance data it gathers with its target setting procedures.

Financial planning is good. This allows the school to allocate resources to good effect to promote learning.

The high quality teamwork and dedication of the staff and the governors, demonstrate the school's 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>	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?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	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	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	2	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	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 welcoming us so warmly to your school, and for helping us to reach the right judgement. I particularly enjoyed talking with you at dinner times, and the wonderful displays of your embroidery and art work around school.

We think that Kettleshulme is a good school with some outstanding features:

- the adults in school look after you really well, and always put your needs first
- Ms La Porta is an excellent headteacher who is always thinking of how to get you to learn more and more
- how sensible you all are about lots of things. You behave very well, particularly in lessons; you give lots of very thoughtful answers to the questions the teachers ask you; and you look after your school with great care and pride.

We think the school would help you to get even better, if the teachers wrote in your books telling you exactly what you needed to do next in your work. You could also help, by speaking up more when answering questions, so that everybody else could benefit from your knowledge and ideas.

I am sure that you will all do well, if you continue to listen carefully to your good teachers.