

# Delph Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105669
<b>Local Authority</b>	Oldham
<b>Inspection number</b>	287291
<b>Inspection dates</b>	2–3 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jim Kidd

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	196
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Mark Hopkins
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Alison Leigh
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 January 2003
<b>School address</b>	Denshaw Road Delph Oldham Lancashire OL3 5HN
<b>Telephone number</b>	01457 874400
<b>Fax number</b>	01457 872499

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This smaller than average school is situated on the edge of Saddleworth Moor and serves a mixed residential area of privately owned and council housing. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is low. Most pupils are of White British heritage and few have English as an additional language. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well below average. Delph Primary holds Eco-Link Silver status and was the first school in the borough of Oldham to achieve the Healthy Schools Stage 3 Award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Delph Primary School's commitment to the pupils in its care is summed up by its mission statement: 'To be the best that we can be!' To this end, teachers provide an excellent curriculum, all elements of which lead to pupils' outstanding personal development. Their academic progress is good, too, and they reach above average standards by the time they leave for secondary education. Without any doubt, this is a good and rapidly improving school. It has improved well since the previous inspection, has good capacity to improve further and provides good value for money.

Children in the Reception class get a good start to their school careers and learn quickly both to work in teams and to take responsibility for their own progress. Their enjoyment of school is reinforced by the support they receive from older pupils, who are delighted to be given the chance to help them. These younger pupils continue to achieve well in Years 1 and 2, but they currently reach higher standards in reading and writing than they do in mathematics. In Key Stage 2, pupils reach above average levels of attainment, and the quality of their creative writing is much higher than that usually found. In all years, pupils respond to good teaching, behave very well and are very keen to make contributions in class.

Members of the school and class councils are encouraged to offer their opinions on how their school may be improved and, as they work towards the Eco-Link Green Flag Award, pupils do much to care for the immediate environment. The local community too benefits from the pupils' work: music is a very important part of school life and the choir and brass band give annual concerts in the neighbourhood and beyond. Pupils are confident yet modest and display an enviable social conscience. They have a keen awareness of faiths and cultures different to their own and their support for a wide range of charities is a byword in the community.

Good levels of care permeate the school and adults work hard to make sure that all pupils, irrespective of their ability and aspirations, can take full advantage of what the curriculum has to offer. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are encouraged to believe in themselves and, like their peers, to take part in the excellent variety of enrichment activities. From the thriving breakfast club to the sports coaching as part of the 'Unity in the Community' scheme, the school is alive with activity, joy and laughter both before formal lessons begin and well after they end.

Leadership and management are good but, because teachers believe that nothing is ever perfect, they occasionally underestimate the quality of the school's provision. Middle leaders are enthusiastic about their subjects, but do not monitor teaching and learning as effectively as they might. However, teamwork among all adults is of the essence and staff morale is high as a result of their belief that their views are encouraged, listened to and acted upon by senior leaders. As staff say, 'There is no place for us and them in our school.' The dedicated headteacher has the well-being of both pupils and staff uppermost in her mind. Parents agree and add, 'Delph Primary School provides a welcoming, nurturing and inclusive education. Staff are always accessible and listen to any concerns we may have.' The inspection team is aware that pupils, parents and staff are very proud of each other and of their school. They have every right to be.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics in Key Stage 1.

- Provide subject leaders with more opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in their curriculum areas.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils enter the Foundation Stage with skills which are broadly average for their age and they make good progress across the school to reach above average standards by the end of Year 6. The strong focus on teamwork and independent learning in the Reception class leads to children achieving particularly well in communication, language and literacy and in their personal, social and emotional development. They use computers with a skill which belies their years. Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 1, but their performance in mathematics does not match their standards in reading and writing. Attainment in English, mathematics and science is consistently above average by the end of Key Stage 2 and pupils produce creative writing of high quality in both Year 5 and Year 6. Pupils who often find the work difficult and those with particular gifts and talents make the same good progress as others because of the effective support and encouragement they receive from their teachers and teaching assistants.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils have positive attitudes to all aspects of their school life. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent, and close attention is paid to reinforcing pupils' awareness and understanding of the local culture. This was evident in a dazzling performance of 'A Grand Day Out' by the school's brass band during rehearsals. The partnership with another school in the borough which comprises many pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds promotes interracial awareness and community cohesion very successfully indeed. Behaviour in lessons and in the playground is very good. Pupils feel safe in school and say there is very little bullying but that when it occurs, it is dealt with swiftly and effectively. Pupils enjoy school very much. This is reflected in their above average attendance and eager participation in lessons. They welcome the wide range of extra-curricular activities, especially sport, and recognise that their participation is invaluable in keeping fit. Healthy eating is always on the agenda of the active school and class councils and older pupils who have passed a safe cycling course are allowed to cycle to school. Good academic achievement, the emphasis on pupils' emotional development and the encouragement they receive to work and play together in harmony prepare them well for their future lives.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is good and there are examples of outstanding practice in Key Stage 2. Teachers are always concerned to provide their pupils with experiences which fire their imagination and encourage them to make active contributions in class. In an outstanding Year 5 literacy lesson, for example, the very effective use of images on the interactive whiteboard motivated pupils to produce thought-provoking similes about different kinds of weather patterns. They were visibly moved when they saw a close-up of the eye of a hurricane and also frost patterns on glass. Pupils behave impeccably and are generally fully engaged in their learning. They work maturely in pairs and groups and are delighted when their

classmates achieve success. Adults and pupils treat each other with the utmost dignity and respect: relationships are a major strength. On occasions, teachers direct activities too much and the pace of learning suffers as a result. Similarly, in a minority of lessons some pupils finish early and do not always have sufficiently challenging work to reinforce their understanding.

Teachers track the progress of their pupils closely and any apparent underachievement is identified rapidly and addressed effectively. Marking is generally good, but varies in the extent of advice it gives pupils on how to improve their work.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

The school underestimated the quality of its curriculum, which makes a profound contribution to pupils' personal and academic achievement. Active involvement with other schools in a local creative writing project continues to raise standards in this area. Similarly, the emphasis on topic work, in history and geography for example, ensures that pupils see learning links across the curriculum and enables them to transfer their skills from one subject to another. Music plays a large part in school life and both boys and girls are desperate to become involved in the choir, which currently comprises almost a quarter of the pupil population. The brass band has an enviable reputation within the borough and 'Band on Tour' performs annual concerts at a nearby residential home and at local infant and nursery schools. Provision for information and communication technology has improved markedly since the last inspection and displays on the corridor and in classrooms show how effectively pupils can use a wide range of quite complex software. Modern languages, too, are an important part of school life and native speakers from both France and Germany deliver lessons on a weekly basis.

There is an outstanding range of extra-curricular activities, including sport, and pupils speak highly of their work within the Eco initiative, which they say 'helps us to understand how we can take better care of our school environment'.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

In the words of parents, 'The school works hard to produce well rounded, polite and considerate children.' Indeed, care, guidance and support are good and lead to excellent behaviour and positive attitudes. Adults working in the school are very good role models through the ways that they interact with each other and with the pupils themselves. Older pupils support younger ones and take on these responsibilities willingly and eagerly. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those identified as vulnerable make good personal and academic progress because of the encouragement they receive from their teachers and teaching assistants. The comprehensive programme of personal, social, health and moral education teaches pupils how to stay healthy and avoid unnecessary risks. Checks on adults working in the school meet statutory requirements and child protection procedures are in place. Risk assessments for school trips and other activities are produced regularly. Pupils' personal achievements in school and beyond are recognised and celebrated. In addition, procedures for tracking their academic progress are robust but there are some inconsistencies in pupils' knowledge of how well they are doing and in what they need to do to improve further.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Good quality leadership and management are the key factors in ensuring that pupils achieve well academically and make outstanding progress in their personal development. The inspirational headteacher, ably supported by a talented deputy headteacher and management team, gives clear direction for future development and ongoing improvement. Senior leaders monitor and evaluate school performance accurately and in detail, using the information gained to set well founded targets for improvement. Subject coordinators have an increasingly good understanding of the priorities in their curriculum areas, but their knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning is underdeveloped. However, both teaching and non-teaching staff share a common vision for what the school is about and there is a real sense of teamwork at all levels. As teachers comment, 'The senior leadership supports us, encourages us and makes us feel both valued and valuable.' The school's strong partnership with parents and its outstanding links with other groups and agencies are a testament to its overriding concern: to make sure that all pupils can benefit to the full from everything it offers. The governing body keeps pupils' learning and personal development at the centre of its deliberations and offers the leadership a good level of challenge and support.

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## Annex A

## 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>
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Inspection of Delph Primary School, Delph, Oldham OL3 5HN

Thank you all so much for the warm welcome you gave us when the inspection team visited your school recently. You were very kind and friendly to us and we enjoyed talking to you and hearing you sing and play your musical instruments. You were very keen to know how the inspection went and we would like to tell you some of the really good points about your school.

Delph Primary is a good school and we understand why you are all so proud of it. Your behaviour is excellent and you get on very well with your classmates. Younger pupils, especially those in the infant classes, benefit a great deal from what older pupils do for them and your school gives them a good start to their education. The school council plays a major part in how Delph is run and members have many good suggestions on how to make it an even better school. Your headteacher and other staff have some really good ideas about how to improve your school too!

You do well in your lessons and your teachers try very hard to make your work interesting. Some of your writing is very good indeed and you have many opportunities to use computers when you are working things out for yourselves. You enjoy learning French and German and many of you take part in the wide range of after-school activities, sport and games for example. You sing beautifully and the inspection team was also delighted to hear the lovely brass band music on Thursday afternoon. When we talked to you, you told us about how well your teachers and teaching assistants care for you and we saw this in every lesson we visited! Adults in the school want you to do well and they try hard to help you in everything you do.

We would now like you to continue to work hard with your teachers to make sure that you improve your work in mathematics in Years 1 and 2. We also think it would be a good idea if your teachers visited more classrooms to see how well you are doing and also to learn from the good things other teachers do in their lessons!

Thank you again for helping us with the inspection. We enjoyed watching you learn.