

Outwood Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106094
Local Authority	Stockport
Inspection number	287412
Inspection dates	18–19 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Diane Auton

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	147
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Malcolm Graves
Headteacher	Mr P Cunningham
Date of previous school inspection	8 July 2002
School address	Outwood Road Heald Green Cheadle Cheshire SK8 3ND
Telephone number	0161 4371715
Fax number	0

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This small school serves a residential area of mixed housing. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is similar to the national average and the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is also similar to that found in most schools. A small number of pupils who are from Asian backgrounds or who have recently arrived in this country from Eastern Europe are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average.

Working in partnership with a nearby special school, the school is resourced by its local authority to provide six places to support the reintegration of pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties into mainstream education.

During the period following its last inspection, the school experienced an extended period of staffing turbulence, with long-term absences and changes of leadership and key personnel. The appointment of the current headteacher in September 2006 marked the start of a more stable period. A new deputy headteacher was appointed in September 2007.

The school holds the National Eco Award (bronze) and the International School Award Fountain Level.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory and rapidly improving school. The recent improvements introduced by its new leadership team are beginning to have a positive impact on standards.

Long-serving governors have helped to steer the school through a difficult period into better times. Leadership and management are now strong and have had a major impact on raising the quality of provision, which is now good. Pupils' personal development is given the highest priority and, as a result, it is good, with some outstanding aspects. Standards are currently broadly average at both Key Stages 1 and 2, and, since the children enter Nursery with skills and understanding typical for their age, this represents satisfactory overall progress. The school is working hard to improve. Standards have begun to rise and, although this has not yet been reflected in national assessments at the end of the key stages, early signs of improvement can be seen through the school's progress data for each year group. In the current year, for example, an increased proportion of pupils achieved the higher levels in assessment at the end of Year 2 than previously. Across the school, however, not enough more able pupils reach the higher National Curriculum levels of which they are capable. The school provides well for pupils who have additional learning or personal needs. Less able and vulnerable pupils are given good support; there is effective provision for pupils who do not have English as their home language; pupils from the partner special school benefit greatly from flexible and innovative practice that supports their successful reintegration into mainstream schooling. As a result, all of these groups of pupils make good progress.

The school's strong community ethos is shown in the overwhelmingly positive endorsements of parents, many of whom feel that their children are well looked after and provided for. Good relationships between home and school are established in the Foundation Stage and sustained throughout the primary years. Attendance, previously unsatisfactory, is now close to the national average, as a result of the school's successful drive for improvement. Pupils' excellent behaviour and very positive attitudes to learning mean that lessons run smoothly and playtimes are happy. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. The school's strong emphasis on praise and valuing each individual ensures that they grow in confidence and form good relationships with adults and with each other. They have a good awareness of issues around healthy lifestyles and personal safety. Pupils readily take on responsibilities and their contribution to the community is outstanding and wide ranging.

Teaching is good throughout the school and pupils find lessons interesting and fun. The curriculum is matched well to their learning needs and enriched by a good range of visits and visitors and after-school activities. Good quality pastoral care enables pupils to feel secure and ready to learn. They are given good academic guidance and this helps them to improve. Recently introduced initiatives focusing on raising standards in literacy and numeracy, although showing improvement, have not yet had enough time to impact significantly on assessment outcomes at the end of the key stages.

Good leadership and management ensure that the school runs effectively and give it good capacity to continue to improve. Challenging whole-school targets are based on accurate information gained from regular and rigorous monitoring. The information gained from regular assessment of pupils' progress is used well to plan provision. However, it is not analysed sufficiently to provide clear summaries of the progress pupils make, so governors and parents can easily help to monitor the school's performance.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Good provision in the well-led Foundation Stage enables children to make a good start to their education and to become happy and receptive learners. They progress well, particularly in their personal development. By the end of the Reception year, most children's skills are at the expected levels for their age. Daily sessions focusing on letters and sounds have been introduced this year and are helping to boost literacy skills well, although it is too soon to measure the full impact of this initiative on standards. The quality of teaching is good and the curriculum is planned well, with activities, indoors and out, well matched to the children's needs and providing fun and interest for them. The children interact well with each other and enjoy warm relationships with the caring staff. Vulnerable children, those with additional learning needs and children at an early stage of learning English are supported well. Positive relationships with parents are established and parents are encouraged to become involved in their children's learning. The learning environment has been extended to include an attractive outdoor area which is used well to promote children's social development and skills across all the areas of learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and achievement, particularly for more able pupils, in Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Produce sharp and succinct analyses of data about pupil progress, providing a clear overview for governors and parents in order to enhance monitoring of the school's performance.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils enter Year 1 with knowledge and skills at expected levels for their age. Overall progress during Key Stage 1 has improved and standards at the end of Year 2 in 2008, although still broadly average, are higher than in the previous year. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels has increased, although it is still below the national average. Progress in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. Standards at the end of Year 6 in 2007 were broadly average and higher level attainment in English and science was below average. The school's data for the current year show that progress has begun to accelerate, although the pace of improvement at times is uneven across the year groups and between subjects. Overall standards in Key Stage 2 continue to be broadly average. The proportion of most able pupils reaching the higher national Level 5 standard still lags behind the national averages.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy carrying out their responsibilities, for example, when older pupils act as play leaders for the younger ones. Their behaviour is excellent. They are able to express their views confidently through the school council and in lessons and assemblies. Pupils are keen to contribute to their community and enjoy excellent opportunities for this through fund-raising activities for local charities and through the Green Gang's ecological activities. For example, the school has a link with a nearby hospice and pupils regularly help to look after the gardens

there, understanding that this is something they can do to bring pleasure to the patients. Pupils are prepared well for life in a diverse society in this inclusive school. They know about the importance of healthy lifestyles and are keen to eat and drink healthily and take regular exercise. Their basic skills such as literacy and numeracy equip pupils satisfactorily for the next stages in their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching is good overall, with some outstanding practice. Pupils are enthusiastic learners because teachers use a good range of strategies to engage their interests and are given a clear understanding of the purposes of their learning tasks. Activities are challenging and stimulating. The school uses the information gained from regular assessment effectively when planning its provision. Pupils benefit from good teamwork between teachers and skilled teaching assistants. Teachers use questions and prompts well to help pupils develop their thinking. They have frequent opportunities to work in groups or with a partner and this helps them develop confidence as learners. In most lessons, the pace of learning is brisk, so that pupils are continuously engaged, although occasionally, activity sessions are too lengthy and when this is the case, the momentum of pupils' learning is reduced.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

A recent review has enlivened the curriculum. Useful links have been made between subjects and through the use of common themes. This gives pupils opportunities to develop and practise their key skills in literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT) in other areas of study. A range of new strategies has been introduced in order to improve provision in literacy. It is too soon to measure the impact of this on standards, although there are early signs of improved progress in reading and writing across the school. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of visits and visitors, including a residential trip for older pupils. Pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2 enjoy Spanish lessons, with input from a native speaker, and practise their new language skills enthusiastically at registration and assembly. After-school clubs provide for a range of interests and are well attended. Curriculum provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities includes effective additional programmes, so these pupils enjoy full access to learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Parents value the good pastoral care the school provides and the regular communication between school and home. Procedures for child protection, safeguarding, and health and safety are all well established. Support for individual pupils is planned well and arrangements are kept under regular review. The school works effectively with a range of external agencies to support pupils' welfare and progress. Individual targets for literacy and numeracy are set in discussion with the pupils, so that they know and understand them well. Detailed and supportive marking gives them good advice on how to improve their work. Progress is tracked carefully. The school has recently begun to help pupils assess their own work and to assist them in gaining an overview

of how well they are doing and what the next steps in learning will be. These improvements in guidance are starting to speed up pupils' progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher's clear vision for school improvement is shared wholeheartedly by staff and governors. With the support of the new deputy headteacher, he has established robust monitoring systems and the whole-school drive for improvement has got off to a lively start. Its impact can be seen in the improved quality of teaching, the curriculum and the academic guidance provided for pupils. It can be seen in pupils' very positive attitudes to learning. It has not yet impacted sufficiently on raising standards, although there are encouraging early signs. Self-evaluation is largely accurate and the school sets itself challenging improvement targets. Assessment provides a wealth of data on progress which the school uses well in planning the next stages in provision. Leaders have not yet begun to analyse the data sharply enough to provide a clear overview of progress issues for governors and parents. Governors play an active role in the school's daily life; they are knowledgeable and supportive and have a good ability to act as its critical friend.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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	3

The quality of provision

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

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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	3
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 Outwood Primary School, Cheadle, SK8 3ND

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school. As you know, I came to see how well the school is doing and how you are all getting on with your learning. I found that Outwood is a satisfactory school. These are some of the points I discovered about the school.

? The school is improving and you are starting to make more rapid progress in your learning. Keep up the good work!

? The Foundation Stage gets your education off to a good start.

? Teaching is good throughout the school and you enjoy your lessons. This is helping you to improve.

? Your behaviour is excellent and this helps to make the school a lovely place in which to learn and grow.

? The adults in school look after you well.

? The headteacher leads the school well and he is supported well by the staff and the governors.

There is still work to be done to make Outwood the best school it can possibly be. I have asked the headteacher and the staff to carry on raising standards and achievement, especially for the most able pupils among you. I have also asked them to do some more work on analysing the information about your progress, to enable governors and your parents to know how well the school is doing. You can help by continuing to be happy learners.

With my very best wishes for the future.