

Cloverlea Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106295
Local Authority	Trafford
Inspection number	287472
Inspection date	14 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Eileen Mulgrew HMI

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	238
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Nigel Martin
Headteacher	Mr P Linnett
Date of previous school inspection	4 November 2002
School address	Green Lane North Timperley Altrincham Cheshire WA15 7NQ
Telephone number	0161 9808338
Fax number	0161 9808338

Age group	3–11
Inspection date	14 June 2007
Inspection number	287472

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools.

Description of the school

Cloverlea is an average sized primary school. It serves an area of social and economic advantage. However, 50% of pupils attending the school are not from the immediate surrounding area. Just over half of these pupils live in an area of social disadvantage. The number of pupils eligible for a free school meal is very low. Most pupils are of White British heritage. Very few pupils are at an early stage of learning to speak English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below the national average whilst the proportion with a statement of special educational need is average. A high number of pupils join the school at other times after Reception.

The school has achieved the National Healthy Schools Award in 2004 and the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark Award in 2005.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Cloverlea is an outstanding school. The excellent headteacher has created a school community which provides a high level of care, support and guidance for all its pupils. Children enjoy coming to this school because they feel safe, secure and valued. As a result, they work hard, make excellent progress and reach high standards in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave in Year 6. A particularly noteworthy feature is the successful inclusion of pupils who may have experienced difficulties in their previous school. The school is a happy place where pupils greatly enjoy learning and take pride in their achievements. One parent stated, 'Cloverlea is a caring, inclusive school which offers a calm, happy environment for children to learn.' This sentiment was expressed by many parents who overwhelmingly support the headteacher and staff.

The quality of education in the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) is good. Pupils make good progress in this phase as a result of carefully targeted teaching. Children settle quickly into the Nursery because they are well cared for both by staff and older pupils. Arrangements for entry into Nursery and transfer to Reception are good and appreciated by the parents. As a result, pupils soon feel part of the school family. Although activities are carefully planned for Nursery and Reception pupils to work and play together, the accommodation of the school limits these opportunities.

Teaching overall is outstanding. Staff are dedicated to providing the very best for all pupils including those who have not achieved well at other schools. This is because they know their pupils as individuals and provide excellent care, support and guidance. In lessons across the school teachers have high expectations of their pupils. A comprehensive system for checking the progress of all pupils, including those with learning difficulties, is rigorously used to plan work which carefully matches the needs of all pupils. Classrooms are bright, attractive places which are well organised and well managed. Pupils have excellent relationships with their teachers and show how much they want to learn by their concentration and perseverance.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. They are polite and caring to each other. Behaviour is excellent and pupils have extremely good attitudes to school. Their excellent knowledge and understanding of the importance of living healthy lifestyles is borne out in their healthy food choices and their enthusiasm for all sporting activities.

The school delivers a good curriculum which effectively develops a high level of basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). The school has invested heavily in facilities for ICT which are much improved since the last inspection. To enrich the curriculum, there are weeks planned around a specific subject with links to other subjects. In a recent week devoted to art, a visit to Whitworth Art Gallery prompted high quality work in making embroidered cushions and mask making. However, the school has recognised that there is a need to develop the curriculum further to provide even more appealing and interesting experiences for all pupils.

The school is extremely well-led. The headteacher knows his school and its community very well. With the deputy headteacher and senior leadership team, he has created a collaborative approach with the result that everyone concerned knows the school's strengths and areas for development, and their role in securing improvement. The challenges brought about by pupils transferring from other schools, often with learning or behavioural difficulties, have been well managed to ensure all pupils continue to attain high standards and make outstanding progress.

The school has made excellent progress on all issues since the last inspection and provides excellent value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Further develop and exploit links between subjects to provide an increasing range of activities that interest pupils.
- Push strongly to bring the plans to provide accommodation for a joint Nursery and Reception unit to fruition.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Standards are well above average and achievement is outstanding. Most pupils enter Nursery with skills and knowledge expected for their age, although some pupils can do more and some less. Emphasis is placed on developing skills which enable pupils to work independently. Progress in Nursery and Reception is good so that by the end of the Foundation Stage many pupils have achieved standards above those expected for their age in all six areas of learning.

Pupils' progress in Key Stage 1 is very good. Pupils consistently achieve above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. In the 2006 tests for pupils in Year 2, almost half did better for their age in reading and a third did better in mathematics. Excellent progress continues in Years 3 to 6 and in the 2006 national tests for Year 6, overall standards were well above average. Over half of the pupils did better than expected for their age in English, mathematics and science. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including vulnerable pupils, make exceptionally good progress. The school's current data indicates that high standards will be sustained this year.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The personal development and well-being of the pupils is excellent. This is a result of the excellent care, support and guidance shown to all pupils in this inclusive school. Attendance is very good and behaviour exemplary. Pupils love learning, have fun and are excited by new challenges. One pupil commented, 'I am the cleverest in the class but sometimes the work is hard for me!' as his friends nodded in agreement. The positive, trusting relationships between all members of the school community result in pupils feeling safe, secure and confident to approach an adult if they feel troubled. Consequently, pupils achieve exceptionally well acquiring the numeracy, literacy, ICT and social skills necessary for high school and later life.

School councillors take their contribution to the development of the school seriously; at a recent governing body meeting they gave an electronic presentation on ideas for improvements canvassed from their classmates. Pupils have plenty of opportunities to take on jobs and understand how this supports the smooth running of the school. The older pupils run the healthy tuck shop at break time and are acquiring a good awareness of basic economics through selling the goods, counting the money, re-stocking and 'balancing the books'. These mature personal qualities reflect the excellent support for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. Pupils have an extensive programme of fundraising activities which support an ex-teacher of the school now teaching in the ghetto schools of Ecuador. This close link allows pupils to understand a very different culture from their own.

Pupils appreciate the importance of a healthy lifestyle and many pupils choose healthy options from the improved 'home cooked' menu. They enthusiastically take up the extensive opportunities for exercise during lessons and in after-school sports clubs, including infant multi-sport, lacrosse and judo. This has motivated many pupils to join sports clubs run in the local community and there is a healthy competitive spirit to winning awards.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Overall, teaching and learning are outstanding. Excellent relationships, high expectations and the attentive learning attitudes of pupils lead to a very, supportive learning atmosphere in every classroom. Teachers' very good subject knowledge results in a confident, precise style and well planned tasks which meet the needs of all abilities. Learning activities are varied and fun with many opportunities for discussion with partners or in groups. Pupils take pride in their work and presentation is of a high quality. Independent work is encouraged and pupils willingly use ideas from lessons. For example, during a wet playtime a pupil made an information pop-up book about the current history topic. Teachers use the interactive whiteboards effectively to enhance pupils' learning. The development of ICT skills is made very relevant to pupils' experiences. For example, after a class visit to Chester Zoo, Year 1 pupils had to control the mouse to draw an animal on screen and then type a caption beneath it. Pupils are encouraged to check how well they have understood a lesson and to share this with their teacher. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and give pupils a good understanding of what they need to do to improve.

Highly skilled teaching assistants are used well to provide specifically focused support for individuals and groups of pupils. As a result, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including the more vulnerable pupils, make as much progress as their classmates.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets the needs of all pupils. High priority is given to developing the basic skills of literacy, mathematics and ICT, coupled with the development of pupils' personal qualities. The improved ICT hardware, including an upgraded suite and laptop computers, has provided pupils with good opportunities to use ICT skills in other subjects. Standards in this area of the curriculum have improved since the last inspection. The well developed, exciting outside areas of the school site are now used to enhance subjects such as art, science and geography. The school has recognised the need to make the curriculum even more relevant to the pupils and has plans to review this area of its work.

High quality art displays reflect the standards of work achieved during a recent week devoted to art. For example, a visit to the Whitworth Art gallery to study the use of textiles resulted in pupils making embroidered cushions and Venetian masks.

The curriculum is further enriched by the provision of an annual residential trip, French lessons, a wide range of visitors and a good range of clubs which take place out of school time.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The outstanding provision for pupils' care, guidance and support forms the basis for pupils' excellent personal development and well-being. Parents are confident in the work of the school. Pupils are closely supervised, both in and out of school, with risk assessments conducted whenever needed. Relevant required procedures for child protection, safeguarding pupils, and health and safety are firmly established and understood by all staff. The school gives careful attention to vulnerable pupils and provides them with very good personal support. Extensive use is made of external agencies to gain further support when needed. The entry of children into the Nursery and Reception is eased by opportunities for them to visit before they start school. The comprehensive system for tracking pupils' progress in all subjects ensures that no time is lost in finding out what pupils can do when they move to a new class. Procedures for pupils moving to the various high schools help them to feel confident about starting a new school.

Pupils receive very good academic guidance. Through the process of marking and the setting of targets in English, mathematics and science, all pupils are challenged and supported to go further in their learning. Pupils with particular talents or skills are given chances to promote and accelerate these strengths.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management, including governance, are excellent. The leadership team has effectively developed a school culture in which all contributions are valued. Staff at all levels of leadership have very high expectations and are focused on raising academic achievement and pupils' personal well-being. Through accurate self-evaluation staff and governors know what the school is doing well and where it could do better. For example, it has correctly identified that it is time to review the curriculum it offers to its pupils. All areas of the school are closely monitored and good evaluative reports by all subject leaders inform senior staff and governors about standards and plans for development.

Governors are well informed. They visit the school regularly and have a very good picture of its day-to-day running. The chair of governors and headteacher meet frequently and subject governors meet with subject leaders. As a result, all governors are well placed to support and challenge the work of the school. A good example of this from a couple of years ago was when the school's results in science dropped slightly, and governors and staff worked as a team to identify the cause and then to implement swift action which brought about rapid improvement. There is no complacency and the school has excellent capacity to make further improvement.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall
--	-----------------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
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	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	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	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
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?	1

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?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you very much for the welcome you gave me when I visited Cloverlea. I very much enjoyed talking with you about your school, watching how hard you work in lessons and being with you in your achievement assembly.

You told me that Cloverlea is a brilliant school and I agree with you that it is excellent. You have really good teachers who help you to make very fast progress so that generally you meet very high standards by the time you move to secondary school. Many of you do better than other children of the same age! Your behaviour is exemplary; you enjoy school and know a lot about how to stay fit and healthy. You are very polite, care for each other and become very mature, sensible young people.

I was most impressed with the quality of your artwork around the school, the opportunities you have to learn French and the specialist sports coach who helps you to succeed in sporting tournaments.

Your super headteacher and the other adults who run the school have a very good knowledge of how you are all getting on, how to help those of you who need more support and how to challenge those of you who have particular skills or talents.

I have asked your headteacher to look at the subjects you learn and link them together to give you even more exciting work to do. You can help by letting your teachers know which subjects you enjoy the most. Although the pupils in Nursery and Reception have a good start to their schooling it would be better all round for them if their classrooms were closer together, so I have asked your headteacher to do all he can to make sure the plan to create a Foundation Stage unit takes place.

Thank you again for being so friendly, polite and enthusiastic.