



Adlington Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 111018
Local Authority Cheshire
Inspection number 288828
Inspection dates 28–29 September 2006
Reporting inspector George Crowther

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Brookledge Lane
School category	Community		Adlington, Macclesfield
Age range of pupils	4–11		Cheshire SK10 4JX
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01625 573201
Number on roll (school)	93	Fax number	01625 572796
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs N Tennant
		Headteacher	Mr Stephen Bentham
Date of previous school inspection	30 January 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school serves a socially advantaged area. Pupils' attainment when they start school is broadly average, but varies with each small year group. Very few pupils are eligible for free school meals. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is low. Almost all the pupils are from White British backgrounds. A few are from minority ethnic heritages, but none is at the early stage of learning English. The headteacher was appointed just over a year ago and there have been two further, recent staff changes.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Adlington is a good school. The intimate, 'village' atmosphere, much valued by parents, creates a very positive, caring environment for pupils' learning that helps them to do well. During a period of change, the school is firmly focused on maintaining standards and further improving pupils' achievement. It has an accurate picture of its own effectiveness and is well placed to bring about further improvement. It provides good value for money.

Each small group of children starts school with a wide range of existing skills, but most make good progress across the school. By Year 6, standards are high. Particular strengths are the very good results in the Year 6 national tests and the high standards in reading. Progress from Reception to Year 2 is satisfactory rather than good because tasks in lessons are not always best matched to enable pupils to take the next step in their learning. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified early, well supported and make good progress.

Pupils' personal development is good with outstanding features. They thoroughly enjoy school and are very keen to learn. The children get on very well together, in lessons and around the school, because relationships are excellent. The quality of teaching is good overall. Lessons are well managed

and organised. Teachers make learning fun and interesting, but some activities lack sufficient challenge. A good curriculum provides interesting and relevant experiences for the pupils. Satisfactory provision in the Foundation Stage ensures that children make a confident start at school.

The headteacher is providing a strong lead for school improvement and everyone knows what is expected of them in the future. The school has already put in place important systems to check on pupils' progress. The next step is to use this information to raise pupils' achievement. Analysis of information about the school's performance does not always reveal the reasons for strengths and weaknesses, which would guide future action.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the proportion of lessons where work is well matched to pupils' needs, particularly for the more able, so they can take the next step in their learning.
- Use the growing information about pupils' progress to identify and tackle potential underachievement and evaluate the impact of action taken.
- Analyse more critically the information gained from checking on the school's performance and identify the most important areas for improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The pupils achieve well across the school and, by Year 6, reach high standards and meet the challenging targets set for them. They settle quickly and confidently in the Reception year and make satisfactory progress. By Year 1, most children reach the expected standards. Progress in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory leading to results in the Year 2 national tests that are broadly average and sometimes better. Standards in the current Year 2 are average. From Reception to Year 2, progress in lessons is sometimes satisfactory rather than good because the work is not matched carefully enough to help pupils, particularly the more able, take the next step in their learning. Progress in Years 3 to 6 is good because the teaching motivates the pupils successfully. Standards in the current Year 6 are high. Measures of pupils' progress from Year 3 to Year 6 show that most do well. Relatively speaking, Year 6 results in English and mathematics in the past have been better than in science, but targeted action led to improved science results in 2006. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good, sometimes outstanding, progress. The work they do is well matched to their needs and they receive good support from teachers and teaching assistants. Parents commented positively on this aspect of the school's work.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils say they really enjoy school. They particularly like the growing range of activities in and out of lessons. One pupil said, 'I like the computers because I can go on a website and learn new things.' Pupils say lessons are interesting because there are lots of different things to do, such as when Year 5 and Year 6 pupils enjoyed discussing and drawing a range of African sculpture. Attendance is good, behaviour is excellent and relationships are outstanding. As one pupil said, 'Our school is a very friendly place to be.' This was evident at lunchtime when children of all ages played together harmoniously. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good because lots of experiences, such as studying India and Africa, develop pupils' understanding of themselves and their place in the wider world.

Pupils have a good sense of their own well-being. They know that a balanced diet and exercise are important for good health. 'If you don't get exercise, your heart will not be healthy.' Pupils feel safe in school because the adults take good care of them. They know about dangers out of school, such as traffic, and the oldest pupils act as road safety officers for the younger ones. Pupils express their views confidently and are interested in what is happening in school. Special responsibilities for the older pupils, such as being buddies to Reception children, give them an understanding of contributing to the community.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. This enables the pupils to make good progress and reach high standards. Teachers' excellent relationships with pupils help them to manage and organise lessons well. Interesting whole-class teaching and a variety of activities generate enthusiasm, as seen when Year 3 and Year 4 pupils used drama to portray a story they had been reading. Teachers involve pupils effectively in their learning through appropriate questions and discussion. The best teaching has an urgency that promotes rapid learning. In some lessons, however, the tasks pupils are given are not matched well enough to help them take the next step in their learning. Sometimes, what pupils are intended to learn from a task is not clear enough, or activities do not provide enough challenge, particularly for the more able.

Systems for assessing pupils' attainment and tracking their progress have been put in place relatively recently. They are providing vital information about how well pupils are doing. As yet, the information is not used consistently to identify pupils who may be at risk of underachieving and to ensure that work in lessons is well matched to pupils' needs. Pupils have targets for learning, but being aware of them and aiming for them is at an early stage of development. The needs of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified well. Clear learning targets help them to make good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum provides a good range of experiences, which the school is expanding and enriching all the time. It is generally well planned and organised, which helps all the pupils, whatever their needs, to build on their skills and knowledge. The curriculum for the Reception children has plenty of opportunities for learning through play, but the purpose of some activities is not clear enough. Throughout the rest of the school, a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy is increasingly complemented by topics that pupils find interesting and from which they learn well. For example, the study of the Tudors by Years 3 and 4 has generated much interesting work. Activities outside lessons, including lots of clubs, are good in range and quality and much enjoyed by the pupils. For example, in partnership with local radio, pupils devised their own show, developing important skills for the future. A good programme of personal, social and health education helps pupils to learn much about their rights and responsibilities and how to be a valuable member of the school community.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Levels of care are outstanding and parents are right to rate this as an exceptional feature of the school. Within a close-knit community, staff know the pupils well and

are very skilled in ensuring that each child is safe, happy and ready to learn. The pupils reflect this when they say, 'The teachers always help us if we feel unhappy or ill.' The pupils' confidence in the care the school provides makes a very strong contribution to their learning. More formal care procedures, such as child protection, are thorough and well implemented by the staff. Support and guidance for pupils' learning are improving all the time. At present, however, though the school has put in place systems for tracking pupils' progress, it is not yet making best use of this information to support their learning. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported in class and make good progress. Ways of helping them with their learning are very well organised.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good leadership by the headteacher, senior staff and governors is providing a strong sense of direction for the school through a period of considerable change. The school has a track record of high standards in Year 6, but leadership is determined to examine every facet of the school's work to improve pupils' progress still further. Parents and governors welcome the increasing focus on each pupil's progress. All members of the school community have been involved in the debate about future improvement, which has harnessed their commitment.

Management is putting in place important building blocks to ensure that pupils' achievement can be better in the future. For example, new systems for assessing pupils' attainment and tracking their progress are intended to identify potential underachievement so it can be tackled. As yet, the school is not at a stage where its use of this information is having a clear impact on raising pupils' achievement. Management has an accurate view of the school's

effectiveness. Checks on the quality of teaching and learning have provided considerable information about what the school does well and what could be improved. Management's analysis of this information, however, is not yet sharp enough in identifying the most important areas for improvement; for example, in the quality of teaching. As a result, self-evaluation is accurate, but it does not always unpick the reasons for strengths and weaknesses, which would guide future action.

Governors have provided considerable support through a period of change. They have a perceptive grasp of the school's current strengths and what needs to be done next. Good communication with staff ensures that any concerns governors may have are discussed openly.

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.

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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
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

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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

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

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.

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 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

Thank you for making me feel so welcome when I visited your school to find out how well you are doing. There are lots of good things about your school, but I also found a few ways in which I think it could be even better. The things I particularly like are:

- your school feels special because everyone enjoys being there
- everyone is friendly and you all get on very well together
- the Year 6 buddies do a smashing job helping the Reception children
- your parents like the school because the teachers get to know you really well
- you try hard with your work and most of you are making good progress
- by Year 6, the standard of work is high
- you make particularly good progress in reading
- there are lots of interesting things to do in lessons
- you really enjoy all the activities outside lessons, particularly the clubs
- you are exceptionally well behaved and very friendly towards visitors
- you have a good understanding of how to be healthy and stay safe
- you like the way the staff take great care to make sure you are safe and happy
- the teachers are very keen to keep improving the way you learn.

I would like you to work with your teachers to improve the way you learn.

- I have asked your teachers to make sure that you are given challenging work which really makes you think. You must try hard, even when the work is difficult.
- Your teachers are finding out more about how well you are getting on. I want them to use this information to make sure you learn as quickly as possible.
- Your headteacher and other teachers look at how well you are learning in lessons. I've asked them to look really carefully to find out ways in which your learning can be better.

Thank you for helping me with the inspection of your school.