



Kelsall Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 111104
Local Authority Cheshire
Inspection number 288856
Inspection dates 4–5 October 2006
Reporting inspector Paul Bamber

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Flat Lane
School category	Community		Kelsall, Tarporley
Age range of pupils	4–11		Cheshire CW6 0PU
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01829 751343
Number on roll (school)	214	Fax number	01829 752811
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Dr H Ziman
		Headteacher	Mr S Williams
Date of previous school inspection	1 July 2002		

Age group 4–11	Inspection dates 4–5 October 2006	Inspection number 288856
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This average sized village school serves a relatively advantaged area where most families own their own home and where both parents/carers are employed. Far fewer pupils than is the norm take a free school meal, have a learning difficulty, use English as an additional language or have a minority ethnic background. The school acts a focal point for several community activities. It has gained a number of awards including Investors in People, the ArtsMark Gold, Bronze ECO and Healthy Schools. It is currently seeking Inclusion Quality Mark and the Sports Mark awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school in which pupils' personal development is outstanding. Many parents rightly comment that the school succeeds extremely well in its aim to nurture confident, articulate and well rounded young citizens. Pupils behave very well and eagerly look forward to their lessons and the many enriching activities provided by the school's creative curriculum. The high quality of the artwork around the school and of the musical and dramatic productions is a testament to the excellent promotion of the arts. Because the curriculum is so well planned pupils learn that subjects are interrelated and that by applying what they learn in one subject, they can achieve more effectively in another. For example, pupils' knowledge of how to measure angles stood them in good stead when they explored light beam reflections in a science lesson.

Teaching of good quality ensures that all pupils, from Reception right through to Year 6, achieve well and attain above to well above average standards. Effective questioning, careful planning, matching tasks well to pupils' needs and the creative use of resources exemplify the good teaching. However, across classes and subjects, teachers' marking of pupils' work does not consistently and clearly point out how they can improve their work. The school diligently ensures that all pupils, including the most vulnerable and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are as fully included as possible in all it provides. There is a real commonality of purpose amongst all who lead or manage the school to constantly review, evaluate and improve all aspects of its work. The headteacher has been instrumental in introducing rigorous systems to check that all pupils make the expected progress. These have contributed significantly to better achievement in Years 3 to 6. The school is very open to change and eager to learn from exemplar practice in other schools in order to improve provision and the quality of teaching and learning. The newly appointed deputy headteacher has already made a considerable contribution to the much improved behaviour and relationships at break and lunchtime.

Governors make an outstanding contribution to the management of the school. They are supportive of its work, but knowledgeably challenge the senior management so that they ensure good value for money and a sound financial footing. The newly formed subject leadership teams are industrious and enthusiastic but insufficiently focused on how their actions will specifically improve pupils' learning or achievements.

Pupils rightly feel well cared for. Parents of pupils who find coping with their work more difficult loudly sing the praises of the school, one parent commenting 'Kelsall is a wonderful school to be part of, thanks to such a dedicated and friendly staff that supports our child in every way possible.'

What the school should do to improve further

- Make sure that teachers' marking in every class and in every subject consistently helps pupils to improve their work.
- Focus subject leadership more specifically on enhancing pupils' learning and achievement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Throughout the school pupils progress well. They enter the Reception class with above expected skills, most having experienced pre-school education. Because they are taught and supported well and have a practical and effective curriculum, they all make good progress and many exceed the national expectations in all areas of their learning by the time they enter Year 1. From Year 1 to Year 6, pupils continue to progress well. In Years 3 to 6 the good progress that pupils have made over the last two years is in marked contrast to 2003 and 2004 when too many pupils underachieved, especially in mathematics. The introduction of more detailed analysis of test data and of rigorous systems to track pupils' progress have transformed their achievement. Standards over the last two years have been significantly above average in Years 1 to 6. The more able pupils make equally good progress as other pupils. The progress that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make has improved at a good rate recently because of the well focused extra support they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils' extremely positive attitudes are key factors in their good achievement. Behaviour is particularly good in lessons and pupils are confident and polite. They settle quickly to their work, listen carefully and are eager to learn. They say how much they enjoy school, and parents support this view. This ensures above average attendance. Pupils' very good understanding of their own and other cultures is supported through working in themes such as International Week. For the most part, pupils understand how to be healthy and keep safe, although some bring playground snacks that do not fully match this understanding! Pupils consider that the school listens to their views. For example, members of the children's committee are proud of the work they do to improve the school, particularly in their involvement in the school's 70th birthday celebrations. Pupils make a very good contribution to the school and wider communities.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

One of the major strengths of the good teaching throughout the school is the clear and meticulous planning of pupils' work. In the Reception class it is very evident that all staff effectively assess children's needs and match the tasks set to these needs. In other classes, teachers promote pupils' understanding of the purpose and content of lessons very well through explicit learning objectives and clear explanations. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and encourage very good relationships which ensure

that lessons are positive and productive. Pupils learn particularly well when they work cooperatively and practically and when they have opportunities to make choices about their own learning. Because teachers ask searching questions and encourage pupils to answer at length, pupils confidently articulate their ideas and opinions, not being afraid to suggest alternative answers or employ their own methods to solve problems.

Staff use their specialist knowledge well to enhance pupils' learning in art and design, music, French and science. Recently improved methods to support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have increased the impact that teachers and very effective support staff have on the progress made by these pupils. The more able pupils generally learn well and make good progress. However, sometimes teachers prolong the introductions to lessons or do not move the brightest pupils along quickly enough. This slows their pace of learning. In some classes and in some subjects, teachers' marking of work does not consistently help pupils to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. In the Reception class it is firmly based on the recommended areas of learning. Outstanding features of the curriculum include the provision for art and design. This was observed in the high quality of artwork displayed around the school. Pupils' work at the time of the school's birthday celebrations shows the history curriculum as being particularly good. Teachers' plans show a good match of work to pupils' needs. All pupils in Years 3 to 6 learn French and all have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument. Pupils are keen to do so and many look forward to joining the school band. They learn how to keep safe and stay healthy, and contributions from visitors help in this. A good range of clubs and visits promotes enjoyment, raises achievement and encourages physical activity and social and economic awareness. This, coupled with good achievement in basic skills, helps to ensure that a firm foundation is set for the future.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good care, guidance and support. Procedures to ensure pupils' welfare and safety are in place. The school has considered most potential hazards in its daily work and tries hard to reduce these. Guidance to pupils on how to improve their work, through teachers' marking, is inconsistent in its quality. However, the support pupils receive and the way in which pupils are encouraged to manage their feelings and emotions is outstanding. Pupils talk and write about their feelings, for example in their 'Feelings' books, and develop a good range of strategies to deal with them. Teachers' comments in these books show a high level of concern and understanding. The school has effective partnerships with parents for supporting pupils' development and with other agencies offering guidance and support. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are cared for well, and they achieve as well as their classmates. Parents of these children are full of praise for the school's support. The very few pupils whose home language is not English are very well supported.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The very good leadership of the headteacher, supported and guided by an excellent governing body, has been a key factor in the considerable improvement made over the last two years in the pupils' achievements, especially in Years 3 to 6 in mathematics. There are first-class partnerships with parents, other schools, the local and wider community, the local authority and businesses, all of which significantly enhance pupils' achievements, their personal development and their curriculum. The school is very open to change and innovation, embracing new ideas and methods that it feels will improve provision for pupils. The school knows itself well, celebrating its many strengths, but is realistic about those areas that it needs to improve. Its strengths, together with the way in which previous underachievement has been successfully tackled and the strong unity of purpose demonstrated by the harmonious staff team, indicate that the school has excellent capacity to improve further.

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about and supportive of the school. The very new leadership team is barely bedded in but already the new deputy headteacher has contributed well to enhancing provision at break and lunchtime. However, subject leaders are insufficiently focused in their work on how they specifically contribute to improving pupils' standards, achievement and learning. All leaders and managers provide a most positive role model for staff and pupils, creating a very positive ethos in the school. Governors provide excellent support and guidance to senior management. They rigorously hold the school to account for standards, progress and its provision, taking a very strong stance over budget restraint and staffing structures. As a result, the school's budget is now on a firm footing and the school's staff have a wide range of expertise and experience.

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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?	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	1
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	2
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	2
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	1

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	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for making us so welcome during the days we spent in your school. The other inspector and I very much enjoyed our visit to your school and we would like to share with you those things we thought were really good about your school and those things we felt it could do a little bit better.

What we liked most about your school:

- you are very confident, get on well with each other and enjoy sharing your ideas and opinions with other children and adults
- you do well in your work because you try so hard and listen attentively in class
- your artwork is exceptionally good because the school teaches you such a wide variety of techniques really well
- your teachers are very good at helping you to use the skills you learn in one subject to do better in another; for instance, using what you learn in mathematics to help you solve problems in science lessons
- because Mr Williams and other teachers have introduced new ideas in the school, you are making much better progress in your learning.

There are a few things we asked the school to do a bit better.

- Although some of the teachers' marking tells you how to improve your work we have asked them to make sure that this happens in every class and in all your subjects.
- We have also asked the teachers who are in charge of subjects to focus their work more on helping you to improve your standards and the progress you make.

Thank you for helping us with the inspection of your school. We hope that you continue to really enjoy school and carry on doing really well.