



Mottram St Andrew Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 111460
Local Authority Cheshire
Inspection number 288968
Inspection dates 11–12 January 2007
Reporting inspector Mark Madeley

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Priest Lane
School category	Foundation		Mottram St Andrew, Macclesfield Cheshire SK10 4QL
Age range of pupils	4–11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01625 829035
Number on roll (school)	161	Fax number	01625 820226
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr A Thornton-West
		Headteacher	Mrs C Bowen
Date of previous school inspection	30 April 2001		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
4–11	11–12 January 2007	288968

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This small, oversubscribed school serves the immediate village and a wide area between Macclesfield in the south and Wilmslow in the north. More than half of the parents choose to send their children here rather than to their local primary school. The pupils are mostly of White British heritage. Very few pupils are eligible for free school meals. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is lower than average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is very small.

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 with some outstanding features. It gives good value for money. Since the last inspection, good leadership and management have fully tackled the issues for improvement, maintained high academic standards and improved pupils' personal development, which is now outstanding. Inspirational leadership by the headteacher has resulted in the school becoming acknowledged as a model of innovative teaching practice. Partnerships with other schools and support agencies lead to an outstanding sharing of effective practice. The vast majority of parents are delighted with the school and the education and care their children receive. Parents support the school fully. Change has been managed very well; for example, new styles of teaching and devolved management responsibilities have been introduced to a receptive and willing staff. The inspection agrees with the school's self-evaluation and judges that it has good capacity to improve further. The governing body fulfils its dual role of being a critical friend and being fully supportive of the school.

Children start school with above average attainment. Good provision in the Foundation Stage helps children make good progress in all areas of their learning. Parents are delighted at how well their children settle into Reception and the high quality of education they receive at the school. Across the school, progress is good, and pupils achieve well, because consistently good teaching is effective in meeting their needs. In the national tests, Year 6 pupils have reached well above average results in five of the last six years. Results in 2006 show that pupils' writing was a relative weakness and the school is working to improve their skills in this aspect of English. Standards in lessons are very high. In small classes pupils grow in confidence because teachers allow them time to answer questions fully. They really enjoy learning because lessons are both interesting and challenging. They are well aware of how to improve their work further because teachers' marking is of exceptional quality.

Parents indicate that this is a very caring school and the inspection agrees. The care, guidance and support given to the pupils are indeed outstanding. Mutual respect is taught very well and, consequently, pupils are exceptionally caring towards each other. The curriculum for English, particularly reading, and for mathematics and science, is very good, with pupils extending their skills by using them well in other subjects. The pupils make very good use of their literacy and research skills in history and geography. Opportunities to enrich and broaden pupils' experience through visits to places of educational interest are outstanding. Pupils are very keen to take part in the wealth of after-school clubs. The very active school council allows pupils to have a say in how their school is run and their views are listened to and often acted upon by management. Pupils are keen to help others and work very hard to raise funds for local and international charities. All pupils have an outstanding awareness of how to stay fit and well. The school puts great emphasis on physical education lessons and sports clubs. The kitchen staff offer a good selection of healthy alternatives at lunch which the pupils often choose.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' writing skills in Key Stage 2.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Most children when they start school know how to take turns and to share toys. They speak clearly and accurately for their age using a broad vocabulary. Their counting skills are well developed. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage class. Most pupils join Year 1 having achieved, and in many cases having exceeded, the standards expected for their age.

The results of teacher assessments in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 2 have been consistently well above average. Results in mathematics have improved markedly since the last inspection and are now well above average. The standards in lessons in Years 1 and 2 reflect the high results attained by pupils in teacher assessments.

In the Year 6 2006 national tests for English, mathematics and science, pupils attained well above average results and this represents good progress for those pupils. There were significant improvements in science scores and in the percentage of pupils reaching the higher grade (Level 5) compared to the 2005 results. Pupils' scores in the writing test were relatively lower than other results. The school has identified this problem and has put in place measures to improve writing across the school. In a small school where each pupil counts for roughly 4%, the governing body set the school challenging targets for the Key Stage 2 national tests and in 2006 the school almost reached them.

All groups of pupils make good progress during their time at the school, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, who receive good support in their work.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils love coming to school, meeting and working with their friends and learning from their teachers. Their attendance is outstanding, an indication of their enjoyment of school and the value their parents place on education. They demonstrate excellent manners in all they do. Behaviour in classrooms and in the corridors is very mature because pupils understand what is required of them; for example, holding doors open and responding rapidly to the teacher's silent signal for lining up in the playground. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Elections are held for places on the school council and eco-committee. This helps pupils understand how democracy works. Pupils are fully committed to their roles in performing various tasks of responsibility around the school. Pupils make healthy choices at lunch and snack time and enjoy taking exercise in order to stay fit and well. They know basic ways to stay safe: for instance, Year 3 pupils had a good understanding of the potential

dangers of email because the member of staff emphasised this in her teaching. Pupils have a good awareness of other cultures through geography lessons, activities like charity fundraising and the school's well developed link with a South African school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils are motivated to learn because teachers make lessons interesting. Pupils confidently explain their answers and how they reached them to the class, having discussed them with their group or partner; this raises their self-esteem. Group work effectively supports the learning of pupils of all abilities because it helps them to learn from each other. Noise levels are managed very effectively, with pupils responding promptly to the teacher's signal for their attention. At the beginning of lessons, teachers share with pupils what they are expected to learn so that everyone knows what is required of them. Their learning is thoroughly reviewed at the end. Tasks are challenging; for instance, work on solving a 'magic square' in Year 3 taxed the pupils' ability to quickly add to and subtract from 15. Pupils' presentation is neat because they understand what the teachers are looking for. Pupils' progress in lessons is carefully monitored and the information used effectively to plan the next stage in their learning. Test data and teachers' observations are used well to identify those pupils who need additional support or further challenge.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding and meets the needs of the pupils very well. It is wide ranging. For example, French is taught, the school sets aside time for extra activities such as Arts Week and Energy Day, and there are frequent visits to places of educational interest. The school uses drama and dance effectively to develop pupils' writing skills. Improvements in the physical education programme and sports clubs have led pupils to having an excellent awareness of how exercise helps them stay fit. In the Foundation Stage there is a very good balance of direct teaching; for example, letter sounds with carefully planned play activities. Pupils' understanding of staying safe and healthy is promoted exceptionally well by the science and the personal, social, emotional and health programmes. Pupils' confidence, problem solving and team building skills are improved even further by annual residential visits in Years 4, 5 and 6. For a small school, there are many after-school clubs and the take-up by pupils is exceptionally high.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The vast majority of parents feel that their children are kept safe and are well cared for in school by staff who know each pupil well. Procedures for the safeguarding of

children are in place. Parents feel extremely well informed about school life and its work. Homework diaries are used very effectively to aid dialogue between school and home. The vast majority of parents of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities say that the support they and their children get is of very high quality. Parents have been consulted on the format of annual reports and most agree that these now give a clear picture of their children's attainment and effort as well as useful general comments. Pupils are frequently involved in assessing their own work, and the work of others, and do so with great confidence and skill. English work is marked exceptionally well against a ladder of criteria so pupils know what they have done well and what they need to do to improve further. This marking is then checked by the teacher and discussed with the pupil.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Governors, colleagues and parents feel that the headteacher's leadership is outstanding and the inspection agrees. Initiatives to improve the quality of teaching are now firmly embedded and used as a model of effective practice for other schools. Staff have been consulted at every turn and a system of devolved management has been agreed. This involves teams of staff taking on subject responsibilities and different individuals each term taking the place of the headteacher in her absence. The system is in its infancy and so its overall effectiveness has yet to be evaluated but it is clear that colleagues feel valued and their managerial skills are being developed. Good systems for checking provision identify areas for improvement and subsequent action results in improved standards; for example, in science in 2006. Finances are used effectively to enhance pupils' learning. For instance, a specialist music teacher comes in to take music lessons when class teachers have their preparation time. The governing body is well organised, has a good overview of the school, manages finances prudently and holds the school to account for its performance.

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

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

We really enjoyed our recent visit to your school. You were extremely friendly towards us – your cheerful greetings and warm smiles were most welcome! You were also extremely confident when you spoke to us. We valued what you and your parents told us and used the information to inform our judgements. We think yours is a good school and that it does some things outstandingly well. It helps you make good progress in English, mathematics and science. We agree with you that your headteacher leads the school in an outstanding way. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers make learning interesting and challenging. They encourage you to help each other. You answer questions very well and, in mathematics lessons in particular, explain how you obtained your answer. Teachers are very good at building your confidence; for instance, by getting everyone to take turns to explain their group's answer. You have an excellent understanding of how to improve your work because teachers mark your work exceptionally well.

You told us that you really enjoy coming to school and your exceptional attendance shows that both you and your parents value school. You are very keen to learn in lessons, answering teachers' questions and applying yourself to the tasks set. Your understanding of how to stay fit and healthy is outstanding. The school council is very well organised and gives you a chance to contribute to school life. Your parents said that you are kept safe in school because adults care for you very well and we agree. Your work for others in the school, the local community and the wider world is exceptional.

Your school is doing very well, but there is one aspect which can be improved further. We have asked the school to improve the writing skills of pupils in Key Stage 2 and we know you have already started to do this.

Thank you very much for helping us with our inspection. You all made an outstanding contribution. We hope that you are all proud of what you, the staff, the governors and your parents have achieved and we wish you and the school all the best for the future.