

# Ladybridge Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106054
<b>Local Authority</b>	Stockport
<b>Inspection number</b>	309014
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 June 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Derek Aitken

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	208
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs E Hindley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs C Jackson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	31 January 2005
<b>School address</b>	Councillor Lane Cheadle Cheshire SK8 2JF
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 4285445
<b>Fax number</b>	0161 4916218

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is an average sized school situated near the town centre. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. The vast majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average. The school operates a resource base on behalf of the local authority for several pupils. These pupils have statements of special educational need for a wide range of severe and complex learning difficulties. In addition there are a few pupils with statements in the mainstream classes. The school operates a part-time Nursery where significant numbers of children spend only a few weeks prior to joining the Reception class. The school has acquired the status of an extended school. It holds the National Healthy Schools Award.

## 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. Parents and staff report very positively on the improvements made over recent years. These are amply demonstrated in pupils' good personal development and, increasingly, in their academic achievement, which is also good. Pupils are happy, confident and enjoy school. The school's hard work to ensure higher standards in pupils' health is evident in its day-to-day work and has been recognised in its recent Healthy School award. A growing aspect of the school's work is the building of community cohesion linked to its extended school status. The services the school provides, such as courses on healthy eating on a budget, are proving increasingly popular with parents.

Children's skills on entry to the Nursery are well below those typical for their age and, despite some good progress there, standards are still well below average at the end of Year 2. This reflects the high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in most year groups in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Progress is satisfactory in Key Stage 1, but the pace quickens in Key Stage 2 as pupils mature and gain steadily in independence. By the end of Year 6 pupils have achieved well. Standards are, however, below average. Overall, pupils do best in reading and least well in writing. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress alongside their peers. The pupils in the resource base are integrated well into school life. Careful planning enables them to join mainstream classes occasionally for specific subjects. This arrangement is very effective in promoting their progress and self-esteem. Mainstream pupils welcome their presence in class. They say, 'We enjoy learning with them and understand why they deserve and get extra help.'

The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' all-round development. It is focused successfully on promoting pupils' readiness to learn and on improving their basic skills. There is a good variety of enrichment activities, for example, in physical education, which pupils greatly enjoy. Most of the teaching is good. Teachers use an imaginative variety of strategies and techniques to ensure that pupils are engaged in their work and that they develop the skills to learn independently. Sometimes, lessons are less well adapted to meet the needs of all pupils. This slows the pace of learning and limits the otherwise good contribution made by teaching assistants to pupils' progress. Care and welfare arrangements, to meet the diverse range of pupils' needs and to ensure their well-being, are of good quality and this promotes pupils' positive attitudes toward their learning very well. The school's systems for tracking pupils' progress and identifying pupils who would benefit from extra support are effective. While there is some good practice in using individual targets to support pupils' learning and to raise standards, this is not yet a regular feature of the school's work.

The school has made good improvement since its previous inspection in 2005, in response to good quality leadership and management. Most notably, pupils' attainment has improved and the quality of teaching and learning is better. Senior and middle leaders have a sharper view of strengths and areas for development. Partnerships with other organisations are good and the school makes good use of its resources. The school is well set for further improvement and offers good value for money.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

The Foundation Stage provides a good education for the younger children whose skills are well below those expected for their age when they join the part-time Nursery. Because many of them arrive midway through the year and have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, staff have to spend considerable time on developing and reinforcing children's basic personal and social skills to equip them for later learning. These factors present barriers to children's progress and mean that overall it is satisfactory, rather than good. By the time children join Year 1 their skills remain well below average, although they have made some good gains in aspects of literacy and numeracy and in their personal development. The curriculum is well balanced to cover all areas of learning. Indoor and outdoor resources are of an equally high standard and are used well to support children's learning. The children benefit from expert teaching. Teachers engage children well in conversation and use assessment carefully to focus very effective teaching on the aspects of their learning which children find the most difficult to master. Parents value highly the quality of care their children receive. The Foundation Stage is led and managed well.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise standards further, especially in writing.
- Improve learning further by ensuring that all pupils have work and individual targets which are matched to their needs.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils build well on their earlier attainment as they progress through the school. Results at the end of Year 2 were well below average in 2007 and standards are currently similar. This reflects the high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in these year groups. Pupils make satisfactory academic progress in Key Stage 1 and the positive attitudes they acquire towards learning at this time, together with their increasing maturity, underpin their good progress in Key Stage 2. These factors enable them to achieve their suitably challenging targets in Year 6. Standards improved to below average in all subjects in both 2006 and 2007. Standards in Year 6 are currently below average. Pupils develop their reading skills especially well. Programmes to support pupils who would benefit from extra help in their learning are very effective in boosting pupils' progress in speaking and mathematics. Pupils' achievement in writing is less strong. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with statements, make good progress against clear and challenging targets in their individual education plans.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils demonstrate their sense of responsibility by maintaining their attractive school and its gardens in good order. In addition, the school council had an important role to play in deciding on the playground awning and in planning the imminent playground improvements. Pupils have other good opportunities to contribute to the school community by taking part in sporting fixtures. Their self-esteem is successfully promoted by being selected as weekly class captains and achievers. Pupils are

polite, friendly and welcoming. They play and work together well with their peers and with the staff. The very good relationships foster tolerant attitudes and a willingness to support each other in their learning. Pupils have a good appreciation of healthy lifestyles and how to stay safe. They behave well and are keen to participate in activities and in lessons. Attendance is satisfactory. Overall, pupils develop well the skills they need to succeed in later life.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Very good relationships between staff and pupils foster good attitudes to learning. Teachers use a good range of methods and resources, including information and communication technology, to vary learning activities. This keeps pupils on their toes and attentive. Good contributions are rewarded and pupils have ample opportunities to learn independently. 'Beat the clock' type activities are used very successfully to motivate pupils and to promote cooperative working. Teachers' questioning and explanations are both good. Teachers regularly refer to key words to reinforce learning and ensure that the learning intentions are phrased in language which pupils can readily understand. Marking is generally good and provides useful guidance to help pupils improve. Sometimes, although groups of learners are identified in planning, work is not matched well enough to their different needs. On these occasions some pupils are not sufficiently stretched in their learning.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum meets the needs of pupils well. There is good emphasis on preparing pupils for living in a diverse society and this is successfully reflected in pupils' concern for the welfare of each other and their growing awareness of multicultural issues. Enrichment is strong. There is a wide range of clubs which are enthusiastically supported by the pupils. A large number of visitors and visits, including an outward-bound residential stay, widen pupils' experiences. Pupils in Key Stage 2 benefit from weekly lessons in French and Spanish. Special theme weeks, which draw on specialists from the community, for example, local artists, provide a valuable extra dimension to pupils' learning. Small group and individual sessions are very effective in meeting the wide range of pupils' needs. Support for gifted and talented pupils is growing and is satisfactory. There are not yet sufficient opportunities provided for reinforcing and extending writing skills.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

Systems to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety are good. Child protection arrangements are in place and meet current government guidelines. Various pastoral procedures, including good input from the learning mentor, are very effective in removing barriers to learning and in promoting good attitudes and behaviour. These contribute well to the harmonious and well ordered community and ensure a positive climate for learning. The requirements of vulnerable children are met well by the strong internal links which exist between staff in the resource base and support staff for mainstream pupils. In addition, there is a good range of specialised support, for example, for occupational therapy, which helps individual pupils take the small steps they need to make good progress in their learning. Systems to support pupils' academic development

are improving. Currently, they are having a satisfactory, rather than good, impact on helping pupils to reach higher standards. The use teachers make of individual targets to support pupils' learning is inconsistent.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Senior leaders provide clear direction for the work of the school. Their hard work and commitment have been instrumental in ensuring a steady surge in school improvement in the last five years. Good systems for monitoring the work of the school are in place and, consequently, leaders have a sure sense of priorities and the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' standards. This is reflected in the school's accurate self-evaluation. Good internal communication has created a strong sense of teamwork and a desire to keep on improving. The school is moving forward well on several fronts, for example, in establishing a children's centre. Related initiatives, such as the well attended breakfast club, have contributed well to pupils' well-being and ensured better levels of attendance and punctuality. These improvements are now increasingly reflected in pupils' academic standards and achievement. Leaders acknowledge, however, there is more work to be done to raise standards further. Governors are informed very regularly about school development and this enables them to support school improvement well.

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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?	2
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?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
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 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	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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	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**

Inspection of Ladybridge Primary School, Cheadle, SK8 2JF

I am writing to thank you for your help when my colleague and I visited your school recently and to tell you about our inspection findings. We enjoyed meeting you. We were impressed by you in lots of ways, not least in the care and understanding you showed for each other. You look after your school well and we could see the result of your efforts in the gardens and the playground improvements.

Your school has improved in many ways in recent years. The children in the Foundation Stage get off to a good start but they still have a lot of learning to catch up on when they join Year 1. Your progress speeds up as you move up the school although, overall, you don't quite reach the standards expected for your age by the end of Year 6. To help you reach higher standards I have asked the staff to concentrate especially on helping you to develop your writing skills.

The school works very well to look after you and ensures you develop well the personal and social skills that you will need for later learning and life in general. The headteacher and her staff are always thinking of new ways to make your learning more interesting for you all, for example, by adding to the after-school activities, which they know you enjoy. They also make sure that those pupils who need extra help with their learning have the support they need outside the classroom to help them also to make good progress.

You get on very well with your teachers, enjoy their fun lessons and are taught well. There is never any shortage of willing volunteers, which makes sure lessons are always lively. Most of you, but not all, get work which suits your different needs. I have therefore asked the headteacher to make sure this happens for all pupils and that you all have individual targets to help you in your learning.

You can help your teachers by continuing to work hard and trying to do even better in your writing tasks.