

Parkroyal Community School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111016
Local Authority	Cheshire
Inspection number	310481
Inspection date	11 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Kevin Johnson

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	394
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr J Morrell
Headteacher	Mr Nick Warren
Date of previous school inspection	30 November 2004
School address	Athey Street Macclesfield Cheshire SK11 6QU
Telephone number	01625 426083
Fax number	01625 617358

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspection evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and the following aspects were investigated: standards reached by pupils and the progress they make; the effectiveness of the Foundation Stage; pupils' personal development and some aspects of care, guidance and support and leadership and management. Evidence was gathered from first-hand observations, discussion with staff, governors, pupils and parents' questionnaire. Relevant documents held by the school, including pupils' work, were scrutinised. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments as given in the self-evaluation were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average primary school located in the centre of Macclesfield. The large majority of pupils are White British. An increasing number for whom English is an additional language are joining the school. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average; similarly, the proportion known to be eligible for free school meals. Parkroyal is recognised as an Eco-school. It holds the National Healthy Schools Award and in 2006 was awarded the Artsmark Gold. The school is also an outreach centre for promotion of, and training for, the teaching of modern foreign languages.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

The school provides an outstanding education for its pupils. The exceptional quality of the headteacher's leadership results in outstanding team work which involves all staff members. This has an extremely positive influence on the overall work of the school where excellent care and support for pupils paves the way for their outstanding achievement.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They are immensely proud of their school and really do enjoy lessons because teachers make them interesting. They say that there is always a lot to do and thoroughly enjoy the creativity of their work in the arts, particularly their dramatic performances. Pupils are very caring towards one another and are quick to befriend new pupils, particularly the increasing numbers who are unable to speak English when they arrive. Pupils have a good understanding of faiths and cultures other than their own and show mature attitudes towards multicultural living. Attendance is above average. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary. Pupils are fully aware of the benefits of a healthy lifestyle and how that can be achieved. They appreciate the healthy choices on the lunch menus and observe guidance about healthy snacks. Having gained Eco-school status pupils are very conscientious about conserving energy and recycling paper. Other responsibilities involve pupils as buddies or playpals, being school council representatives and taking care of the wide range of equipment, which keeps pupils active during playtimes.

Standards at the end of Year 6 are above average and have been consistently so for the last five years. A significant proportion of pupils achieved above the expected level for their age in English and science in the 2007 national tests. There is also some outstanding achievement in writing. These results represent outstanding achievement overall given their starting points. Above average standards have been maintained at the end of Year 2 since 2004, rising steadily to well above average in 2007. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported very effectively and make at least good progress. Their needs are identified quickly and a wide range of additional help is given to boost pupils' basic skills. Progress is checked rigorously to ensure that their pace of learning is maintained.

The outstanding quality of teaching accounts for pupils' exceptional enthusiasm for learning and their exceptionally strong all-round achievement. Mutual support and professional dialogue between staff members are motivating forces and typify their continuous efforts to improve the quality and effectiveness of what they do. Teachers' use of assessment to help them plan for pupils' varying abilities is a major strength. Their highly effective use of interactive whiteboards brings lessons to life and fully engages pupils in learning. Excellent relationships mean that pupils know they are valued class members so their eagerness to learn is fuelled by mutual trust and high self-esteem. The curriculum is vibrant and exciting for pupils. Literacy is linked well across subjects and there is strong focus on making numeracy relevant to everyday experiences. There are many opportunities provided for pupils to broaden their horizons. These include trips abroad where pupils have the chance to put their French speaking skills to good use. They particularly enjoy the chances to perform in music, dance and drama working with artists who visit the school. The range and quality of art work displayed is impressive.

Parents agree overwhelmingly that their children are well cared for in school. Many are particularly appreciative of the support for those who have additional needs. The most vulnerable are exceptionally well cared for and supported, especially those with social or emotional difficulties. Policies and procedures for safeguarding pupils are in place. Pupils feel safe because

of the strength of trusting relationships within the school. The school's work on anti-bullying is acclaimed within the local authority. The increasing number of pupils for whom English is an additional language settle in extremely well. Welcoming support from staff and pupils ensures that they quickly acquire the language skills they need to access their learning. Systems for tracking and monitoring pupils' progress are very effective. Potential underachievement is quickly halted because of swift intervention to match the level of work to pupils' individual needs. Pupils always know how well they are doing because teachers' marking is informative and challenging.

The headteacher expertly enables staff to significantly develop and improve their expertise. New ideas and initiatives are openly encouraged and all views are considered valid when discussing priorities and formulating future development plans. The school's somewhat modest evaluation of its achievements reflects the energetic drive for continuous effective change. Assistant headteachers, who form the senior leadership team, add great strength to the leadership and management of the school. Their clearly defined areas of responsibility provide a collective overview of standards and quality. Accountability for achievement and standards is shared with all teaching staff and linked closely to their performance management and professional development. All issues from the previous report have been fully dealt with and some, such as the effectiveness of assessment, have been considerably improved. The corporate vision and hard work of staff and governors has resulted in the school's extremely high profile within the local authority as a model of outstanding practice. Parkroyal is also recognised nationally for its work in the promotion and development of modern foreign languages in primary schools. Governors are highly supportive of the school and, as critical partners, rigorously hold managers to account for the challenging standards that are set. They manage finances with great efficiency. Given the relatively low cost per pupil they provide outstanding value for money. A fair summary of parents' views is that they feel they could not have chosen a better school for their children. The school has outstanding capacity to maintain and improve current quality and performance.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children in the Foundation Stage are given a good start to their education. Their skills are broadly in line with expectations for their age when they enter Reception classes. Good teaching results in their good progress. When they go into Year 1 a good proportion have achieved above expectations in communication language and literacy and mathematical skills and most show excellent progress in personal and social development. Children are very well cared for. Effective liaison with pre-school group leaders enables staff to share information about children's particular needs. Consequently, the right provision is in place as soon as they enter Reception. The teaching of phonics is a significant strength. Children quickly learn to link sounds and letters and begin to write independently by the time they move into Year 1. There are well planned opportunities for children to develop their skills and understanding through activities they choose themselves. The school has not had time to fully set up outside learning provision in the newly appointed area. Nevertheless, planning is already taking account of the ways in which children can practise their physical skills alongside other areas of learning. The newly appointed Foundation Stage leader has introduced a more promising system for assessing progress and has realistic plans for further development.

What the school should do to improve further

- The leadership has clearly identified what needs to be done to sustain school improvement. Consequently, there are no further issues to add.

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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?	1
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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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?	1
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.

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Inspection of Parkroyal Community School, Macclesfield, SK11 6QU

I am sure you will remember that I visited your school recently to find out how well you are learning. I shall certainly not forget the extremely warm welcome you gave me and how friendly you were when we had lunch together. You all made me feel quite at home and I thank you for your wonderful politeness and good manners. I enjoyed talking to you and you helped me to find out a lot about your school.

You have an outstanding school with outstanding teachers. In fact all of the grown-ups take extremely good care of you. That is why you all achieve as well as you do.

You all enjoy school a great deal. You are fantastically well behaved and most importantly your attendance is above average, so keep it up!

I was very impressed by your art work and the fact that every single one of you took part in a performance last term.

Everyone is extremely pleased and wants your outstanding achievement to continue. Your headteacher and governors already know how to make your school even better. You can help by continuing to be as hard working and as happy as you already are.