

Mablins Lane Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111216
Local Authority	Cheshire
Inspection number	310536
Inspection dates	8–9 December 2008
Reporting inspector	Geoff Lawrence

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	483
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev David Winstanley
Headteacher	Mr S Webb
Date of previous school inspection	20 June 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Mablins Lane Crewe Cheshire CW1 3YR

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	8–9 December 2008
Inspection number	310536

Telephone number
Fax number

01270 685085
01270 250332

Age group	4-11
Inspection dates	8-9 December 2008
Inspection number	310536

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This large primary school serves an area of social and economic advantage. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below the national average. Most pupils are of White British heritage and there are a small, but increasing, number of pupils from minority ethnic heritages or who speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. A privately run 'Before and After School' club operates on the site and was subject to a separate inspection. Mablins Lane is an Investor in People and holds the following awards: Artsmark Gold, Basic Skills, Inclusion Quality Mark, Healthy School Award and Activemark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school rightly judges its overall effectiveness as satisfactory. It does, however, have significant strengths in the quality of pupils' personal development and the care and support provided for them, all of which are good. To support these aspects, the school has developed strong and productive links with other agencies and the community. These contribute well to meeting the extra needs that some pupils have. Within a satisfactory curriculum there is a strong focus on promoting pupils' personal development and this contributes significantly to their good behaviour throughout the school and the positive relationships that exist at all levels. Pupils' good attitudes towards learning can clearly be seen in the classrooms. They say they enjoy their lessons and the good range of lunchtime and out-of-school activities, a view that is supported by pupils' above average attendance. Pupils are polite, well mannered and speak confidently. They were keen to demonstrate their understanding of how to stay safe by raising concerns about the lack of a regular crossing warden outside the school. They also have a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. They assume responsibilities confidently and eagerly, promoting very good relationships by acting, for example, as recycling officers and school councillors.

Standards at the end of the Year 6 have remained close to the national average since the last inspection and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Achievement is not better than this because there is some variation in the quality of teaching across the school. Some is good, but it is satisfactory overall. In good lessons, teachers capture pupils' interest, involve them in their own learning and maintain a brisk pace. This not only motivates pupils and helps them to make better progress, it also adds to their enjoyment of learning. In contrast, where teaching is satisfactory, pupils are not always fully engaged because lessons are not sufficiently interesting and too much time is spent listening. This slows the pace of learning and reduces the opportunities for pupils to make the progress of which they are capable. Recent initiatives to improve the teaching of English are already making a difference to pupils' performance in the subject but have not yet had full impact.

Leadership and management are satisfactory but have notable strengths, particularly in the team spirit and the ethos that has been created in the school. The headteacher and deputy headteacher work very closely together and this has enabled the deputy headteacher to refine his leadership skills and run the school effectively while the headteacher has been carrying out work on behalf of the National College of School Leadership. Consequently, the deputy headteacher is well prepared to assume the role of acting headteacher in January 2009. There are a range of monitoring procedures in place and these are used to set targets for pupils and teachers. However, the end of year targets set for pupils are often unrealistic and unattainable for many, and this limits leaders' ability to accurately judge pupil progress and teachers' effectiveness in improving achievement. Governors fulfil their statutory duties and are both supportive and challenging of the school. The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further and provides satisfactory value for money.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children enter the Reception having a wide variety of pre-school experiences and staff work hard to gather information about each child. This is used to help children settle quickly and enjoy school. Data shows that the knowledge and skills of current Reception children are at a

lower level than in previous years and below those expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress in most areas and slightly better progress in the way they link letters and sounds. This is a response to recent initiatives and has improved their language and communication skills. Children's progress is monitored but staff are not fully effective in planning for individual children's next steps in learning. Insufficient support is provided to enhance children's language and social development whilst they are learning through play both individually and when in groups. There has been good improvement in the outdoor provision since the last inspection and this is now providing greater opportunities for children to explore and learn in a different environment. However, the full effect of this on the children's progress is yet to be seen. The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is satisfactory overall. The leader knows the strengths and weaknesses well and recognises that, although good improvement has been made since the last inspection, more needs to be done to support children's progress and personal development.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure children in the EYFS are effectively supported when developing their language and social skills through play.
- Ensure the targets set for pupils match their individual ability more closely to enable their progress to be judged more effectively.
- Increase the proportion of good teaching in order to improve achievement.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school and they achieve standards that are broadly in line with those nationally by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is similar to the last inspection and indicates that the school has followed the national trend. Inspection evidence shows that the current Year 6 are on track to achieve challenging targets in English because of good teaching at the end of Key Stage 2 and the recent implementation of strategies to improve reading and writing. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are provided with effective support and this helps them to achieve as well as other pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The school's focus on promoting pupils' emotional development is beginning to reap rewards and this contributes to their good behaviour, attitudes to learning and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are given opportunities to be reflective, responsible, and are able to show empathy and concern for fellow pupils. This gives them confidence to work both independently and cooperatively. They take part in a number of local community activities and have links with a school in South Africa. This, coupled with their involvement in activities such as the 'fair trade' project, has given them a better understanding and appreciation of other cultures as well as adding an economic dimension to their learning. The school council makes a positive contribution to school life and improvement and regularly seeks the views of others. All of these features contribute to the pupils' good social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. Pupils use information and communication technology (ICT) well. This means

that, along with their experiences of enterprise activities, they are well placed to develop the skills needed for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teachers are aware of gaps in pupils' knowledge and generally plan lessons to meet their needs. A positive feature of teaching is the improved marking, with teachers making it clear to pupils what they have achieved and how to improve further. This is a new initiative, however, and so has yet to show full impact on pupils' progress. Pupils are competent users of computers and teachers make good use of this fact to use ICT to enhance their learning. The variation in teaching quality that exists affects the rate of achievement that pupils make. Where teaching is good, lessons are brought alive and, as a result, pupils are eager to learn. This helps them to make better progress. Not all lessons are equally stimulating. Relationships, however, are good and all teachers manage children's behaviour positively and effectively. They promote their personal development well so that they become more confident and have good attitudes to learning. There are relatively few teaching assistants but they play an important role in teaching and providing support for pupils, particularly those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory but has a strength in the quality of artwork, which, with attractive wall displays that celebrate pupils' work, has helped to create a stimulating environment for learning inside and outside the building. The school is currently revising its curriculum to make greater links between subjects so that skills learned in one area can be transferred to another. An example of this was seen in an English lesson where pupils were using ICT research skills to produce a poster on modes of transport in Victorian times. The full impact of this development has yet to be seen, although recent changes to the English curriculum have already raised standards in reading and are beginning to improve pupils' writing. The curriculum is well planned to ensure that the mixed-age classes do not repeat work. There is a good range of visits and enrichment activities, which extend learning outside the classroom. ICT is well established across the school and integrated into the curriculum. The school has made a good start at introducing the French language.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Parents are confident that the school looks after their children well and inspectors agree. The school is currently working hard to secure additional support for the pupils who have joined the school recently and do not speak English. Procedures for health and safety, risk assessment and first aid are in place and the school meets the latest government requirements for safeguarding children. Pupils say they feel happy and secure in school, which enables them to enjoy themselves and make satisfactory progress. Effective systems ensure pupils' good behaviour, attendance and punctuality, which are strengths in their personal development. The school works very closely with EYFS providers and the local secondary schools to promote good transition arrangements for pupils entering and leaving the school. Procedures to monitor

pupils' progress more thoroughly have recently been put in place. Although yet to have full impact, these have helped teachers to know exactly where pupils are in their learning and to set appropriate work for them. Pupils are given more information on how to improve their work and they are now beginning to be involved in evaluating their own learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection and the issues identified then have been addressed. Leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and regularly monitor and evaluate its work. However, the approach to whole school and end of year target-setting is not yet matched closely enough to individual pupils' needs, so that a more accurate view of both pupil and teacher performance can be gained. A stronger area of leadership has been the substantial opportunities provided for staff to develop their leadership skills through well structured professional development. The result of this is that a strong and enthusiastic team is emerging, which is taking initiatives and is beginning to make an impact on pupil progress. It is, however, too early to see the full effect of their endeavours. Morale amongst the staff is high and all are working with a common purpose. The views of all stakeholders are valued and the great majority of parents are very positive about the school although a few have expressed concerns regarding the move to mixed-age classes. Governors have a clear view of where the school is and the direction in which it is moving. They work closely with the leadership team providing an appropriate level of challenge and support. The school's effectiveness of promoting community cohesion is satisfactory.

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.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	3
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	3
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
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 learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

As you know, a team of inspectors visited your school recently to find out how well you are learning. Thank you so much for the marvellous welcome you gave us and for being so open, polite and friendly. We found out that your school provides you with a satisfactory education. This means that some things are done well and others not quite so well. We agreed that all the adults in school take good care of you and the school helps you develop into mature and sensible people and you behave well and try hard in lessons. You work really well together and help each other a lot. Your attendance is good. You know the benefits of a healthy lifestyle is and how to keep yourself and others safe. You also told us how much you enjoyed school.

When we watched your lessons and looked at your work, we could see that your teachers and teaching assistants work really hard to help you to learn and they have some great ideas to help you. However, we did notice that in some lessons you spent a long time sitting and listening to the teachers. This meant you had less chance to make good progress. In the good lessons we saw, we noticed that teachers made the work exciting and you were fully involved. We would like to see it happening more often and in all classes so that you can do even better than you are now and this is what we have asked your teachers to do.

We have asked the school to help ensure that children in the Reception classes receive more effective support from staff to help them learn better through play. We also saw that the Reception class had a new outdoor area, which is much better than the last time inspectors visited the school.

Those responsible for leading and managing the school and all the other staff work very hard indeed to make sure that you enjoy coming to school and that you are well cared for and safe. They set targets for you each year, but we found that some of the targets are too difficult for some of you to reach. We have asked them to look more closely at what each one of you can do and set you targets that challenge you to do your very best but are achievable.

Thank you once again for helping us. We enjoyed our time with you and your teachers. We hope you that you continue to work hard and enjoy school.