

Mobberley CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111277
Local Authority	Cheshire
Inspection number	310553
Inspection date	16 April 2008
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 category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	122
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Helen Mountney
Headteacher	Mrs Carol Owen
Date of previous school inspection	7 March 2005
School address	Church Lane Mobberley Knutsford Cheshire WA16 7RA
Telephone number	01565 873242
Fax number	01565 872095

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the impact of the school's management on pupils' current progress and standards, and on their personal development and well-being. Evidence was gathered from: the school's self-evaluation; national published assessment data and the school's records of pupils' progress; lesson observations; interviews with staff, pupils and the chair of the governing body; the school's policy documents; and parents' questionnaires. 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 its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included, where appropriate, in this report.

Description of the school

The number of pupils at this rural school, which is smaller than the average primary, has grown significantly since the last inspection. The Reception class is oversubscribed for September 2008. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below the national average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than average in the current Year 6 class, but is below the national average in the school overall. A much higher proportion of pupils than is the norm joins the school from Year 3 onwards. For the last five years, the number of pupils in Year 6 has been very low, often less than 10, so the test results of these year groups need to be evaluated with caution. The new headteacher was appointed a year ago.

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. The inspector agrees with parents, who praise the very high levels of care, the excellent promotion of personal values such as self-esteem and confidence, and the consistently good quality of teaching their children receive. The outstanding curriculum, which makes excellent use of partner schools and support agencies, enables pupils to acquire a breadth of knowledge and develop into well behaved and inquisitive learners. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for those pupils who have special gifts and talents is of a high quality. The school ensures that pupils are safeguarded. They are helped to make a smooth start to school and to move on confidently to the next stage of their education.

The headteacher leads a skilled and experienced team most capably. Managers at all levels set a very clear direction for improving the school; as a result all staff are committed to 'improving the pupils' progress' as their core value. They willingly explore new ideas and undertake extensive training in order to improve provision further. Future planning is comprehensive and recognises that further improvement will come from further fine-tuning of current good systems. It is firmly based on a thorough knowledge of how well the school is currently performing because all staff and the effective governing body are fully involved in the self-evaluation process. Combined with good improvement since the last inspection, this indicates that the school has good capacity to improve further. Staff with subject responsibilities raise standards in their subjects in many ways; for example, by introducing new ideas to the school and by evaluating pupils' work. The school gives good value for money.

Pupils achieve well in English, mathematics and science. Consistently good teaching enables most pupils to make good progress in these subjects, as indicated by the national test results, despite the high levels of turnover of pupils from Year 3 onwards. Pupils' standards at the start of Year 1 are above average. Effective teaching improves pupils' reading, writing and mathematical skills so that standards at the end of Year 2 are above average, as they have been for four years, and pupils are well prepared for learning in Key Stage 2. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2007 were above average with exceptionally high proportions of pupils in this very small year group reaching the higher levels in English, mathematics and science. This continued an upward trend. Standards vary considerably between year groups but are above average overall. One reason for pupils' good progress is that they are very knowledgeable about their own learning and they help class teachers set their learning targets. Pupils understand and use teachers' marking to improve their work and evaluate their own learning. They give teachers information about how well they have learned so that the teachers can adjust their planning for future lessons. Pupils are well informed about how to improve their English work further because teachers' marking is of a high quality. In mathematics, teachers give oral feedback; however, the marking of mathematics tasks is not detailed enough to help pupils know what to do to improve their work.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. They say that school is great fun and really interesting; the outstanding curriculum plays a big part in this. Attendance is above average, a further indication that pupils enjoy school. They say that lessons are presented in interesting ways, making very effective use of new technology, and that they go on memorable visits. A great emphasis is placed on physical activity, with specialist coaching in a wide range of sports including lacrosse, hockey and golf. Consequently, pupils have an excellent understanding of how to stay fit and well and there is a huge take-up for after-school sports clubs. Older pupils use scientific vocabulary confidently to talk about the need for a balanced diet or the harmful

effects of smoking and alcohol. Even the youngest children talk knowledgeably about the dangers of too many sweets! Pupils are very aware of how to keep themselves safe, including being aware of the potential dangers of using the Internet. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is of a high quality and the school recognises that these aspects are slightly better developed than pupils' awareness of different cultures. Plans are being implemented to improve this; for example, two days were used last year to explore the Japanese culture. The school has a wonderful family feel with pupils taking great care of each other; for example, Year 5 and Year 6 pupils look after their Reception class 'buddies' during some activities. The school council gives pupils an effective voice in the management of the school. They are very active in the wider community, raise significant funds for charity and have an excellent awareness of ways to conserve energy.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Parents of five-year-olds praise the care and education provided in the Reception class and the inspection agrees with them that provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Children start school with skills that are broadly typical for their age and quickly settle into routines because induction procedures are outstanding. They make good progress in all six areas of learning. Each year, the group of children is different and the class teacher adapts her planning to meet their needs. For example, this year there are more boys than girls so there is greater emphasis on themes which are of interest to boys. Early reading and number skills are taught well. The programme is stimulating and makes good use of resources; for example, the children acted out a Christian wedding in the local church. Parents welcome initiatives like the reading workshop, which enables them to help their children learn at home. The Foundation Stage is managed well, with the headteacher sharing her expertise with the highly competent new teacher. By the end of the Foundation Stage, most children exceed the expectations for their age with particular strengths in reading, number, personal and physical development, and knowledge and understanding of the world.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the marking of pupils' work in mathematics helps them understand how to improve.

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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?	1
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 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	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	2
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	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?	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?	2
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	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 Mobberley C of E Primary School, Knutsford, WA16 7RA

Thank you for making me so welcome when I visited your school recently. It was a privilege to see you working together so well during your 'Go Green' activities. These special days with their exciting activities are one of the reasons why yours is such a good school. These and the wide range of other activities, like overnight visits, the opportunity to learn three European languages, wonderful music provision and extensive sporting opportunities, contribute to your great enjoyment of school.

You tell me that the staff are very kind and help you learn and I agree. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers are skilled and help you make good progress in English, mathematics and science. In conversation, you showed an excellent understanding of the importance of your learning targets and how these, and your teachers' marking, encourage you to improve your work even further. I think that your understanding of how to stay safe and healthy and your work in school and the wider community are also outstanding.

Your headteacher and her staff are a very good team who are always looking for ways to improve the school for you. They seek out good practice in other schools, get support and advice from the governors and listen to your school council's ideas. They know how to make your school even better and this is well documented in their future planning. I have asked your teachers to make the marking of your work in mathematics as useful to you as it is in English. You can help your school to improve further by continuing to work as hard as you can and by continuing to be caring and helpful towards everyone in the school.

Once again, very many thanks for helping me with my work. You all behaved superbly well, spoke to me with great confidence and looked after the younger children exceptionally well. I wish you and your school all the best for the future.