

Cheadle Heath Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 133326 |
| Local Authority | Stockport |
| Inspection number | 316084 |
| Inspection dates | 28–29 November 2007 |
| Reporting inspector | Graham Martin |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School | 214 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mr Keith Ross |
| Headteacher | Miss Christine Meekley |
| Date of previous school inspection | 6 May 2003 |
| School address | Edgeley Road Cheadle Heath Stockport Cheshire SK3 0RJ |
| Telephone number | 0161 428 2476 |
| Fax number | 0161 428 5981 |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This average sized school is situated in a mixed area of private and local authority housing. Part of the area experiences higher than average levels of unemployment or low incomes and the associated socio-economic disadvantages. The proportion of pupils entitled to a free school meal is above average. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic heritages is below average but increasing. The school has achieved several awards, including the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark in 2005 for its work to promote the essential skills of literacy and numeracy, and two nationally recognised awards for developing information and communication technology (ICT) in 2006. It is also a health promoting school, as evidenced by the award of Healthy Schools status in 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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| 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 a number of outstanding aspects. The school's strengths are evidenced in the improvements made since the last inspection and the development of shared leadership, demonstrating that the school provides good value for money and has an excellent capacity to improve. Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. They behave exceptionally well, enjoy positive relationships and are very friendly and sociable. Pupils say they enjoy learning very much, which is reflected in good attendance and in their enjoyment of lessons. They are cared for well and arrangements to safeguard their well-being meet national guidelines. Pupils' awareness of healthy living and keeping safe is very good, as is their moral, social, spiritual and cultural development. The headteacher leads the school exceptionally well and is very ably supported by the deputy headteacher. They work together very closely and their joint leadership is a significant strength of the school.

Pupils enjoy good opportunities for learning. The curriculum goes beyond statutory requirements to provide a wide range of interesting activities that stimulate pupils' interests, such as the exceptionally good provision of music. Pupils' achievement is good overall. By the end of Year 2, standards are a little lower than average and the standard of boys' writing is well below average. Progress becomes very good during Key Stage 2, leading to above average standards in English, mathematics and science. The quality of teaching and learning is good and sometimes outstanding. Teachers make learning relevant and fun. In the best lessons teachers explain clearly how pupils can achieve their targets and marking is used exceptionally well to move pupils' learning on. However, this is not consistent across the school and the school's policy for marking is not translated into consistently effective practice.

The significant improvement since the last inspection is an outcome of good teamwork, inspired by an exceptionally clear vision and aspirations for the school that are shared by all staff. Pupils' achievement in ICT is now good and the use of ICT to support and enrich teaching and learning is also much better. Leadership is shared well so that all staff understand their part in helping the school to improve. The school is well supported, and often challenged, by a governing body that is very well led. A clear strength of the work of governors is their emphasis on ensuring that the best value is obtained from the resources available.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children settle quickly and happily into the Nursery class. On entry, their range of skills is wide but, on average, below what is expected for children this age. They enjoy a good range of learning activities and make good progress in their personal development. They quickly learn to cooperate with each other and with the adults who support them. Their behaviour is very good. The Foundation Stage team is well led and provision for the children in both the Nursery and Reception classes is managed well. Warm relationships and the nurturing environment provide safety and security, enabling the children to develop positive attitudes to learning. The quality of teaching is good. Because assessment is thorough, learning is planned carefully to cater for the children's different needs and abilities. Daily sessions in the Reception class focusing on letters and sounds help to boost early reading and writing skills well. All of these factors underpin the good progress the children make in relation to their abilities and starting points. By the end of the Foundation Stage, pupils' standards remain a little below expected levels. Children are motivated and interested in a range of indoor and outdoor activities and

enjoy the level of challenge they provide. Opportunities for decision-making and investigative play are provided, although activities to use the good resources available for independent exploration are not developed as well as they could be.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the standards in boys' writing in Key Stage 1.
- Ensure that marking is used consistently well to enable pupils to meet their learning targets.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils enter Year 1 with positive attitudes to learning established in the Foundation Stage, although their standards are a little below average. Pupils make satisfactory progress across Key Stage 1 and reached slightly below average standards in the most recent national assessments at the end of Year 2. Standards in reading were broadly average in 2007 and girls reached higher levels than boys in writing. Standards in mathematics were slightly below average. The school has begun to address boys' lower attainment in writing, although it is too soon to evaluate the impact of this work.

Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2007 rose significantly and were above average in all subjects. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 at the end of Year 6 was above average in science and broadly average in English and mathematics. These results represent good overall progress from pupils' below average starting points on entry to school. Good intervention and support by adults enable pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to make good progress. Those new to learning English also make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are a significant strength of the school. Parents frequently comment on how well the school's good guidance and support adds to their children's well-being. Pupils' outstanding behaviour is a credit to their families and to the school. Pupils really enjoy learning. They are conscientious, self-motivated and have very positive attitudes. They are friendly, confident and enjoy exceptionally positive relationships with each other and the adults who support them. Their moral, social, spiritual and cultural development is exceptionally good. Pupils are very aware of how to keep healthy and safe and have a clear understanding of how important nourishing foods are. Their awareness of how to avoid risks and hazards is very good. Pupils report how happy they are and how strongly they feel part of their school community. They say they feel well prepared for high school, having no serious anxieties about moving to the next stage of education. Pupils have very positive aspirations; those who play an instrument want to carry on learning music when they go to high school and 'maybe even at university'. Personal qualities that will stand pupils in good stead for their future economic well-being, such as using their own initiative and being determined to complete a task, are developed well. Pupils take real pride in helping their school, taking tasks and responsibilities seriously and making well informed decisions about how they can help the school's work to improve.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Lessons seen by inspectors confirmed the school's judgement that teaching and learning is good. Good lessons are characterised by well planned activities that interest the pupils and provide them with challenges that extend their learning. When teaching and learning is outstanding, teachers plan opportunities that are fun and relevant. They use a variety of questions at levels appropriate to the pupils' needs to include them all in learning. They also mark work in ways, both recorded and verbally, that give pupils clear guidance on how to achieve the next National Curriculum level. Furthermore, they explain to pupils the meaning of levels and what measures of success are used to show that a level has been achieved. This quality of marking is not, however, consistently well used. The speaking, listening and independent learning skills of boys are not sufficiently developed to bring about higher standards in writing by Year 2.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The enjoyment of learning reflects a well planned curriculum that captures pupils' interests and encourages their personal development well. The school's review of its curriculum ensures that it fully promotes the use of pupils' learning skills across all subjects. Good links between different lessons enable pupils to practise their skills in literacy and numeracy in other subjects. Initiatives to raise standards in writing in Key Stage 1 are getting off to a good start, but not enough impact is evident on the standard of boys' writing by Year 2. ICT is used very well as a teaching aid, adding interest and enjoyment to lessons. Pupils also have frequent opportunities to develop and extend their ICT skills by using them to research topics, helping them to develop their investigative skills. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of popular after-school activities, a comprehensive programme of educational visits and visitors to school, and an annual residential trip for older pupils. Pupils enjoy learning French in both key stages. Music is a particular strength of the school, with a high proportion of pupils learning to play instruments and greatly enjoying opportunities to perform in the school band.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pastoral care is good. Parents appreciate the very good levels of personal care the school provides. Arrangements to safeguard pupils and measures for health and safety meet current requirements. Pupils with additional learning needs are identified promptly and supported well through good intervention strategies and the work of well trained teaching assistants. This enables them to make good progress in relation to their abilities and starting points. Vulnerable children are supported well. The provision of a learning mentor has increased the school's capacity to nurture pupils' emotional well-being, helping to remove barriers to learning. In lessons, pupils are given a good understanding of the purposes of their learning activities and are given clear guidance on how to meet the lesson objectives. The school's current review of its marking policy and practice is developing well in some classes but the quality of marking is not consistent across the school to ensure that all teaching promotes the highest levels of achievement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide the school with exceptionally good vision and very clear direction. Their outstanding teamwork and sense of purpose give the school similarly outstanding capacity to improve. School self-evaluation is accurate, giving leadership a very clear picture of the school's strengths. Priorities for improvement are identified very well and the steps needed to achieve them are clearly stated in the school improvement plan, with identifiable measures of success. While the impact of the work of senior leadership is exceptionally good, measures to evaluate the impact of middle leadership are still developing. However, not all policies, such as that for marking, are translated into best practice. Very good management systems ensure the smooth day-to-day running of the school. The sharing of leadership roles is helping to raise standards because middle leaders recognise their accountability, share and aspire to the school's vision and are provided with the resources and training to achieve their objectives. The good involvement of the very well led governing body helps the school to improve. Governors share and support the aspirations of staff and parents well. Their very good management of resources to obtain best value helps to achieve these objectives.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| 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

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| 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 | 1 |

Achievement and standards

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| 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

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|---|---|
| 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 | 2 |

The quality of provision

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|--|---|
| 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 |

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

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| 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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards | 2 |
| 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 | 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 |

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

Inspection of Cheadle Heath Primary School, Stockport, SK3 0RJ

Thank you for the lovely welcome that you gave to Mrs Auton and me when we visited Cheadle Heath Primary School recently. You were very polite and helpful. We really enjoyed our talks with you and the things you told us about your school really helped us to decide if your school is as good as you say it is. I hope that you will be pleased to know that we do think you have a good school. In fact, we found quite a few things that are even better than good!

Some of the exceptionally good things we found are:

- the way you behave so well and your high level of interest in learning
- the way that your headteacher and deputy headteacher are working hard to make sure that you all have the best possible chances to learn
- the way that you are well prepared for going to High School. You told us that you don't feel worried about moving up to Year 7 because you have had such good teachers at Cheadle Heath Primary School
- that you have lots of enjoyable learning opportunities, such as learning to play instruments well.

We have asked your headteacher and teachers to do two things to make your school even better.

- Help some of the boys in the infant classes to be as good at writing as they need to be.
- Make sure that the marking of your work always helps you to understand what you need to do to improve and how to achieve your learning targets.