

Mellor Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106058
Local Authority	Stockport
Inspection number	324322
Inspection date	22 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Peter Toft HMI

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	165
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	Mr Andrew Sokill
Headteacher	Mr Jim Nicholson
Date of previous school inspection	13 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Knowle Road Mellor Stockport Cheshire SK6 5PL
Telephone number	0161 4271052
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- the effectiveness of the teaching in challenging pupils to achieve highly
- progress in developing provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes
- the effectiveness of leadership and management.

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 document, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report. Evidence was gathered from: national published assessment data; observation of the school at work; discussions with the chair of governors, managers, staff and pupils; analysing the results of the parental inspection questionnaire and reviewing the school's documentation and assessment records of pupils' progress.

Description of the school

This small school serves an affluent village to the east of Stockport. Children join the Reception class with above average attainment. Almost all are of White British heritage and all speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, or with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, is well below average. An Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) unit provides for children in the Nursery and Reception age range. The school is designated as an Extended School and there is a before and after school club managed by a volunteer committee of school staff.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstandingly effective school. From a very strong base, the new headteacher has worked energetically with staff, governors and parents to secure an impressive range of developments. Improvement since the last inspection has been excellent and the areas for attention identified at that time have been dealt with in full. Given this track record and the high calibre of managers, staff and governors the school has an excellent capacity for further improvement. It has high ambitions and a wide range of priorities to bring this about.

Standards are exceptionally high. Children enter the school with above average attainment and they make rapid progress throughout the years. They gain knowledge and skills to high levels and develop concentration, curiosity and very positive attitudes to learning. By the end of Years 2 and 6 pupils attain standards which are well above average in English, mathematics and science. They leave school well prepared for future secondary education. A significant number pass examinations for entry to academically selective independent schools. They also attain very well in subjects across the curriculum, for example, in art where wall displays show pupils' work of skill and creativity and in music where a large number of pupils learn to play a musical instrument with confidence. Boys and girls achieve equally well. The small number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress as well as their peers. Since the last inspection, much has been done to challenge pupils to think and some very effective lessons were seen in which pupils showed high order thinking skills as a result of teachers' sharply focused questions.

Pupils' personal development throughout the school is excellent. They begin school with positive attitudes which are skilfully nurtured by staff. Behaviour is excellent in lessons and around the school. Parents are highly satisfied with the school's general effectiveness, including the contribution that it makes to their children's happiness, enjoyment and willingness to learn. The school has successfully developed a strong sense of community. Pupils learn to get on with each other, to appreciate differing points of view and to understand that there are different cultures and ethnic groups within our country. An excellent assembly was observed in which an outside speaker gave a vivid and balanced description of Islam, to which pupils across the school listened to with rapt attention. This is an example of how effectively the school supports pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Together with the excellent relationships in the school, the curriculum makes a significant contribution to pupils' awareness of the cultural complexity of our community and to the promotion of social cohesion. It also contributes similarly to their impressive appreciation of environmental issues.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Planning procedures are highly developed and diligently executed by staff under careful direction by senior managers. Staff are encouraged to contribute creatively to this planning. As a result they have collectively developed comprehensive and interesting schemes of work which support the quality of teaching. In lessons, class teachers and other specialists employed to teach specific subjects and activities show deep subject knowledge and a real interest and skill in conveying this to pupils. This is well appreciated by parents. Lessons are clear, brisk and lively with time used very effectively. Teachers are highly effective in stimulating pupils to think and to develop their curiosity. The pupils respond enthusiastically and show very good concentration and maturity. Pupils of all abilities are properly challenged and staff efforts to help those who are gifted and talented to make appropriate progress have borne much fruit in recent years. Teachers assess pupils' progress in depth and with great regularity. Their helpful marking and use of targets to focus

learning are appreciated by pupils who have clear ideas about how well they are doing. This and further learning are strengthened by the regular opportunities pupils have to mark their own and their peers' work under the direction of teachers. Information and communication technology (ICT) is skilfully used by staff to enliven their teaching.

The school provides an excellent broad and balanced curriculum which meets statutory requirements. It is very well organised to ensure that National Curriculum and other subjects, such as French and Spanish, are covered in depth within interesting projects and courses. It is supplemented by an excellent range of extra-curricular activities, often run by specialists to very high levels, including in music and sports. The coverage of citizenship is outstanding.

Pupils receive excellent care, guidance and support and this is much appreciated by both pupils and parents. Those pupils spoken to feel completely safe in school and are confident that any help they might need will be quickly and effectively given. They are given ample guidance on how to live healthily. This includes very good opportunities for physical exercise, tuition on healthy eating and the provision of healthy lunches. Pupils with specific medical or learning needs are monitored and helped diligently. Arrangements to check the suitability of staff meet requirements. Careful attention is paid to ensure that the building,, grounds and procedures such as that for fire evacuation, promote pupils' health and safety.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The new headteacher, ably assisted by senior leaders, has brought about a range of significant improvements in recent months, for example, the range of extra-curricular activities provided which are already of considerable benefit to pupils. The school runs exceptionally smoothly and has an excellent ethos for learning. The experienced governing body has a very clear insight into the schools' performance. It works very effectively with staff to provide support and challenge within a climate of continuing improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Provision in the school's Nursery and Reception classes is outstanding. Children are given appropriate opportunities to choose from and initiate a wide range of absorbing practical experiences. The balance of activities and direct teaching is very carefully matched to children's individual development and growing need. This is helped considerably by high quality teaching which enables children to follow their interests in depth. Staff make close assessments of children's progress. This enables them to match provision to children's evolving needs. An excellent indoor and outdoor environment is well used to support the high quality teaching and learning. Excellent care, guidance and support are given. The children develop well, learn to take responsibility and make excellent progress overall towards nationally agreed Early Learning Goals. However, in their mathematical development, children's calculation skills, though their attainment is above average, is less well developed than in other areas of their learning. The management of the EYFS is outstanding and well informed by a deep insight into how children at this age can be effectively helped to develop. The EYFS staff work very effectively as a closely knit team, with a sharp eye on preparing children to be ready to benefit from more advanced learning as they move up the school.

What the school should do to improve further

- In the EYFS, bring children's attainment in calculation up to the levels of the other areas.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

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

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?	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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
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 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

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 eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

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

Inspection of Mellor Primary School, Mellor, Stockport SK6 5PL

I promised to let you know what I thought of your school when I inspected it recently.

- Mellor Primary School is outstanding.
- You are given a first class education both in academic subjects and a wide range of activities.
- You reach high levels in subjects such as English, mathematics and science and the quality of the art and music I saw was most impressive.
- You enjoy school a great deal and your behaviour and concentration are excellent.
- Your parents clearly appreciate the high quality of the school and the care and guidance it gives you. I hope you do too!
- The teaching I saw was outstanding and you get fully involved in the interesting work you are set.
- You have a clear idea of how well you are doing because of the helpful ways in which teachers mark your work and check your progress.
- The management of the school is excellent and the governors and headteacher have some interesting plans for future improvements.

To help with this improvement I have asked the headteacher to:

- help children in the Nursery and Reception classes to develop calculation skills which are as good as the excellent work they do in other parts of their curriculum.

I wish you all the very best for your future learning at Mellor.