

Queensgate Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106072
Local Authority	Stockport
Inspection number	324325
Inspection date	21 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Susan Walsh

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)	258
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	Dr P Gardner
Headteacher	Mrs S Challinor
Date of previous school inspection	3 October 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Albany Road off Meadway Bramhall Stockport Cheshire SK7 1NE
Telephone number	0161 439 3330

Age group	3–11
Inspection date	21 October 2008
Inspection number	324325

Fax number

0161 439 9200

Age group	3-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage, including children's achievement, challenge for the most able pupils, the use of outdoor space, and the quality of leadership and management. Also evaluated was the impact of the school's strategies to improve pupils' writing and the involvement of leaders and managers other than the headteacher in development planning and raising standards.

Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation; national published assessment data and the school's own assessment records; observations of the school at work; discussions with pupils and representatives of senior staff and the governing body; a scrutiny of school 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 form were not justified, and these have been included, where appropriate, in this report.

Description of the school

The school is slightly smaller than most other primary schools. Very few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. Although the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average, the school provides for a significant number of pupils with severe and complex learning disabilities. These pupils are taught within mainstream classes. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) includes a Nursery class, although a considerable number of pupils join the Reception class after attending other settings. The school has a good number of national and local curriculum awards, including a Healthy Schools award and an Inclusion Quality Mark.

There is a privately run out of school club on-site, but it did not form part of this inspection.

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 outstanding school that effectively combines the achievement of very high academic standards with warmth, kindness, and an awful lot of fun. It provides outstanding value for money. Parents are delighted with the provision offered by the school often using the word 'fantastic' and praising the 'excellent staff.' They recognise that the headteacher has driven the relentless focus on improving standards and accelerating achievement and her insistence on 'raising the bar' has resulted in outstanding teaching combined with an outstanding curriculum.

Every child is encouraged to reach their full potential. When children start in the Nursery or Reception classes their skills are often above those typical for their age. Their progress is good in the EYFS. Pupils make outstanding progress in Key Stage 1 and this is sustained in Key Stage 2. At the end of Key Stage 1 standards are exceptionally high with a good proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 in reading, writing and mathematics. A recent focus on writing has boosted pupils' achievement in writing even further and more pupils than ever are now reaching the higher levels in this subject. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are also exceptionally high and improve year-on-year. A very high proportion of pupils reach the higher Level 5 in English, mathematics and science. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with severe and complex needs, is excellent. They are fully included in all lessons and activities and receive exceptional support. Work is carefully planned to meet their individual needs whilst reflecting the theme of the lesson. This results in their outstanding achievement. The school is working hard to ensure that pupils' thinking and questioning skills continue to develop.

Lessons are lively and exciting. Resources are used very well to support learning. For example, when pupils are writing about autumn they are able to see, touch and smell real leaves and conkers and when they are involved in role play in a greengrocer's shop they are able to serve customers with genuine seasonal vegetables. Teachers make full use of assessment information to plan work that matches pupils' needs. There is excellent support for those who find academic work difficult and lots of challenge for the most able. Pupils are very clear about what they are expected to learn and at the end of lessons they are thoroughly involved in assessing their own work. Pupils are always aware of their own targets and work assiduously towards them in lessons. Excellent links between subjects are making lessons relevant and capture pupils' interests really well. A strong focus on providing high quality stimuli for writing has helped to drive up standards and the interests of boys are catered for particularly well. The use of drama has encouraged creative thinking and there has been a successful focus on raising the standards of more able writers. For example, when Year 2 pupils dressed up as characters from the time of The Great Fire of London they brought their understanding of that period and their empathy with the characters to their high quality writing. They also had a great deal of fun!

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Pupils are able to blossom in this warm, supportive environment. Pupils say they 'like the way that teachers and children help and encourage you when you are having a hard time'. They feel exceptionally safe and secure. Child protection and safeguarding procedures are in place. The excellent programme for personal, social and health education ensures that pupils are exceptionally well informed about how to keep healthy and safe. Pupils are understandably proud of their school. Their personal development, including their behaviour is outstanding. They are very keen to make a worthwhile contribution to the school community through their roles as play leaders, buddies and members of the school

parliament. Good attendance reflects pupils' outstanding enjoyment of school. School trips, which range from visits to the local hat factory and air raid shelters to residential visits, are thought to be 'Awesome!' Opportunities for pupils to develop their music skills and sporting prowess are very good indeed and there is a huge range of clubs. Especially good basic skills combined with the pupils' extremely positive attitudes result in them being exceptionally well prepared for future economic success.

The school is very outward looking and works very well with a host of other local providers to secure pupils' well-being. There is a keen awareness of the needs of the local community and pupils are very respectful of other cultures and faiths. The schools' self-evaluation is highly accurate because it is based on thorough monitoring and evaluation that has involved subject leaders as well as senior leaders. Outstanding leadership and management are reflected in a shared vision and understanding of exactly where the school needs to move forward. The hard work and commitment of all the staff has ensured that the school's carefully laid plans come to fruition and result in year-on-year improvements to already exceptionally high standards. This, together with the very good improvements since the previous inspection, demonstrates the school's exceptional capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the EYFS has improved, because of good leadership and management, and is now good. The quality of the accommodation has been enhanced which has allowed the school to develop a good curriculum with much more effective use of the outdoors. There is a suitable balance between activities led by adults and others chosen by children. When children join the EYFS either in the Nursery or Reception classes they are usually articulate and confident with skills that are above those typical for their age. They make good progress, especially in their personal and social development and their creative development. There is good work to challenge stereotypes and encourage the progress of both boys and girls. For example, both boys and girls in the Nursery were equally interested in learning about how to care for babies. Parents remark about how their children have grown in confidence and in emotional maturity in response to the 'gentle supportive teaching style'. Teaching is good and staff have good questioning skills that move children's learning on. Children are cared for well. Parents say that good induction procedures have helped their children to settle quickly. There is extensive assessment information but this is not always precise enough or used sufficiently well to plan activities that match children's individual needs. This sometimes slows learning especially for the most able children.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that assessment information in the EYFS is sufficiently precise and is always used effectively to plan activities that match children's individual needs.

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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?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
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?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

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	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 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?	2
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 Queensgate Primary School, Stockport, SK7 1NE

It was a delight and a privilege to inspect your school. I really enjoyed talking to you all and listened very carefully to what you had to say. You go to a really super school! It is outstanding! It's clear that you have a brilliant time at school because of all the exciting things you have to do. It was good to hear that you know lots about keeping healthy and safe. I was very impressed by your outstanding behaviour. You have very good manners and make visitors very welcome indeed. You told me that your teachers look after you extremely well and that they always try to help you. You also told me that your friends are also very helpful and supportive.

Your teachers work very hard indeed to make sure your school just gets better and better. The standards you reach are much higher than those reached by pupils in most other schools. You make outstanding progress because of outstanding teaching but also because you all work very hard. I really enjoyed looking at your writing and saw some wonderful work in Years 2 and 3. I also noticed some fantastic work displayed on the walls in other classes. The trips and visits sounded very exciting. You told me you had a brilliant time when you saw the sharks at Blackpool and enjoyed learning about woodcraft on your residential visit.

Leaders and managers have worked very hard to make your school one of the very best. Provision for the children in the Nursery and Reception years is good. I have asked the teachers to improve the way they check these children's progress and use that information to plan their work.

Thank you again for being such good company.