

# Lum Head Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106093
<b>Local Authority</b>	Stockport
<b>Inspection number</b>	324329
<b>Inspection dates</b>	16–17 March 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Judith Tolley

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.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	173
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
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr J Lowrey
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Helen Smith
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 May 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Troutbeck Road Gatley Cheadle Cheshire SK8 4RR
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 428 7992
<b>Fax number</b>	0161 491 6802

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Lum Head is a smaller than average sized primary school. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. More than a third of pupils come from a variety of minority ethnic backgrounds, well above the national average. Over a third of pupils speak English as an additional language, although only a small number are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is lower than the national average. The headteacher was appointed in September 2007 and the deputy headteacher in January 2009. The school has Extended Schools status and the Activemark award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Lum Head Primary is a rapidly improving school. It provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. As a result of strong leadership and very clear direction, recently declining standards, particularly in Key Stage 1, have been successfully tackled and the school is now back on track. The quality of teaching and learning although satisfactory overall, is weaker in Key Stage 1 than in Key Stage 2.

Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory in relation to their starting points. Provisional test results in 2008 and work seen during the inspection indicate that standards at the end of Year 6 are above average and pupils are now achieving well in English, mathematics and science. This is the result of consistently good, or better, teaching for older pupils as well as extra help in mathematics and English and pupils' very positive attitudes towards their learning. Progress however, is slower in Key Stage 1 and standards have been too low for too long. This is because there are gaps in the knowledge and skills expected for pupils of this age. Satisfactory teaching and learning in Key Stage 1, coupled with extra help in mathematics, reading and writing are now proving effective in enabling them to make the progress they should. By the end of Year 2, although pupils' progress has accelerated, a significant proportion of pupils are still struggling to achieve their targets. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve as well as their classmates.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and their attitudes towards their learning are good. They clearly enjoy their learning and have good relationships with each other and their teachers. They readily take on responsibility and are keen to talk about new developments in their school. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is particularly strong.

The curriculum is satisfactory, meets the needs of pupils effectively and enables them to achieve. In Key Stage 2 there is good provision for literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). Teachers make the most of opportunities presented by different subjects for pupils to use these skills in practical situations. One pupil said when talking about topic work, 'and suddenly we realised we were doing mathematics!' In Key Stage 1, this is less well developed and opportunities are too often missed to consolidate and extend pupils' skills in reading and writing in particular. The school has piloted 'creative curriculum' weeks where pupils investigate issues for themselves and, as a consequence, use skills in a practical and meaningful way. It is aware of the enthusiasm shown by pupils and the positive impact these experiences have had upon their achievement and standards. The extension of this model across the whole school is, as yet, in the early stages of development.

The school provides very good care for all of its pupils. Safeguarding measures are in place and the school meets government guidelines to ensure the safe recruitment of staff. The strong commitment of all adults in the school towards the welfare of its pupils is clear in routine interactions between staff and pupils, not only in the classroom but also at playtimes and around the school. Pupils say that they are confident that adults will sort out any problems they have. Academic guidance and support, including that for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language are more variable across the school, but they are satisfactory overall. Effective assessment procedures have been introduced so that teachers are now able to track pupils' progress accurately.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides clear leadership and direction. She is strongly supported by the senior leadership team. She has swiftly put appropriate measures

in place to eliminate underachievement and raise standards. In doing so she has won the confidence of staff, pupils and parents alike. These measures have been particularly successful in Key Stage 2 where progress has accelerated significantly; challenging targets have been met and often exceeded. In Key Stage 1, progress is slower and, despite improvements, weaknesses remain. Middle leaders are enthusiastically developing their roles in evaluating work and supporting other teachers in their subject areas. However, at the moment, there are no clear lines of responsibility to evaluate, develop and coordinate overall provision in each Key Stage. Issues from the last inspection are being tackled successfully and recent improvements in standards and achievement indicate that the school has good capacity to improve further. Governors provide very strong support. They are very well informed and act very effectively as critical friends.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 3**

Provision in the Reception class is satisfactory. Children enter Reception with skills that are in line with expectations for their age but their language and communication skills are relatively weak. Until very recently they started Year 1 with skills below those expected of children this age. In the short time that the Early Years Foundation Stage coordinator has been in post, she has created a secure and stimulating environment which meets children's needs and enables them to develop their skills effectively. They now make satisfactory progress.

Children are well behaved and usually engaged by activities although, on occasion, children are required to listen for too long and find it difficult to maintain concentration. Teaching assistants provide good support, particularly for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those at the early stages of learning English, so that they are able to participate successfully in activities with their class mates. Activities to promote the development of children's personal, social, physical and creative skills are particularly successful, whereas opportunities are sometimes missed to reinforce language and literacy.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The records of individuals' progress form the basis of daily and weekly planning and are noted in children's profiles to ensure continuity and progression in the next stage of learning. The coordinator is working hard to develop links with the wide range of preschool settings the children come from to ensure a smooth transition into Reception. She has correctly identified areas for improvement. Work is already underway to extend provision into Year 1, improve opportunities for outdoor play, including gardening, and to involve parents more in their children's education. But these are still at the early stages of development.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise standards and improve achievement in Key Stage 1.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 1.
- Ensure provision is effectively planned and monitored in each Key Stage.

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**

In 2007, standards attained in national tests at the end of Year 6 were in line with the national average and declining in English and mathematics. This represented satisfactory achievement in relation to pupils' starting points. Provisional test results in 2008 indicate that standards at the end of Key Stage 2 were above average in English, mathematics and science, representing good achievement. Work seen during the inspection confirms that, similarly, current Year 6 pupils attain above average standards in English, mathematics and science. However, in test results in 2007, by the end of Year 2, standards were below average overall and well below average in writing. In relation to pupils' starting points this indicates that pupils were not achieving as they should. Teacher assessments for pupils at the end of Year 2 in 2008 show that standards continued to decline and were below average in writing and significantly below average in reading and mathematics. This has left pupils with a lot of ground to make up and has put undue pressure on teachers when pupils enter Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1, work seen during the inspection indicates recent improvements in reading, writing and mathematics, so that most pupils are now attaining standards close to those expected for their age. This represents satisfactory achievement overall. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also achieve satisfactorily.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils enjoy coming to school and are willing learners. They listen carefully and, when they are given the opportunity, they work well collaboratively and organise themselves well. They have good relationships with each other and with adults in the school. They appreciate the time teachers give to them if they need extra help. They are courteous, thoughtful and kind to each other. This is especially noticeable in the playground and around the school where older pupils regularly help younger children. They are keen to take on responsibility, for example, as playground helpers, school councillors, house captains and members of the Eco committee, and they take their responsibilities seriously. They have a good understanding about how to stay safe and the benefits of a healthy lifestyle and are able to make sensible choices. Pupils develop skills which will contribute to their future well-being satisfactorily, for example, in Activity weeks. Older pupils' involvement in the Green Festival and The Life Game give them an insight into the wider world, as do their links with France and their fundraising activities. Pupils' attendance is just below average but is improving. The school is working hard to reduce absence and this is proving successful.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching and learning varies considerably across the school. In Key Stage 2 it is consistently good or better enabling pupils to achieve well, whereas in Key Stage 1 there is much more variation and achievement is satisfactory overall. In the more effective lessons, teachers use questioning very well to develop pupils' thinking skills and extend their knowledge and understanding. They present new ideas clearly so that pupils rapidly understand. Teachers use plenary sessions well to check understanding at each stage and they plan activities well so

that pupils build effectively on previous learning. Imaginative use of resources, such as the interactive whiteboard, engages pupils and captures their interest. Pupils are frequently challenged, for instance, through science investigations and group work, to explore ideas for themselves and come to conclusions. Where pupils are encouraged to discuss ideas with a partner first they are confident in sharing their ideas with a wider audience and participate enthusiastically in whole class discussion. In less effective lessons, teachers require pupils to listen for too long or do not actively involve them so that they find it difficult to maintain concentration. Tasks are not always well enough matched to pupils' needs to allow lower attaining pupils to experience success or provide higher attaining pupils with sufficient challenge.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is rapidly improving to better meet the needs and interests of the pupils. The school has recently piloted themed weeks where subject leaders work together so that pupils can explore ideas in a varied and imaginative way and, at the same time, practise basic skills. These have been successful in raising standards in English and mathematics. Pupils talk about these practical and realistic experiences enthusiastically but they are not yet the norm. Effective links are made, for example, with science and mathematics in Key Stage 2 but, generally, opportunities for pupils to practise skills across all subjects and across the whole school are at a very early stage of development. The curriculum is enriched by opportunities to learn modern foreign languages and Latin and by a variety of clubs and sporting activities. Visits, including residential visits, and visitors to the school further enhance pupils' experience.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils have confidence that staff will deal effectively with their concerns and they know that help is always available when needed. Academic guidance and support are less secure. Although teachers mark work regularly and give guidance about how pupils can improve their work, pupils do not always have a clear understanding of their learning targets or of the standards they are achieving. Recent improvement in the collection and analysis of assessment information means that the school is better placed to meet individual needs, but this does not always transfer effectively into the classroom. Intervention programmes for English and mathematics provide effective support for pupils, particularly those who have underachieved in the past, and enable them to eliminate gaps in their learning. The school has useful links with outside agencies to counter barriers to learning. Similarly, links with the high school ensure a smooth transition from one stage to the next.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

In the relatively short time that the headteacher has been in post, she has acted swiftly and successfully to eliminate significant underachievement in Key Stage 1 and the Reception class and to arrest and correct the declining standards. Although achievement is still a concern in Key Stage 1, there are clear signs of improvement. As a result of her clear direction, enthusiasm and support, middle managers are increasingly taking the lead in their subject areas. They are beginning to take responsibility for evaluation and development in their subject areas and to see how they can link them coherently in themed activities. However, no one has direct

responsibility for the oversight and planning for each Key Stage as a whole and this is slowing improvement particularly in Key Stage 1. Resources for ICT are now more effectively deployed so that pupils have access to them in their classrooms. The quality of teaching and learning are regularly monitored and support given where necessary to improve practice. A reliable system of assessment is now in place throughout the school which enables pupils' progress to be tracked effectively from their entry into Reception. Underachievement can, therefore, be rapidly identified and appropriate action taken. The school works effectively with other institutions and outside agencies and is making a good contribution towards community cohesion through its work as an Extended School, and particularly through its work with parents in the Family Support Centre. It provides satisfactory value for money.



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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?	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	2

### 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 <sup>1</sup> 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

<sup>1</sup>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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
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	3
The behaviour of learners	1
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	3

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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?	3

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
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	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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 Lum Head Primary School, Cheadle, SK8 4RR

On behalf of the inspectors I would like to thank you all for making us so welcome when we inspected your school recently. We thoroughly enjoyed talking to you and hearing your views. We were sorry to miss meeting those children who were out on a residential visit but really enjoyed reading their letter.

I'm sure you will be interested to know that your school gives you a satisfactory quality of education. You are very well looked after. Teaching is satisfactory and helps you to achieve as you should. You told us how much you enjoyed working together to explore ideas for yourselves in Activity weeks and how much they helped you to learn, especially in English and mathematics.

I was particularly impressed by how well you behave and how well you get on with each other and with adults in the school. You play an important role in your school through the School Council, the Eco committee and as Playground helpers and House captains. I saw how well some of you worked together to explore ideas for yourselves in lessons. Younger children in the Reception class also make satisfactory progress because they, too, are encouraged to explore things for themselves and to talk about what they find out.

The teachers have been working hard to help you improve your English and mathematics recently and this has been successful. Although you achieve as you should overall, older children are doing better than the younger ones. This is because they have gaps in their learning that they have to make up. They have improved a lot but we think that they can still do better. So I have asked the teachers to make sure the younger pupils also achieve well. I also noticed that some lessons were more exciting and helped you to learn better than others so we have asked the teachers to make all lessons as good as the best. Finally, I have asked them to make sure they plan your learning carefully in each Key Stage and check that it allows you all to do well. You can help by making sure you attend regularly.

I hope you continue to enjoy your learning. I wish you every success in the future.