

Cheadle Catholic Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106112
Local Authority	Stockport
Inspection number	324334
Inspection dates	1–2 December 2008
Reporting inspector	Stephen Rowland

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	355
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Brenda O'Shea
Headteacher	Mrs C Robinson
Date of previous school inspection	7 November 2005
School address	Conway Road Cheadle Hulme Cheadle Cheshire SK8 6DB
Telephone number	0161 485 3754
Fax number	0161 482 8106

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average junior school situated in Cheadle Hulme, south of Manchester. The majority of pupils come from relatively advantaged social backgrounds. The proportion of pupils taking free school meals is low. Few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and very few are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is slightly below average.

The school has the Healthy Schools Award, Investors in People and was awarded the best trade stand at the Stockport Young Entrepreneurs.

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 with outstanding features. Pupils' progress in personal development and well-being is outstanding because of the very high quality of care and support that is provided for them. Partnerships with parents and within the community are particularly strong and pupils show a marked sense of loyalty and belonging. Pupils are eager to participate in all aspects of their schooling and express appreciation for the work of their teachers. Parents value the school; a typical comment was, 'I feel very lucky that my child is able to attend a school like this.'

Achievement is good. Pupils make good progress so that the standards reached by the end of Year 6 are consistently high in relation to the national average in English, mathematics and science. There has been a steadily improving trend in standards and progress over recent years. This is because the quality of teaching is good and some is outstanding. Nevertheless, within this positive picture there is still some scope for improvement. At times, even in lessons judged good overall, teachers miss opportunities to engage pupils actively in their learning. For example, there are inconsistencies in how well teachers use strategies such as 'talking partners' to enable pupils to explore their thinking when discussing new ideas or problems. The quality of teachers' feedback to pupils, both verbally and through marking, is similarly inconsistent. Consequently, some pupils are more aware than others of how to improve their work. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported and make good progress.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are polite, respectful and supportive of each other. There is, for example, a very effective 'buddy' system where older pupils look after younger ones. Pupils value this and say it makes the school happy and safe. The abilities they develop through supporting each other and through the work of the school council enable pupils to gain a sense of responsibility toward the school community and develop social skills they will need in adult life. The high standards attained in English, mathematics and science also help prepare pupils very well for the future. Attendance is consistently good.

The school has a clear moral and spiritual ethos, which is central to pupils' understanding of these areas. Indeed, the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are actively involved in a number of community projects and this helps them to be aware of their wider social responsibilities. The pupils' participation in the BBC's Newsround programme has also given them a very high level of understanding of some social, moral and global issues. Pupils are very aware of healthy lifestyles and are happy to explain what they do to develop this, such as making healthy eating choices and taking part in physical activity. The outstanding curriculum really enhances pupils' enjoyment of learning. Opportunities in music, sport and to learn a modern foreign language are strong features that add to pupils' all round development. There is also an excellent variety of enrichment and extra-curricular activities.

The school's leadership and management are good. The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide very focused and committed leadership, which has enabled the school to sustain high quality pupil care and good learning. They are ably supported by subject leaders and middle managers who are becoming increasingly effective in evaluating the work of the school and bringing about improvements. Governors understand the school and provide effective support and challenge. With the headteacher they have successfully improved the quality of the school's accommodation and have increased the availability of information and communication technology (ICT) resources, which were the main areas for improvement from the previous inspection. The

sustained high standards and the improvements secured show that the school has good capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teachers take every opportunity to engage pupils actively in their learning.
- Ensure that teachers' marking and verbal feedback enables all pupils to understand how to improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress to achieve standards that are consistently above the national average. There has been a sustained pattern of improvement over the last three years and standards in reading and science are well above average. In its drive for continual improvement the school has identified writing as an area for further development. Inspection evidence shows that the strategies that have been introduced have begun to have an impact so that pupils' above average standards in writing are improving further. Similarly, the school has set challenging targets to increase the proportion of pupils reaching the highest levels in mathematics. This is being tackled effectively through a rigorous programme of training and support. There is no significant difference between the standards reached by boys and girls. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities progress at the same good rate as other pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very strong. Very good social and moral development is demonstrated by the pupils' respect for each other and in how well they get on together. There are close links with local churches and pupils learn about their own and other cultures through visits and numerous external partnerships. Pupils are aware of the need for safe practices and help to ensure that the school is a safe place. Pupils feel that they are a part of a community, with one pupil stating that 'the school is a democracy where everyone is respected and listened to.' Pupils describe staff as 'comforting and helpful'. An active school council contributes to the management and development of the school. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is outstanding and attendance is above the national average, reflecting pupils' enjoyment of learning. There are many ways that pupils contribute to the school community, for example by acting as prefects to support the smooth running of the school. Pupils' above average standards in literacy and numeracy and their involvement in the Young Entrepreneurs initiative, which has allowed them to manage a mini business, has meant that skills for adult life are very effectively developed.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good, with some examples of outstanding practice. In the very best lessons there is a lively pace and pupils are fully and actively engaged so that they progress at a rapid rate. Learning outcomes are made clear to pupils and they know how to achieve them. Pupils are made aware of how well they are doing and how to improve. The most effective lessons also involve teachers using interactive whiteboards very well to engage and involve

pupils in their learning and using strategies such as 'talking partners'. Occasionally, the pace of learning flags when teachers do not achieve a good enough balance between their own input and actively involving pupils in their learning. Throughout the school relationships are good and teachers are very effective in promoting pupils' exemplary behaviour. Marking is encouraging and supportive, but there are inconsistencies of approach so that feedback does not always enable pupils to understand the next step in their learning. Teaching assistants are used effectively, often supporting small groups of pupils to ensure that they make good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum has many strengths. Provision in English, mathematics and science is very strong so that the standards achieved in all these subjects are above the national average. The setting arrangements in literacy and numeracy in Years 5 and 6 have further strengthened the school's ability to meet the needs of its pupils. Opportunities to develop extended writing skills are a feature in many subjects and this is helping to drive up achievement. Enrichment and extra-curricular activities have provided many interesting and engaging opportunities for pupils. Provision in music and sport are particular strengths and pupils benefit from and appreciate the chance to learn a modern foreign language. Themed learning days, such as the French day and the Roald Dahl day, are built into the curriculum, allowing pupils to explore an area in greater depth. The curriculum contributes significantly to pupils' personal development and well-being, and includes a strong citizenship and personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme. Since the last inspection, ICT resources are greatly improved and this has allowed pupils to benefit from a wider range of learning opportunities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school ensures that all pupils are supported and cared for thoroughly. Pupils are very happy to confirm this and value the school's caring ethos. The needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are assessed thoroughly and their progress is tracked carefully so that they gain confidence and make good progress. The needs of vulnerable pupils are addressed through a strong system of pastoral support, which helps to overcome barriers to learning. Statutory requirements to ensure pupils' safety, including checks on adults who work with them, are met. Similarly, health and safety requirements, and child protection policies and processes, are in place. Pupils' academic progress is tracked very thoroughly and this underpins their good achievement. There are clear improvement targets for each pupil in each core subject. Interventions are planned so that, where needed, pupils can get back on track and their performance can be boosted. In some lessons, the opportunities provided for pupils to be involved in assessing some of their own and others' work enables them to understand their own progress better. Transition arrangements from the infant school and to the secondary phase are thorough and effective.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and deputy headteacher form a strong partnership that is setting a very clear and purposeful direction for the work of the school. There are strong examples of subject leadership that are having a very positive impact on the school's work. The strong focus on the

care and well-being of pupils and on their all round personal development has led to the excellent outcomes in personal development and well-being. Data on pupils' performance are analysed carefully and this information is used well to set challenging targets. The school's accurate self-evaluation ensures leaders have a good grasp of its strengths and weaknesses. The school delivers good value for money. The school has a clear range of policies to promote community cohesion and the excellent links with, for example, local places of worship is helping these to be implemented. This is a very inclusive school that ensures all groups of pupils achieve equally well.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

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?	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

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 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	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**

Thank you very much for making the inspection team so welcome in your school. We were very impressed by the way you behaved and by your good manners.

We judged your school to be good with some outstanding features and saw many things that impressed us, including:

- very caring and hardworking teachers
- lots of interesting activities which help you learn
- an atmosphere of respect and kindness.

To make your school even better we have asked your headteacher and the staff to do two things. These are:

- to ensure that the feedback you receive from teachers, for example in marking, lets all of you know exactly what you should do to improve your work
- to ensure that more lessons provide opportunities for you to be actively involved in your learning, for example by encouraging you to talk about your ideas and work with a partner.

We hope you will do your best to work with your teachers and other pupils.

Please keep on working hard and enjoying school.