

Flowery Field Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106183
Local Authority	Tameside
Inspection number	324344
Inspection dates	3–4 December 2008
Reporting inspector	Gill Jones 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)	427
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 Derek Slinn
Headteacher	Mrs Yvonne Daly
Date of previous school inspection	28 November 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Main Street off Old Road Hyde Cheshire SK14 4SN
Telephone number	0161 368 1466
Fax number	0161 368 8021

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	3–4 December 2008
Inspection number	324344

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

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

Description of the school

This is a large primary school close to the centre of Hyde. Most of the pupils who attend the school live within an urban regeneration area. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is double the national average. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage although the percentage from minority ethnic groups is above that found nationally and increasing. The percentage of pupils who are at the early stages of learning English is well above the national average. The percentage learning difficulties and/or disabilities is slightly above the national average.

The school is on two sites, a short walking distance apart. Key Stage 1 and the Early Years Foundations Stage (EYFS – Nursery and Reception) are on one site, Key Stage 2 is on the other. The school provides a breakfast and after-school club. The school has gained a number of national awards, which include: National Healthy Schools, Eco Schools (Silver) and the Activemark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Flowery Field Primary School provides a satisfactory quality of education. The headteacher has set an ethos which reflects the school motto; 'Flowery Fields is a happy place to learn'. The school provides a good level of care and support for pupils, particularly for those who are vulnerable and including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Parents say that their children enjoy school and this was evident during the inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress, overall.

Pupils start school with skills and abilities that are generally well below those expected nationally for 3 and 4 year olds. They make good progress in the EYFS and the majority are ready to start the National Curriculum in Year 1. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are below the national average. Far fewer pupils reach the higher levels (Level 3) in reading, writing and mathematics than is found nationally. Standards reached by the end of Key Stage 2 by 11 year olds have remained broadly in line with the national average over the past 3 years. In 2008, however, the school's own information shows that the standards reached at the end of Year 6 fell significantly although most pupils met their individual targets and their progress from well below average starting points was satisfactory. Pupils of Bangladeshi heritage reached standards above those found nationally.

The headteacher and deputy headteacher are well supported by a leadership team that has been extended recently to include the new EYFS leader. This new team is developing an accurate view of pupils' progress, which is now being checked effectively to identify any underachievement. However, the roles and responsibilities of the new leadership team are not yet clearly defined and this has led to some delays in action being taken to check the impact of strategies for improvements and in staff being held accountable. For example, improving attendance has been given a high priority in the school, but there is no clear overall analysis to check whether the strategies to improve attendance are successful. This lack of sharp self-evaluation is reflected in the poor quality of whole school improvement planning, which has slowed the rate of improvement.

Most pupils behave well in lessons and around the school although a small minority present challenging behaviour, which is well managed by staff. Pupils are polite to visitors. The school council is proud to represent the pupils and to be involved in supporting the headteacher by interviewing for new members of staff. Pupils know how to keep fit and healthy and the school provides a good range of sporting clubs and activities, which pupils are keen to support. The school choir recently took part in a concert at the Manchester Evening News (MEN) Arena and pupils are proud of their achievements in school plays and musicals, which provide them with good cultural experiences.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers have good relationships with pupils and use the school's reward system effectively to encourage their good behaviour. Interactive white boards are used imaginatively, which engages the pupils' interest well. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and, in addition, Spanish is taught by a specialist from Years 2 to 6. However, not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to practise their basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics in other subjects such as science, history, geography and design technology. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough, particularly for the more able.

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall, but the pastoral care provided is good. Lunchtime arrangements provide ample opportunities for pupils to play energetically. The pupils say they enjoy their breaks. Good relationships exist between school and other professionals who support vulnerable pupils and the school seeks support and advice when needed. The school is sensitive to the needs and diversity of its multi-ethnic population and uses the curriculum well to promote self-respect, racial harmony and consideration for others.

The leadership has welcomed the recent intervention programme from the local authority to help it to raise pupils' standards and achievement. The rigorous approach the new leadership team is taking to improve pupils' progress and to tackle the weaknesses in its self-evaluation shows that it has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children start in the EYFS with skills and abilities that are generally well below those typical of 3 and 4 year olds nationally, particularly in their language and communication skills. They settle quickly and become confident in using all the well resourced areas available to them to work independently, both indoors and outdoors. Staff use opportunities effectively to enrich children's understanding of language. For example, during the inspection it was snowing. As the children played in the snow, staff stimulated discussions about the features of snow and ice and as a result, the children acquired new language, knowledge and understanding.

Good manners are taught as part of the class routines. Children's behaviour is mostly good, but where children lack self-control staff are effective in managing it. Staff know the children well. Assessments of their progress are accurate and there is a good system of record keeping, which is shared with parents on a regular basis. Parents appreciate the care and support provided for their children. They say they feel welcome in Nursery and Reception. Relationships between staff and parents are good. The EYFS is well led and managed. The children get off to a good start in their learning and by the end of EYFS achieve levels in their knowledge, skills and understanding which are broadly in line with those found nationally, although a little below. This represents good progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve teachers' expectations of what pupils, particularly the more able, can achieve in English, mathematics and science, in order to raise standards and achievement.
- Ensure that the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics are practised in other subjects such as history, geography, religious education, science and design technology.
- Ensure that senior leaders use all the information available to them, to guide school improvement planning and evaluate the success of their plans against the standards achieved by pupils.
- Ensure that all leaders and managers have clearly defined roles and responsibilities for which they are held accountable and that these are linked to the school's priorities for improvement.

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

Pupils start in EYFS with skills, knowledge and abilities that are well below those typically found of 3 and 4 year olds nationally. They make good progress and by the time they enter Year 1, most have reached levels in their skills and abilities that are in line with those found nationally. In Key Stage 1, pupils' standards in reading, writing and mathematics are below the national average for 7 year olds, particularly at the higher level (Level 3), showing that more able pupils, in particular, do not achieve as well as they should. This is linked to a weakness in the school target setting procedures for individual pupils, which is now being tackled with increased rigour by the extended leadership team.

Since the last inspection, pupils have made good progress in Key Stage 2 and have reached standards that are in line with those found nationally for 11 year olds in English, mathematics and science. However, in 2008, the school's own information shows that standards fell significantly and that progress was no better than satisfactory. In particular, some of the pupils expected to achieve the higher level (Level 5) did not reach their individual targets. The school has identified the reasons for this and has recently improved the tracking of individual pupils' progress as a result. Most pupils in Year 6 are currently on track to meet their targets, which is evident in the work in their exercise books. The progress of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is in line with that of other pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory overall. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils know how to lead a healthy lifestyle. They are keen to take part in sporting activities and take rigorous exercise during breaks. Many pupils make healthy choices at lunchtimes, including those who bring a packed lunch. Pupils' cultural awareness is good. They are proud of the achievements of the school choir, who recently sang in the MEN Arena. They enjoy the opportunity given to every year group to perform on stage in a musical, play or pantomime. This enables them to learn to work together as part of a team. Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory. Most pupils behave well in lessons and around the school, but a small minority present challenging behaviour which disrupts other pupils' learning. Pupils report that there is bullying but they say that staff help them to deal with it. They say that because staff supervision is good, they generally feel safe in school. The school council is keen to improve the school and local environment. It works well with the teacher in charge to gain national awards for its work, but, the council is heavily reliant on adult support to fulfil its functions. Pupils say they enjoy school; however, their attendance is slightly below the national average.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Typically, teaching is lively and engages the pupils' interest well. Relationships are good. Effective use is made of the interactive white boards. For example, in one lesson observed by inspectors, the teacher scanned pupils' writing onto the interactive board, so that it could be used to identify learning points as part

of a whole class discussion. Teachers question pupils well and in the best lessons, it is made clear to pupils what they need to learn to improve their work. Where teaching is no better than satisfactory, the teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving is not consistently high enough. Teachers' planning does not always identify what different groups of pupils should learn by the end of the lesson. Generally, pupils spend too much time listening to the teacher, with insufficient time to practise their skills in reading, writing or investigative work. As a consequence, some pupils do not have enough completed work in their exercise books. Behaviour is generally well managed by staff and they make good use of the school reward systems. Teaching assistants provide good additional support to individual pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. It meets current statutory requirements and Spanish is taught from Year 2 onwards. There is an appropriate emphasis given to English and mathematics. However, insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils' basic skills to be practised in other subjects such as history and geography. In some subjects, such as mathematics and science, there is an over-reliance on worksheets. Here opportunities are missed to extend pupils knowledge and understanding through investigative work. The curriculum places a strong focus on personal, social and health education. This is used well to improve the pupils' understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle and to provide opportunities for pupils to work together in teams and to build good relationships with each other. A good range of visits, which include several residentials and additional outdoor pursuit activities, enrich the curriculum. A good emphasis on music and drama activities enhances the pupils' cultural experiences.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school meets all the current requirements to safeguard the health, safety and well-being of its pupils. It has the confidence of the majority of parents, who appreciate the good pastoral care shown to children and their families. The staff know the pupils well. The needs of vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are particularly well met. The school has built good relationships with outside agencies, support is well managed and available resources targeted effectively. The school provides a good range of activities to help families support their children's learning. For example, parents are encouraged to join the 'better reading partnership'. However, the uptake for these activities is poor. The staff mark the pupils' work regularly and the pupils appreciate their encouraging comments. However, not all marking shows pupils how to improve their work and does not always link effectively to pupils learning targets. There are some pockets of good practice in marking from which all staff can learn.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher and deputy headteacher share the same values. The well-being of pupils is their first priority. They have complementary skills and are supported effectively by a newly extended leadership team. Recently, there has been a good emphasis placed on tracking pupils' progress. Rigorous action taken recently by the extended leadership team is resulting in challenging targets being set and staff being held accountable for the standards achieved by pupils. Middle leaders are well supported in this by the recent intervention of the local authority.

Some of the weaknesses identified at the last inspection still exist. This is because the senior leadership does not yet use all the pupils' progress information available to them to help identify the priorities for school improvement planning which results in weak self-evaluation. Improvement plans lack clarity, responsibilities are not clearly defined and the evaluation of actions taken lack rigour. Whole school policies are not always consistently applied on both school sites and some parents commented that 'it feels like two different schools'. Governors are committed to the school and visit regularly. However, the information provided to the governing body sometimes lacks sufficient clarity to enable them to judge effectively how well the school is doing. The leadership knows its community well and has built effective partnerships to enhance its provision for pupils. The school is taking positive action towards building community cohesion, which includes employing staff from minority ethnic backgrounds to welcome isolated new families into school.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

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	3

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?	2
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?	3
The standards ¹ 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

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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	3
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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
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	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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 Flowery Field Primary School, Hyde, SK14 4SN

You may remember that I visited your school recently with two other inspectors to carry out an inspection. Thank you for sharing your views about your school. I listened very carefully to what you said and this letter is to explain what I found. I judged your school to be satisfactory. This means that you receive an acceptable standard of education, but some things should be done better.

The youngest children get a good start to their education; they are taught to be well mannered and polite and are making good progress in their learning. As you get older, most of you concentrate well in lessons and want to do your best. Your teachers have high expectations of your behaviour and want you to succeed, but not all of you behave well, which slows your learning. Some of you told us there is bullying, but you are confident that the staff help you to sort it out. You have a good knowledge of how to keep fit and healthy and many of you enjoy the good range of sporting clubs that the school provides. Taking part in 'The Big Sing' and the concert at the MEN Arena shows that you make a good contribution to your local community. Your school council reported that it likes interviewing staff and organising events such as the 'bring and buy' for Children in Need.

I was concerned when I looked at the standards you achieve in reading, writing, mathematics and science. I know that some of you can do better, especially those of you who are quick learners. I have asked the school to make sure that you have opportunities to practise your reading, writing and mathematics in subjects like history, geography and science and to check that your work is marked in a way that helps you to understand how to improve. Your headteacher and other managers will check your progress and the standards you reach, to see if their plans for improving the school are working.

It is possible that I or another inspector will visit your school again before the next inspection to see how well it is doing. You can help to make your school better by, always trying your very best, behaving well and letting your teachers know if you find the work too difficult or easy. I wish you all the very best for the future.