

# Alderley Edge Community Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	111008
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cheshire East
<b>Inspection number</b>	325270
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 June 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Paul Bamber

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	217
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 Graham Tyson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr C Perry
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 January 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>	Church Lane Alderley Edge Cheshire SK9 7UZ

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 June 2009
<b>Inspection number</b>	325270

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

This average-sized school serves an area of social and economic advantage. A small minority of pupils is entitled to a free school meal. While the percentage of pupils who have a statement of special educational need is average, the percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is around half the national average. There are lower percentages than normal of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of a Reception class. There is a pre-school on site and pupils have access to an after-school and a holiday club. These provisions are not within the remit of this inspection and their quality is inspected and reported upon separately.

The school has Investors in People Status and has gained awards in recognition of its work as a Healthy School and in promoting pupils' physical development. It also has the Dyslexia Friendly Award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This well led and managed school continues to provide its pupils with a good all round education. Standards are above average and pupils achieve well. The high quality of the care and support provided ensures that pupils' time in school is happy, safe and productive. The mutual respect and very good quality relationships that exist throughout the school play a significant part in ensuring pupils' very positive attitudes and excellent behaviour.

Children make a good start in Reception, developing well in all areas of their learning. After two years of attaining average standards and progressing satisfactorily, this year, pupils in Year 2 are achieving well and their standards are well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils in Key Stage 2 achieve well in English and mathematics and attain above average standards in these subjects by Year 6. However, they do not achieve as well as they could in science where standards by the end of Year 6 are only broadly average. Many older pupils have a rich vocabulary and write well in a variety of styles and for many different purposes.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils are mature and responsible, eager to learn and take pride in their work. They are very effective young citizens and have a clear understanding of how to stay healthy and to keep out of harm's way. They acquire very secure basic skills and, together with their growing understanding of entrepreneurship and finance, they are very well prepared for the future.

Teaching is of good quality and promotes pupils' good achievement. The positive and purposeful way in which lessons proceed reflects the respect between teachers and pupils, the effective way in which staff manage behaviour and the keenness with which pupils approach their work. Key features which ensure the good progress made by pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are the sensitive and well focused support they receive from teaching assistants and the encouragement they have from their classmates. Specialist teaching in physical education, music and in modern foreign languages enhances pupils' achievements in and enjoyment of these areas of the curriculum considerably. Currently, the most able pupils are not always consistently and rigorously challenged throughout lessons. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the new creative curriculum and appreciate the way in which subjects now dovetail. They report, for example, that they now see much better how the skills they learn in literacy and numeracy lessons can be applied in many other subjects. There is considerable curricular enrichment, with after-school clubs, visits and visitors all adding value to pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Parents value highly the outstanding care and support provided for their children. They feel that this is a key strength of the school, especially the encouragement given to pupils who find learning more difficult and to those who join the school other than at the normal time. The school ensures that safeguarding procedures meet requirements and does all it can to minimise risk. Comprehensive systems for tracking pupils' progress enable staff to spot any pupils not doing as well as expected and to intervene and support these pupils appropriately.

The headteacher is well respected by the vast majority of parents and has, with his effective deputy headteacher, promoted good improvements since the school was last inspected. The governing body asks searching questions about the school's performance, while strongly supporting its work. The many close partnerships the school has established particularly enhance pupils' personal and social development, their emerging economic awareness and their enjoyment of learning. Subject leaders, although hard working and enthusiastic, are insufficiently focused

on the impact of what they do on pupils' standards and achievement. Secure financial administration, together with pupils' good academic and personal skills, ensures that the school provides good value for money. Effective provision and the way that this has improved since the previous inspection demonstrate the school's good capacity to improve further.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Children enter Reception with a wide range of skills but overall at levels typically expected for their age. As a result of effective leadership, efficient management and good teaching, children make good progress and enter Year 1 having met or, in many cases, exceeded, the Early Learning Goals. They make the best progress in their speaking and early reading and writing skills and in their personal, social and emotional development. This is because the careful assessments staff carry out when children enter school enable them to focus particularly on these initial relative weaknesses. The concentration on promoting language skills has been particularly beneficial in helping those who speak English as an additional language to achieve well. Parents attest to how happy their children are and how well they progress. Great care is taken to ensure that welfare requirements are met and, as a result, pupils are safe and play and learn happily in the stimulating indoor and outdoor areas. Children become increasingly aware of what constitutes healthy eating and, after some initial difficulties, learn to share and to respect the needs of others. They are increasingly encouraged to take responsibility and to make choices about their activities. This is an aspect of provision which the Early Years Foundation Stage leader acknowledges has been in need of improvement and there is still rather too much emphasis on adult led activities rather than children initiating them themselves. Staff work closely as a team and with parents. The very close links established with the play school, which shares the school site, contribute significantly to how quickly and happily children settle in.

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

- Improve achievement and raise standards in science.
- Ensure that teaching consistently and rigorously challenges the most able pupils.
- Develop the skills and improve the effectiveness of subject leaders, especially in helping them to become more aware of their impact on raising standards and achievement.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement is good and by the end of Year 6 standards are above average overall. In the Year 2 teacher assessments in 2007 and 2008, standards were average overall. In these years, a slightly higher proportion than average reached the expected Level 2, but a lower proportion attained the higher Level 3. Compelling evidence from the latest teacher assessments for the current Year 2 shows that the concerted drive to raise standards in Key Stage 1 is paying off. Current Year 2 pupils' standards in reading, writing and mathematics are well above average. This shows good improvement. Over a three year period, standards in the Year 6 national tests have been above average overall. In the current Year 6, they are well above average in English and mathematics but remain broadly average in science. The school is aware that pupils' skills in practical, investigative science need improving further to raise standards to the same level as those in English and mathematics. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make the same good progress as their peers.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 1

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school, get on with each other very well and have a very strong sense of community. They grow into mature, articulate young people who develop very effective personal skills and a keen sense of responsibility. The sensitive way in which pupils support each other, both in the classroom and the playground contributes very well to the sense of well-being evident throughout the school. This manifests itself in the calmness around the school and in the way in which older pupils support younger ones, for example, as reading partners or as playground buddies. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep safe and report little or no bullying. Through the school council, pupils have a strong voice in school matters, lobbying successfully, for instance, for the school to be more environmentally aware and to create flower beds in the grounds. Pupils feel very well prepared for their next step in education with Year 6 pupils confidently looking forward to moving to secondary school.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teachers throughout the school engender a love of learning in their pupils because they clearly care greatly for them and give them much praise and encouragement. In the best lessons, teaching is pacy, stimulating and challenges pupils of all abilities. Pupils are encouraged to take an active part in learning, to link the work they are doing to the targets set for them and to respond to the guidance provided in teachers' marking. English teaching is particularly strong and not only promotes good achievement and above average standards by the end of Year 6 but also stimulates pupils' love of language. Through very sensitive approaches to poetry, for example, it provides opportunities for pupils to reflect spiritually. In these high quality lessons, the most able pupils thrive. However, consistent and rigorous challenge for these pupils is not evident throughout the whole of lessons, which means that there are periods when they coast. The valuable contribution of teaching assistants is evident in the confidence with which pupils who struggle academically or with their behaviour tackle their work and achieve well.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum meets pupils' needs well. It provides them with effective literacy and numeracy skills and the programme to promote their personal, social, health and citizenship education is very successful. The school has, during this academic year, introduced a more creative curriculum to which pupils have responded enthusiastically, pointing out how much more relevant learning has become as a result. Parents say that their children come home 'buzzing' about what they have been doing in lessons. The school has made a start in auditing its provision for gifted and talented pupils and is putting into place strategies to meet their needs more closely. However, these are not yet consistently met in lessons. There is an enriched curriculum in music, in modern foreign languages and in physical education, facilitated by specialist teaching. Pupils have access to a range of after-school clubs and competitive sport and they enjoy a wide variety of visits and visitors. All of these add considerably to their personal, social, cultural and physical development. The curriculum provided for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities supports their academic and personal development well, enabling them to play a full part in school life. The latter is a telling example of the school's inclusive nature and of leaders' and

managers' successful determination to ensure equality of opportunity for all and to minimise discrimination.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Parents declare themselves to be delighted with the excellent pastoral care and support for their children. There are rigorous systems in place to ensure pupils' safety. Staff know their pupils very well and meet their needs most effectively as a result. Pupils feel able to approach staff with any troubles or concerns and report how helpful teachers' marking and target-setting are in helping them improve their work. The very effective partnerships the school has with external agencies and with other institutions provide excellent support for more vulnerable pupils, for those who join the school at times other than normal, and for transition between year groups, key stages and other schools. The system to ensure excellent behaviour works very well and the school rigorously follows up absenteeism. Despite overall attendance being average, there is a lower proportion than average of unauthorised absence. Nearly all absence is due to illnesses or holidays taken in term-time. The school effectively tracks pupils' progress to ensure that they are meeting their academic targets and progressing as well as expected. Where pupils are identified as in danger of falling behind, appropriate support is introduced and continued until pupils are back on track. For those pupils who find learning a real struggle, the support provided in a one-to-one small group situation proves invaluable in boosting their confidence and in enabling them to make good progress in relation to their starting points.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher, fully supported by all staff, works extremely successfully to promote pupils' outstanding personal development and to ensure their excellent pastoral care and academic guidance. Members of the senior leadership team work closely together to set increasingly high expectations and challenging targets. As a result standards are higher and pupils are making better progress in Key Stage 1 and more pupils in Year 6 are attaining the higher Level 5 in English and mathematics. Senior and middle leaders have been less successful in promoting higher standards in science. The school knows its strengths and relative weaknesses very well. This enables leaders to plan appropriately for improvement. However, subject leaders are insufficiently focused on specific improvements in pupils' standards and achievement. Governors bring a wide range of expertise to inform and support the school's work. The governing body challenges the leadership with rigour and is proactive in initiating and managing change. Governors and senior managers promote community cohesion well. They have ensured a harmonious school ethos and have established links with schools in southern Europe and in North Africa, which make pupils keenly aware of the similarities and differences between their own and others' priorities, attitudes, way of life and traditions.



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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?	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?	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?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
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

<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>	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	3
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

## 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	2
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**

I would like to thank you very much for the extremely warm, friendly and polite welcome you gave to the other inspector and me when we visited your school to see how well you were getting on. You told us on many occasions how happy you were at school and how good you thought it was. I agree that the school gives you a good education. There were some things in particular that I thought were good or even better.

- Your speaking, reading and writing.
- How well the school helps you to grow into sensible, very well behaved, responsible young people.
- The good teaching you receive.
- The good progress you make in speaking other languages, physical education and music. Your singing is lovely!
- How exceptionally well you are cared for and looked after.

Part of my job is to help schools to improve even more. The adults who run the school do a good job, but I have asked them to do three things to help to make the school even better.

- Help you to do as well in science as you do in English and mathematics.
- Make sure that those of you who find learning easy most of the time always have work which makes you think and which challenges you.
- For teachers who are in charge of subjects to be clearer about exactly what you need to do better.

Thank you again for an enjoyable two days.