

Disley Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111015
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	325273
Inspection dates	10–11 June 2009
Reporting inspector	John Coleman HMI

The inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	185
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Alison Farris
Headteacher	Mrs Heather Taylor
Date of previous school inspection	May 2006
School address	Dane Bank Drive Disley Stockport SK12 2BD
Telephone number	01625 383070
Fax number	01663 766434
Email address	head@disley.cheshire.sch.uk

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Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. The inspectors visited 12 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at pupils' workbooks, pupils' performance data collated by the school, the school's monitoring records of teaching and learning, the minutes of governors meetings, reports from the school improvement partner, reports from the headteacher to governors and analysed 76 responses from parental questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- achievement of the highest attaining pupils in science to ascertain if teaching is sufficiently challenging
- the quality of teaching and learning to determine the amount of progress made by pupils and the verification of the accuracy of the school's evaluation
- the rigour of the school's monitoring and evaluation procedures to identify the degree of impact on raising standards and improving pupils' achievement.

Information about the school

Disley Primary School is average in size and is located in a semi-rural area on the edge of the village. The premises are a mixture of old and new with origins going back almost 100 years. There is day-care provision managed by a voluntary committee, and also a before and after-school club run by a private provider. This is inspected separately by Ofsted. There have been substantial changes to the composition of the governing body in the last 12 months, including the appointment of a new chairperson in November 2008. The position of deputy headteacher was filled temporarily by existing staff for the autumn term 2008 pending the substantive appointment of a new deputy headteacher in January 2009. The number of pupils on roll shows a steady decline in the last two years in keeping with demographic trends in the local area. Low numbers of pupils are eligible for free school meals, most are of White British heritage and there are fewer than average with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Inspection judgements

Grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness

3

Capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Disley Primary School enables pupils to make outstanding progress in their personal development and satisfactory progress in their academic studies. The Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. The headteacher and the senior leadership team are extremely successful in creating an inspiring learning environment for pupils to learn. Classrooms and corridors abound with beautiful displays of pupils' work which motivates learning. Relationships between staff and pupils are respectful, caring and considerate. Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning are outstanding as a result of the school's consistently high expectations. The curriculum provides well for pupils by enabling links to be made between subjects, and, consequently, pupils are helped to make sense of their learning. Pupils enjoy the range of trips and visitors to school which enrich the curriculum and bring learning to life, including an opportunity for three residential visits. However, pupils make only satisfactory progress in gaining knowledge, skills and understanding in their academic work. This is because there are significant variations in the quality and consistency of teaching, and in the use of assessment to track pupils' progress. While the quality of teaching is consistently outstanding in the Early Years Foundation Stage and mostly good in Years 1 to 4, it is mainly satisfactory in Years 5 and 6. Schemes of work and plans for the curriculum are fully in place and effective, but the scheme of work for science is weak. Additionally, the teaching of science is a weakness across Years 1 to 6. The highest attaining pupils do not achieve well enough in science.

Recent leadership strategies to improve the quality of teaching are beginning to raise standards and increase the amount of progress which pupils make in their learning. This is the result of the training and development for teachers put in place by the school's leadership. This demonstrates the school's satisfactory capacity to improve. The school's self-evaluation is largely accurate in identifying strengths and weaknesses. Despite this, there is insufficient emphasis given to the raising of standards in school action plans, policies and in the academic expectations for pupils made by teachers in lessons. Partly, this results from a lack of attention paid to what pupils can already do, and too little challenge set for pupils. Teachers in classrooms do not consistently use the good range of assessment data which is held on pupils' prior attainment to target pupils' learning in lessons in a structured and challenging way. Middle leaders with responsibilities for monitoring the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are all relatively new to their roles and as yet are not sufficiently knowledgeable about the standards of pupils' attainment in their subject. Consequently, their ability to inform the senior leadership about the rate of pupils' progress is limited and underdeveloped.

Standards by the end of Key Stage 2 are broadly average as shown by national tests over the last three years. Standards in mathematics are a little higher than those in English, which, in turn, are higher than those in science. Given that most children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge that are typical of those expected of similar age children nationally, pupils' achievement is only satisfactory overall. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, however, make good progress. This is because assessment is used effectively to identify their needs and this generates effective intervention. Very good support is given by the teaching assistants who guide their work. There is strong leadership provided for these pupils by the special educational needs coordinator.

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.

What does the school need to do to improve further

- Raise standards in English and science, especially for the highest attaining pupils in science by:
 - ensuring that pupils' prior attainment as shown in school assessments, is used to fully inform what they should learn next
 - making sure that subject leaders robustly monitor the standards attained by pupils and use this effectively to inform the senior leadership so that incisive strategies can be implemented to increase the progress that pupils make
 - sharpening the emphasis on pupils' standards and progress in plans, policies and classroom practice.
- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching and learning by:
 - reviewing the school's policy for high quality teaching so that raising pupils' standards is given a much higher weight and focus
 - increasing the pace and expectations of teaching
 - providing training for teachers to increase their subject knowledge and confidence for the teaching of science
 - ensuring that leaders at all levels robustly monitor the quality of teaching and use the outcomes to target further improvements.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

In the lessons observed by inspectors, the progress made by pupils varied from outstanding to satisfactory. In the best lessons, pupils show high levels of interest, enjoyment and concentration because the work set is challenging and motivating. For example, in an outstanding lesson in the Reception class, the children were spellbound when a mystery shoe appeared in the shoe cupboard. The children developed their speaking and listening skills as they discussed with partners, who the shoe could belong to and how it might have got into the cupboard. This was then used very effectively as a focus for children to extend their writing skills. In the satisfactory lessons, there is insufficient attention given to what pupils should be

expected to achieve in the time available. The pace of learning in these lessons is too slow and too little is expected of the pupils. In contrast, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because teaching assistants provide effective support and guidance. They know the pupils and their needs well, are knowledgeable about previous learning and help ensure that pupils acquire new skills and knowledge in a step by step way.

Standards in English, mathematics and science as measured by the most recent end of Key Stage 2 tests are broadly average over a three year period. However, in 2007, standards in mathematics were above average and in 2008 in science they were below average. In the pupils' workbooks seen by inspectors, and in the lessons observed, pupils are attaining average standards in English and mathematics and slightly below average standards in science. School data showing the progress of pupils during the current academic year demonstrate improving standards, especially for the Year 6 pupils. They are on track to achieve the school's challenging targets set for them.

Other key features of pupil outcomes:

- Pupils feel very safe and say that bullying is rare. If they have any worries or concerns they are confident that they can turn to an adult for help.
- Behaviour is outstanding in lessons and around the school. Pupils are very self-disciplined and display good levels of mature independence.
- Pupils learn to make healthy choices and enjoy taking part in many sporting and physical activities. Participation in the many after-school clubs is high.
- Outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development for pupils is the result of the school's efforts to successfully promote this. Pupils are given lots of opportunities to reflect and think about themselves and others. For example, pupils considered the beauty of the sunrise and how this makes them feel as they listened to 'Morning' by the composer Grieg. They have a very strong sense of fair play, right and wrong, and do much work about caring and being respectful. Pupils learn to value diversity and treat others equally. They enjoy taking responsibilities such as representing their class on the school council or being a member of the playground squad.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	2
How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning?	3
To what extent do pupils feel safe?	1
How well do pupils behave?	1
To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles?	1
To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community?	2
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3

¹The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

What is the extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	1
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How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to outstanding. Teaching is characterised by excellent relationships between pupils and with staff. In the best lessons, teaching challenges pupils with effective questioning, provides exciting practical tasks and the pace of learning is rapid and demands that pupils understand and consolidate knowledge before moving on to something new. In the weaker lessons, the pace of learning is too slow, expectations of what pupils can learn are too little and pupils' progress suffers as a result. Planning is in place to guide teaching, but the objectives for pupils' learning are often too broad. In the weaker lessons, this leads to the underdevelopment of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills and a lack of enjoyment. In turn, this is because insufficient use is made of what teachers know about the prior attainment of pupils, resulting from previous assessments. The marking of pupils' work varies; at best it provides useful feedback matched against the intended learning, and guides pupils towards what they need to do to improve. A small amount of pupils' work is not marked. In the outstanding lessons in the Early Years Foundation Stage, ongoing assessment of pupils' progress is used very effectively to inform what children learn next. Excellent records are kept of children's work; this is annotated and cross referenced to the curriculum objectives in each of the areas of learning.

The curriculum was extensively reviewed in 2007, and the outcome of this is a creative, relevant and interesting range of topics and themes which make good links between subjects. Some subjects are still taught discretely, and some are delivered by specialist teachers, as in French. The schemes of work for the curriculum are largely good, but the scheme for science lacks enough detail and guidance to ensure that teachers deliver learning which is pitched at the right level of challenge, and with the right knowledge and understanding for each year group. Nevertheless, most of the curriculum is stimulating and enjoyable for pupils. There is a good range of opportunities for pupils to learn a musical instrument, to take part in the school choir and to perform in the public such as the recent visit to the Bridgewater Hall in Manchester. There is a wide range of visits which enrich the experiences for pupils such as to Chester to study the Romans, to Bramall Hall to learn about the Tudors, and a residential visit to Menai. Visitors to school include the local vicar, the police, the nurse and artists; these give pupils first-hand experience and knowledge and help bring learning to life. Education for personal, social and health is very effective. After school, pupils are able to take part in an extensive range of extra-curricular activities including sports clubs, gardening and German.

The school successfully creates a caring family ethos underpinned by the strong consistency with which staff treat everyone equally and with respect. Pupils say they feel safe and they develop very good self-confidence and self-esteem. This is due to the supportive way in which all staff deal with their day-to-day needs and solve any problems quickly and considerately. There are good systems to risk assess both the premises and any activities which pupils get involved in. Clear policies are in place for child protection and first aid, and staff have appropriate up-to-date training. There is

a very effective system for promoting and rewarding good behaviour. Parents' returns in questionnaires value this area of the school's work highly.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, leadership team and governors have very high expectations of pupils' personal development. They have successfully ensured that there is strong consistency in the implementation of school policies and procedures and this creates a motivating school in which the environment is appropriate for learning and enjoying. However, there is insufficient emphasis on the need to increase the rate of pupils' academic progress and so raise the standards they attain. Although standards are beginning to rise in some areas, this is recent and variable. Target-setting at a whole-school level is suitably challenging and is monitored well by the headteacher. However, targets for individual pupils, and classes and groups of pupils, are underdeveloped and the impact on standards is at an early stage. Parents' questionnaires contain some concerns about progress for the most able pupils. In science, inspectors agree that the standards reached by the group of highest attaining pupils are too low. The school improvement plan correctly identifies standards as a priority but lacks the rigour of outlining interim targets, milestones and clear lines of accountability.

The school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination well. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, make good progress because of effective monitoring and intervention strategies put in place by the school leadership. A parent questionnaire typically praising the schools' provision, commented on the good support and guidance and excellent responsiveness of the school. The school makes good use of external agencies to support pupils, including those from the local authority such as hearing specialists and child psychologists. Safeguarding procedures are effective. Staff are suitably checked at the point of appointment through the criminal records bureau and records are kept appropriately of all risk assessments. Child protection procedures and training are up to date and robust.

The leadership has in place a broad strategy for promoting community cohesion. This is firmly based on faith, ethnicity and culture and suitably includes socio-economic factors. The action plans are developing the strength of this provision which the school rightly judges as satisfactory.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in communicating ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2

The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage is a vibrant and exciting place for children to learn. This is because the staff pay so much attention to creating an invigorating classroom and outdoor area. It is outstandingly led and managed so that children feel safe, secure and happy. The children enjoy coming to school. Rigorous assessment and recording systems ensure that each child's progress is carefully monitored and the results of this are used very well to plan for what the children learn next. The progress made by children is outstanding in both their personal and academic development. There is a good balance between teacher-directed and child-initiated activities. Children are praised and encouraged to become increasingly independent. This they achieve as they quickly learn the daily routines and show confidence to explore and extend their learning. The principal reason for children's successful development is the outstanding teaching which they consistently receive.

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Disley Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. If a parent has more than one child at the school, we ask them to record an answer against all the questions, for each of their children.

The inspection team received 76 completed questionnaires. In total, there are 184 parents and carers registered at the school.

There is unanimous support from parental questionnaires for the school. Some issues were raised with regard to a lack of challenge for the most able pupils, and inspectors agree that in science this group should make more progress. Some parents also raised issues about the school premises which were brought to the attention of the school. A small number of parents expressed concerns about the variability in the quality of teaching and this has been referred to throughout the report.

	Always	Most of the time	Occasionally	Never
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Overall I am happy with my child's experience at this school	59	17	0	0
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What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. In 2007-8, 15% of schools were judged to be outstanding.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. In 2007-8, 49% of schools were judged good.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. In 2007-8, 32% of schools were judged satisfactory.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. In 2007-8, 5% of schools were judged inadequate.

Common terminology used by inspectors

- Attainment:** the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
- Progress:** the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
- Achievement:** the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, training or development. This may refer to the acquisition of skills, knowledge, understanding or desired attributes. Attributes include qualities or personal competencies which are important to the development of the pupil; for example personal, social, cultural, emotional or health.
- Capacity to improve:** the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
- Leadership and management:** the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.

12 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Disley Primary School, Stockport, SK12 2BD

Thank you for welcoming the inspectors and me when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting you and seeing all the activities you take part in. These are the main things we liked about your school.

- Your behaviour in lessons and around the school is outstanding. You have lovely manners and are considerate to each other.
- In your lessons you make satisfactory progress and you reach average standards in English, mathematics and science. Your progress is improving.
- The teachers help you to make healthy choices, stay safe and to appreciate other's needs. You do these things outstandingly well.
- You have excellent classrooms which are bright and where there are good displays of your work.
- You told us that you enjoy school and appreciate the after-school clubs and the ways in which you can take on extra responsibilities like being a member of the school council. We agree and have noted how good your attendance is too.

Your headteacher and the staff know what needs to be done to make your school even better and are already starting to improve many things. We have said that the school needs to:

- raise the standards that you reach in English and science, especially for those of you who are capable of the highest test grades
- make sure that your lessons are good or outstanding more of the time.

Best wishes and good luck in the future.

John Coleman
HMI

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