

Mickle Trafford Village School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111082
Local Authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	325291
Inspection date	8 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Kevin Johnson

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	178
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 P Turton
Headteacher	Mrs Julia Griffiths
Date of previous school inspection	1 February 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	School Lane Mickle Trafford Chester Cheshire CH2 4EF
Telephone number	01244 300348
Fax number	01244 300383

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	8 June 2009
Inspection number	325291

© Crown copyright 2009

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 two additional inspectors.

The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the standards attained and progress made by pupils; the quality of teaching; the effectiveness of leadership and management; and provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Evidence was collected from the school's self-evaluation, national published assessment data and the school's own assessments, policies and minutes, observation of the school at work, discussions with senior members of staff and with pupils and from parents' questionnaires. Other aspects of the school were not investigated in detail but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in the self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average sized school. Almost all pupils are White British. Very few pupils are eligible for free school meals. A very small minority of pupils has learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage begins in the Reception class. Before- and after-school care on site is inspected and reported separately, as it is run by a private provider. The school has achieved a number of awards in recognition of developments in the curriculum and its promotion of equality of opportunity.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school.

Pupils describe Mickle Trafford as, 'A small school with a big heart.' The overwhelming majority of parents fully support that view. They particularly endorse the outstanding quality of care and guidance provided and they are very appreciative of the additional support given to the most vulnerable pupils. All safeguarding measures are in place and all staff members ensure that pupils' varying needs are met. Pupils are tremendously proud of their school. They make the most of the exciting opportunities they have to foster their skills and talents both in and outside of school time. They enjoy many enriching moments such as when gathering as a whole school to watch the Reception class release the butterflies they had observed develop from caterpillars. They equally enjoy the extensive range of visits and activities after school.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They are polite and well mannered. Their attendance is well above average and behaviour is never less than exemplary. Pupils feel very safe because relationships are excellent. They are mindful of others and state firmly that there are no incidents of bullying or racism. A well established vegetable garden and pupils' enthusiasm for games and sports justify their achievement of Healthy School and Activemark awards. Pupils are very keen to contribute to school life and apply willingly for positions of responsibility such as recycling or road safety representatives, lunchtime duties and school council members. Pupils have a strong voice within the community through their involvement in local issues. Currently, they apply their science, literacy and citizenship skills by contributing to the Village Design Statement project. By the time they leave the school pupils are self-assured, mature young people who are exceptionally well prepared to face the challenges of the next stage of their education.

From entering Reception with abilities that are broadly typical for their age, pupils make excellent progress and attain consistently high standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of year 6. In the 2008 national tests, overall standards were exceptionally high. School assessments show that those standards have been maintained in the current year. Virtually all pupils are set to reach at least the level expected for their age and very high proportions to exceed that level, representing their outstanding achievement. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very well supported. Their progress is continually checked to make sure their targets remain challenging and that they achieve alongside others. The outstanding quality of teaching, which is consistent throughout the school, accounts for excellent standards and achievement. A major feature is the way teachers use assessments to plan pupils' work, resulting in excellent pace and challenge for all abilities. Targets feature strongly in all lessons and pupils design their own ways to make them memorable and user friendly such as making them into bookmarks, which are transferred from page to page. Teachers' marking is highly effective in helping pupils to measure their own progress and see what they need to do to improve. This ensures that pupils are confident and enthusiastic about what they do. Very positive relationships mean that pupils respond extremely well to teachers' high expectations. They relish new challenges and are keen to work. The experienced team of teaching assistants provides valuable support throughout the school. They contribute significantly to pupils' outstanding progress.

The headteacher provides excellent leadership. Curriculum planning and its quality have improved. As a result the excellent curriculum inspires pupils to learn and underpins their very

rapid rates of progress. There are more rigorous systems for checking pupils' academic progress and use of assessment information. These, in turn, have helped to improve the overall quality of teaching and learning and drive up standards further. Very effective monitoring and evaluation of the school's work, involving all leaders and staff, provides a fully accurate view of its overall effectiveness. Challenging targets, based upon teachers' detailed knowledge of pupils' abilities, are consistently set and achieved. Equality of opportunity is central to the school's ethos. Leaders promote community cohesion well. The school plays an important part in village life. The current year, being the one hundredth anniversary of the school, has been a particularly exciting time for pupils to explore community links and build on existing relationships. Along with other local schools, pupils have embarked on a project which develops mutual knowledge and understanding with schools in India. The school acknowledges however, that there is still work to be done in taking links with contrasting schools in the United Kingdom beyond the planning stage. Governors provide excellent support and challenge for the school. Through the school's development plan they rigorously measure progress in terms of quality of provision and impact on learning. They share a wide range of valuable expertise and provide outstanding value for money. Given the schools past record of improvement and the strengths of leadership and management there is excellent capacity to maintain current standards and quality of education.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to an excellent start because highly effective leadership and management ensure outstanding provision. Children's skills and understanding match expectations for their age when they enter Reception. When they transfer to Year 1 almost all have achieved their early learning goals and a significant number are more advanced. There is an extremely well planned range of challenging activities, based on very careful assessments. Those led by adults, such as group lessons to learn letters and sounds, are sharply focused and brisk enough to move new learning on at a pace. These lessons give children great confidence when tackling early reading and writing independently. Activities children choose for themselves, including those in the outdoor area, provide excellent opportunities for children to develop physical skills alongside those in other areas of learning. Adults are very good at engaging with children in role-play, for example, to stimulate imaginations and encourage language development. Children behave very well because it is expected of them. They form good friendships and become active and independent learners. Provision for children's welfare is outstanding. Excellent relationships with the local pre-school staff mean that children are very well prepared and confident about starting their Reception Year. Parents are welcomed to share information about their children, observe the class in action and discuss ways of contributing to their children's development.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to learn about the different cultures and lifestyles of communities within the United Kingdom.

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?	1
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	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
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?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

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

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	1
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?	1
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?	1
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	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
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	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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**

What a delight it was for us to spend the day inspecting your school recently. You made us feel very welcome and we were highly impressed by your politeness, good manners and excellent behaviour. We also noticed how very good you are at attending school. Well done! All of those things are very important, so do keep them up.

Mickle Trafford is an outstanding school. You make excellent progress and reach very high standards in your work. Your teachers, and headteacher also, are outstanding in the way they help you to achieve those standards and plan all of the exciting ways for you to learn. The grown-ups in school take excellent care of you, just as you take such good care of each other.

Your parents, teachers and school governors love your school every bit as much as you do and are keen to make it even better. To help that to happen, I have asked them to plan more ways for you to find out about and understand the different ways of life that people have in different parts of the United Kingdom.

Congratulations on being part of your schools 100th birthday celebrations. I wonder what your school will look like after another hundred years?