

Malpas Alport Endowed Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111282
Local Authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	325335
Inspection dates	24–25 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Philip Martin

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	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	171
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 Ray Williamson
Headteacher	Mrs Sarah Worthington
Date of previous school inspection	24 January 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Chester Road Malpas Cheshire SY14 8PY

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	24–25 June 2009
Inspection number	325335

Telephone number
Fax number

01244 981160
01948 860803

Age group	4-11
Inspection dates	24-25 June 2009
Inspection number	325335

© 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.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average primary school serving the village and local community. Numbers at the school have been falling since the previous inspection. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is lower than average. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. Very few pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is lower than average. A larger proportion of pupils than average have statements of special educational need. The number of pupils arriving or leaving the school at times other than the start or end of the year is higher than usually found. A Reception class provides for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Since the previous inspection a new headteacher and deputy headteacher have been appointed. The new headteacher took up post in September 2008. The school holds the Activemark and Bronze Eco-school status. It also has Heart Start and Basic Skills accreditation.

There is privately managed before- and after-school provision on the school site. This was inspected separately and receives a separate written report.

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 which has improved well since the previous inspection. School leaders have very effectively identified the school's strengths and weaknesses and developed comprehensive strategies to ensure continued improvement. These have been focused on ensuring that teachers have an in-depth knowledge of how well pupils are achieving and in implementing strategies to improve on this. The headteacher has provided good guidance for teachers, subject leaders and governors to help them to fulfil their roles effectively.

Children have a very good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make good progress from starting points which are broadly as expected for four-year-olds. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average in English and mathematics due to good teaching, a curriculum that meets pupils' needs well and strong academic guidance. This has led to good achievement for all pupils. However, standards in science are in line with national averages. Rates of progress are slower in science, because opportunities for pupils to research and investigate science problems to further extend their scientific language and skills are not always fully used.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Parents agree that their children enjoy school, a typical comment being, 'My children are happy and confident'. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and they have positive attitudes to each other and to school. They develop very good social and cooperative skills. This, along with good literacy and numeracy skills, helps to prepare them very well for the next stages of their education and future life. They understand well how to lead healthy lifestyles and to avoid unnecessary risks.

The rigorous approach of the headteacher has led to improved monitoring and evaluation of the school's work. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning, the curriculum, and care, guidance and support have improved since the last inspection and this shows the school's good capacity to improve. The highly effective systems for judging progress help to ensure that the needs of all pupils are well considered. This emphasises the school's successful commitment to raising standards for all groups of pupils, ensuring equal opportunities and success for all.

Links with other bodies, such as local schools, the local authority and parents, are good and have made a positive contribution to pupils' achievement and well-being. The school develops strong links with the local community and successfully fosters respect for others. However, the school recognises the need to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding of the diversity of society and culture in the wider region, nationally and internationally.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are similar to those expected for their age. They achieve well because they receive effective teaching and good quality learning activities. As a result, children's attainment is above the expected levels when they join Year 1. The classroom and the well-resourced outdoor area are attractively set out in a way that supports independent learning as well as adult-led activities. This effectively builds on and extends children's outstanding personal development. As a result, children are keen to take part and express their ideas. They know routines very well, are sociable and aware of the needs of others as well as their own. Children are enthusiastic learners who thoroughly enjoy their time in school. Parents recognise this and typically comment that, 'my child has been extremely happy', and note their delight in their children's progress. Children have a say in

deciding the themes for their activities, for example, they had chosen 'Pants' as a stimulus for this term's work. Welfare requirements are fully in place, and parents are very well informed about their children's progress. Parents also share useful relevant information with staff. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader, new to the post this year, has refined the assessment systems so that the school has an accurate picture of how well children are learning. Staff use the assessment information very well to plan the next steps in learning. The information has also been usefully collated into informative folders detailing each child's achievements. These are greatly appreciated by the children and promote their self-esteem. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader has made many improvements which have resulted in the good levels of achievement and outstanding levels of personal development. The constant process of self-evaluation continues to feed into a valuable action plan to maintain and further improve standards and provision.

What the school should do to improve further

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to research and investigate science problems, to raise standards and improve achievement in science at Key Stage 2.
- Deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding of the diversity of cultures nationally and the wider world.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils start Year 1 with standards above those expected at that age. By the end of Year 2, pupils reach above average standards in reading and mathematics but not in writing where standards are broadly average. Pupils make good progress in Years 3 to 6 and reach above average standards in writing as well as English and mathematics. Standards in science are average, because pupils do not always have enough opportunities to extend their learning through problem solving and investigations. The needs of individual pupils are carefully analysed and effective support programmes are put in place to support them where needed. Consequently, pupils with learning difficulties/and or disabilities achieve well. The very few pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who are at an early stage of learning English make good progress because their needs are identified and effective support put in place.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Their moral and social development is outstanding. They have a strong sense of right and wrong and fair play. They are prepared to stand up to perceived injustices in a polite and constructive way. Pupils welcome the fact that teachers listen to their views. They enjoy school and attendance is good. Although pupils learn about other religions and beliefs, they have little direct experience of meeting and working alongside people from other cultures. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They have a good understanding of how to lead healthy lifestyles and how to keep safe. They say that it is more important to encourage healthy eating than to make a profit in the pupil-run tuck shop. All this, together with good levels of achievement and positive attitudes, mean that pupils are very well prepared for the future. This is further demonstrated by their active participation in the school and eco-councils and other responsibilities, and the good contribution that all make to the purposeful atmosphere in the school and to the local community.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The good quality of teaching is a key factor in pupils' good achievement and standards. In a typical lesson, pupils learn well because teachers use the detailed information they have about pupils to plan work that broadly matches their abilities. Teachers build well on pupils' positive attitudes. They use effective, unobtrusive methods to ensure that pupils stay on track. When younger pupils became over-enthusiastic in an English lesson about the Rainbow Fish, this keenness was quickly channelled in a useful direction. Lessons are challenging and relevant so pupils are engaged and interested. Older pupils thoughtfully analysed the features of a text putting forward an argument for the use of mobile phones. Teachers' marking frequently offers appropriate praise and points for improvement, although this good practice is not consistent throughout the school. Pupils respond well to advice and are increasingly developing useful skills in checking their own and their partners' work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum meets pupils' needs well in English and mathematics and helps to ensure that they make good progress. The curriculum for science is not as effective, because pupils have fewer opportunities to use and apply their skills in a wide variety of situations. Pupils use their literacy and numeracy skills well in other subjects, and this supports their good achievement. A large number of pupils learn to play a musical instrument. The school is enriched by displays of colourful, interesting and creative examples of pupils' art. There is a wide range of well-supported extra-curricular activities, including sport. The wide range of visits and visitors also enhances pupils' enjoyment and achievement. The school's on-line learning platform is about to be launched and pupils in the class involved in its preparation have produced a good range of interesting and creative work across the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The good relationships between staff and pupils are typical of the high quality of care, guidance and support. Recently introduced systems for measuring and recording progress in English and mathematics are thorough and rigorous. They are used very well in establishing learning targets and tracking pupils' progress towards them. Staff use the information effectively to identify individuals and groups of pupils who may need some extra help. The information is also used well to ensure that work in lessons and small groups matches pupils' abilities. Consequently, all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, achieve well overall. The school has a high level of commitment to pupils' personal well-being. This is developed through its work in helping them to know how to be physically and emotionally safe and healthy, and to develop very good personal and social skills. Older pupils enjoyed role-playing when learning how to respond to medical emergencies. They understand how to avoid unnecessary hazards when using the internet. Safeguarding procedures are in place and meet current government requirements.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Since taking up her post the headteacher has very successfully set to work on a relevant and manageable number of initiatives resulting in a good level of improvement since the previous inspection. The quality of her leadership is excellent. She is determined to ensure that improvements are secure and sustainable. School improvement initiatives stem from a rigorous evaluation of the school's main strengths and weaknesses conducted with the help of the local authority. Subject leaders are keen to refine their skills and are increasingly involved in monitoring and evaluating their subjects. Most do this well, for example, looking at the work that pupils do and sharing planning and lesson observations with a colleague. This has helped to improve provision. Effective systems are in place to ensure that equal opportunities are effectively promoted and discrimination is eliminated. Governors offer a good level of support and challenge. A recent restructuring of the way the governors work ensures that statutory requirements are now met. Governors are making useful links with subject leaders to help them to keep abreast of what is happening in school. Resources are managed well for the benefit of all pupils. Extensive building renovations, which started some time ago, have been completed and the school is an attractive place in which to learn and work. In view of the good achievement and personal development, the school provides good value for money.

The school's promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory. Positive links are established with the local community. However, the school has not yet implemented a clear set of actions designed to deepen pupils understanding of other faiths and cultures, both within a national context and the wider world.

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?	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?	1
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?	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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

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?	2
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	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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	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?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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**

Inspection of Malpas Alport Endowed Primary School, Malpas, SY14 8PY

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we inspected your school recently. I would particularly like to thank those of you who talked to the inspectors about those things you like about school and your learning, as well as where you think there could be improvements.

Your school provides you with a good education. Your new headteacher has made many improvements to the school.

Children in the Reception class get off to a really good start. Those of you in the infant and junior classes learn well because the teaching is good and your subjects are usually interesting. By the end of Year 6 most of you have reached above average standards in English and mathematics. The standards that you reach in science are not as high as that and they should be better. This is because science lessons are not always as interesting as they could be and you do not learn quite as well as you do in English and mathematics. Staff look after you well and you have lots of interesting things to do after school.

You are also very pleasant and polite and your behaviour is excellent. You are keen to widen your experiences and meet people from different backgrounds, cultures and beliefs, but you don't have enough regular opportunities in school to do this yet.

I have asked the school to do a couple of things to make it even better. The first of these is to make sure that teachers help you to reach higher standards in science. The second is to introduce ways to help you to understand and appreciate the range of customs, beliefs and traditions in this and other countries. You can help by continuing to do your best, getting along with each other and sharing your ideas.