



Yew Tree Community Primary School, Acorn Nursery and MLD Resource Base Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 106223
LEA Tameside
Inspection number 277513
Inspection dates 6 March 2006 to 7 March 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs Jane Hughes CfBT Lead Inspector

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary	School address	Yew Tree Lane
School category	Community		Dukinfield
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Cheshire SK16 5BJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0161 338 3452
Number on roll	439	Fax number	0161 338 8743
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr J Higgins
Date of previous inspection	20 September 1999	Headteacher	Mrs Anne Short

Age group 3 to 11	Inspection dates 6 March 2006 - 7 March 2006	Inspection number 277513
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is twice the size of the average primary school and includes a nursery which caters for 94 children who attend either a morning or afternoon session. It shares a site, and jointly manages, an inclusive mainstream/special educational needs nursery with the neighbouring Oakdale special school. The Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD) Resource Base is to close in July 2006. There are fewer than average pupils of minority ethnic heritage and few pupils who speak a language other than English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is lower than average. A Children's Centre is due to open on the site in June 2006. The new headteacher took up her post in January 2006. The school has twice achieved both a Basic Skills Quality Mark and Investors in People status.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This good and improving school provides good value for money. A good school when last inspected, it has successfully tackled the improvement issues raised. Provision for music is much better and the Foundation Stage is now very effective. The school is well led and managed and inspectors agree with the school's own view of its performance. Pupils achieve well. They arrive with below average skills, some significantly so. By Year 6, standards are average. In 2005, Key Stage 2 national test results improved significantly following a two year decline. Stimulating teaching, particularly in the Foundation Stage, coupled with a rich curriculum, captures pupils' imaginations. Even so, elements of the more satisfactory teaching need to mirror the qualities of the best. More consistent marking of pupils' work, particularly in Key Stage 2, and better understanding by pupils of how to improve their work, would enable more to attain higher levels in their work. Outstanding links with local partners encourage pupils to pursue increasingly active lifestyles and to raise their awareness of the needs of more vulnerable pupils. Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour are good. Pupils delight in school. They blossom in their personal and social development, flourishing under the nurturing care, guidance and support of staff and outside agencies. The school's rigorous evaluation of its work supports a clear desire to raise standards that led to much improved performance in 2005. The school benefits from the local authority's 'intensive support programme'. Governors and staff strive indefatigably to improve the school's performance. The school is well placed for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

Continue to raise standards and accelerate pupils' progress by:

- increasing the percentage of pupils who attain higher levels in their work
- planning for greater challenge and interest in lessons in order to increase the already high proportion of good and better teaching
- achieving greater consistency in the quality of teachers' marking, especially for older pupils, so they know exactly what they need to do next to improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well. They start school with skills below those expected for their age; their communication, language and literacy skills are particularly weak. In 2005, children's attainment by the end of Year 6 was broadly average, representing good progress overall. Children get off to a flying start in the Foundation Stage. Most attain the level of skills expected for their age as they begin Year 1. Skills in writing and linking sounds and letters remain below expected levels. In 2005, Key Stage 1 test results were just above the national average, although standards in reading, writing and mathematics declined from 2004. This was because there were more pupils with

learning difficulties and/or disabilities and behavioural difficulties. Another issue was the level of staff turbulence. In 2005, standards for pupils aged 11 were broadly in line with the national average. This represents a significant improvement. The school met most of its targets in 2005 but data show that pupils did not make enough progress in mathematics and science. Challenging targets are helping pupils currently in Year 6 to do better. Intensive support and precise tracking of pupils' attainment are effective. Skilful classroom assistants help pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to make equally good progress. Pupils from different minority ethnic groups and the MLD Resource Base pupils also make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development is good and makes a significant contribution to the progress pupils make. Pupils develop into mature young people by the time they leave. The school forum and eco-committee provide many chances to raise self-confidence and develop a good understanding of sensitive citizenship. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Outstanding links with Acorn Nursery and Oakdale special school enable pupils to mix with children with a wide range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities and this makes an excellent contribution to their social development. Good personal and social education helps pupils to reflect on important matters and develop values such as care, co-operation, honesty and respect for people different from themselves. Nevertheless, pupils still lack a more independent awareness of how they can improve their work. Regular attendance reflects pupils' enthusiasm and enjoyment of school life, although this could improve still further. The school is an orderly community and pupils behave well. Bullying is rare but, when it occurs, staff resolve it effectively. The school involves pupils in many worthwhile local activities. Through these, they are able to make a good contribution to the community, for instance, by giving performances for the elderly. Pupils have good attitudes towards healthy living and are well aware of dangers to health caused by smoking or drug abuse. Pupils are adequately prepared for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good and parents say their children enjoy lessons. Thorough planning is a strong feature of lessons that are well matched to pupils' needs, particularly in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities learn well because of good support and early identification of their needs. Relationships are good and pupils' self-esteem is carefully nurtured. Learning is particularly effective when lessons are well resourced, for example, when the new interactive whiteboards are used to excite pupils' interest and involvement. Some teaching is outstanding. Challenging lessons bring out the best in pupils. For example, a nursery class made first rate progress in developing their physical

and linguistic skills because of the excellent presentation by the teacher and her high expectations of work and attitudes. Year 5 pupils made brisk progress in using a formula to calculate the area of a rectangle because they were involved, enthusiastic and required to think for themselves. A small amount of satisfactory teaching exists. This lacks challenge, especially for the more able pupils, and allows pupils to be passive learners. Although assessment is improving, especially for younger pupils, it is inconsistent. Some pupils are not clear about exactly what they need to do in order to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum meets statutory requirements. It promotes pupils' health and safety and is generally well matched to pupils' needs, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Even so, teachers do not always offer suitably challenging activities, particularly for higher attainers. First class links with the local sports college provide a rich mix of extra-curricular sporting activities including the 'soccer excellence school'. Dance, music, drama and other clubs add to children's enjoyment and extend their social and collaborative experiences. Modern foreign languages are taught from Year 1 and pupils are rightly proud of their language skills. Good provision for literacy and numeracy enables pupils to make good progress. They become confident in the basic skills that they apply well in other subjects. This helps to secure their future economic well-being. Resources for information and communication technology have improved and interactive whiteboards enliven teaching. The Foundation Stage curriculum is well planned to provide a wide range of enticing activities in all areas of learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils are highly valued and cared for, and support and guidance are good. Typical comments from school forum members include 'staff always help you with your work and comfort you when you feel down'. Health and safety procedures are good and child protection procedures are thorough. Procedures to support looked after children are good. Outside agencies work very effectively with these pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well in lessons because of the good adult support they receive. Staff are skilled in taking opportunities in lessons to provide guidance on personal matters, including how an individual's behaviour affects others. Academic progress is positively supported through regular tracking of pupils' learning. However, although pupils know their areas for improvement generally, through 'must, should, could' targets, they are uncertain of exactly what they need to do to reach higher standards in their work. There are secure programmes to support children when they join or leave the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good and a highly committed governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities well. The very recent change of headteacher has been achieved with the minimum of disruption. This is due, in part, to the good systems and wealth of data established by the previous leadership. The new headteacher and the deputy headteacher have forged an effective and supportive partnership. The school has correctly identified key priorities to build upon the significant improvements already achieved. They also recognise there is more to be done in terms of improving some elements of teaching, and improving the challenge offered to higher attaining pupils. Senior leaders, governors and staff show strong commitment to improving outcomes for all learners, particularly higher attainers. This is evident in the way all adults work to ensure that the local authority's 'Intensifying Support Programme' continues to be successful. The school acknowledges that pupils' achievement still needs to accelerate. Subject co-ordinators are highly motivated and effectively promote improvement in their subjects. Conscientious administrators, kitchen, lunchtime and caretaking personnel all add to the strong school ethos. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and priorities. They offer consistent challenge to ensure money is spent wisely. The school demonstrates a clear capacity to improve. Parents say their opinions are valued. One commented 'the school provides a stable and caring environment with a dedicated and constantly enthusiastic staff' - a fair summary of prevailing parental opinion. Outstanding links with learning partners such as the other schools on the 'campus' and the local sports college help the school to deliver regular, exciting learning experiences for pupils. There is a strong commitment to providing a valuable community resource to meet the needs of all learners.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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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	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

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

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for making us so welcome in your school during our recent visit and for telling us about all the interesting things you do.

There are many good things to be proud of in your school. Here are some we liked the most:

- you behave well and work hard which helps you make good progress in your work
- you listen carefully when your teachers are explaining things in lessons
- we agree with you and your parents that your headteacher and all the staff take good care of you
- each day in nursery and Reception is an exciting adventure for the younger ones
- there are many sports opportunities because your school has excellent links with the specialist sports college nearby
- you all mix together happily and help each other with problems.

This is what we have asked your school to do now so it will be even better:

- continue with the work to raise the standards you achieve
- help more of you to reach higher levels in your work
- make sure all lessons offer you challenge and interest
- make sure that teachers' marking in your books shows you how to make your work even better.

We are sure that you and your teachers can do these things. Keep on working hard and making the most of every moment at school!