



Leigh Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 106225
Local Authority Tameside
Inspection number 287447
Inspection dates 28 February –1 March 2007
Reporting inspector Roger Gill

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Walker Lane
School category	Community		Hyde
Age range of pupils	3–11		Cheshire SK14 5PL
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0161 3683366
Number on roll (school)	302	Fax number	0161 3682176
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Rev Philip Bennison
		Headteacher	Mrs Sue Mott
Date of previous school inspection	19 March 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This large school is situated in an area of economic disadvantage. The majority of children are from White British backgrounds. Over a third of the school population is from an Asian British background, for the most part Bangladeshi. Many are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. The school moved into newly built premises in 2001. There has been a high turnover of staff and several long-term absences recently amounting to nearly half of the teaching establishment. The school received an ActiveMark and an award for Innovative Use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in 2004.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school that provides sound value for money. It has just recovered from a prolonged period of low achievement. Leadership and management, which are satisfactory, have often been deflected from the task of advancing pupils' progress, by coping with staffing difficulties. Nevertheless, since September 2006, the school is in better shape. It has improved since the last inspection, despite the major complications caused by staff changes and absence.

The dynamism of new staff, the good quality of teaching in Year 6 and the better facilities provided, for example, the well-equipped computer room have all aided the upturn. Some initiatives, such as the adventurous methods to enhance pupils' writing, are having an immediate effect. These are not yet matched by similar rapid advances in reading, mathematics and science, particularly for higher attaining pupils.

Achievement is judged, by the school, to be inadequate. This is incorrect. The school's view has not been revised quickly enough in the light of progress made since September. The school possesses a great deal of information about pupils' learning and achievement, but it is not probed in sufficient depth or used well enough. This means there is not an entirely accurate assessment of pupils' academic achievement, personal development, the provision in the Foundation Stage, or the influence and capacity of leadership and management. The quality of teaching is monitored regularly and teachers receive helpful advice, but not enough emphasis is placed on the rate of pupils' progress. The inadequate aspects, relating to self-evaluation, represent nothing that the school's satisfactory capacity to improve cannot tackle.

Achievement is satisfactory and standards average. This is due to the strong work ethic in lessons and the clear sightedness of teaching, particularly in Year 6, about what improvements need to be made. Progress in other parts of the school is satisfactory. It is not as good as the school asserts in the Foundation Stage. Children lack regular opportunities for outdoor learning and the Nursery and Reception classes are too far apart to facilitate good collaboration and a consistency in provision. Moreover, assessment and links with Year 1 are not strong enough to assure an entirely smooth transfer at the end of Reception.

Pupils' personal development and well-being is satisfactory, but according to some parents, pupils' behaviour and enthusiasm for school have slipped. Inspection findings show that these aspects have been stabilised by persistent care and support, including the establishment of a breakfast club and walking bus. Pupils also appreciate the emphasis on healthy living, helping out and joining in with community ventures. They are justified to claim that minor behavioural difficulties remain, but are pleased that things are a lot better this year.

Teaching has improved to a satisfactory level, partly because the sound curriculum contains a wide-range of activities designed to enhance pupils' learning. Inconsistencies in teaching persist. Lessons that inspire speedy learning through enjoyable and absorbing activities are balanced by those that contain more pedestrian work. Very occasionally, pupils behave badly because teaching fails to interest them at all. Pupils

who are learning English as an additional language and those who have a learning difficulty and/or disability succeed as well as others, owing to the helpful support that they receive.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in reading, mathematics and science to match the advances made in writing.
- Strengthen provision in the Foundation Stage and links with Year 1.
- Monitor teaching and its effect on children's progress, particularly higher attainers, more accurately.
- Use all information gathered to form an up-to-date view of the school's effectiveness so that plans for development have a more immediate effect on standards and achievement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The school's records and pupils' work show that current standards and achievement in Year 6 are satisfactory and represent a change for the better. Progress elsewhere in the school is also beginning to speed up. In Year 3, progress in writing is shooting ahead by nearly double the nationally expected rate. Children develop soundly in the Foundation Stage from a well below average level on entry to Nursery. Steps forward are no quicker because factors such as underdeveloped outdoor play hold them back in their learning. Elsewhere in the school, progress is uneven between classes because the information about pupils' achievements is not used well enough to ensure they progress at a consistently good enough pace.

Pupils in Year 6 have, in the past, not reached their challenging targets. Goals in writing are attainable this year. However, pupils, typically those capable of above average attainment, are still some way off the mark in reading, mathematics and science.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep healthy and they contribute well to school life and events in the community. The vast majority of pupils feel safe in school, but a few worry about bullying. However, they know that adults treat this seriously and tackle it when it occurs. Behaviour is satisfactory. It is good in many classes, but a small number of pupils are disruptive, which limits progress on occasions. Most pupils enjoy school and many say that their written work is now a source of pride and satisfaction. Pupils' responses are quite flat in a minority of lessons when teaching lacks sparkle. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Strengths are in the good cultural development owing to the frequent celebration of British and Bangladeshi cultures. Attendance is broadly average. It has improved lately, which proves how successful initiatives like the walking bus and family liaison have been.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Satisfactory teaching contains clearly communicated purposes, which are discussed at the end of lessons to check on pupils' learning. Teaching assistants play their part effectively by supporting children who find learning difficult or who need help with their behaviour. Most teachers have a sound idea of where pupils are up to in their learning, except at the start of Year 1 and in the occasionally inadequate lessons elsewhere. Learning, in some otherwise satisfactory lessons loses impetus, which makes lively boys restless and slows the progress they make. Higher attainers are sometimes held back in their learning because they have to wait too long for more demanding work. In good lessons, such as in Year 6, pupils tackle work with real intent. When given the opportunity, pupils take delight in difficult ideas as happened in Year 4 when higher attainers talked with complete confidence about past historic verbs. Teaching in Reception influences children's learning well, particularly since the two classes work so closely together. This is not true of the Foundation Stage overall because the nursery is a separate entity.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The satisfactory curriculum is responsible for helping teachers to raise levels of achievement. Some good elements stimulate learning well. Engaging methods to develop writing, the teaching of French and the use of ICT to make animated videos, all have a positive effect. As a result of the Active Mark, a host of sporting activities help to keep the pupils fit. They are made aware of big issues such as global warming and a small group thoroughly enjoyed discussing this with the Prime Minister in London. The school has gone some way towards enlivening the basic curriculum. Skills in English and mathematics are augmented by those developed during the annual Health Week and working towards recognition as an Eco-friendly school. Notwithstanding, there is more to do to ensure that provision for reading, mathematics and science reach satisfactory levels throughout the school. Moreover, the lack of a fully developed range of coordinated activities in the Foundation Stage limits the progress of the youngest children.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils are cared for and supported well, but the inconsistent way in which academic guidance is provided makes this aspect satisfactory. The school works effectively to support pupils, particularly those learning English as an additional language or who find work difficult. The many vulnerable pupils, for example, those with emotional difficulties, receive good care. In this and other respects, the Learning Mentor plays a very useful role, for example, in making sure that more pupils come to school and

on time. Moreover, arrangements for health and safety, including child protection, work well. Pupils are beginning to be aware of targets for academic improvement, but not all have a precise knowledge of what they are aiming at. This is because the quality of advice differs between classes, for example, in the way work is marked and the depth in which pupils are informed of their next steps.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors were resolute in the face of extensive disruption. Leadership and management is now having a satisfactory effect, whereas it was somewhat thwarted before. Efforts to improve pupils' progress in Year 6 are paying off. Subject leaders have been trained effectively to help introduce initiatives designed to improve standards. Standards in writing are recuperating, but it is too soon to see the full effect in other aspects of learning. Governance is satisfactory, particularly now that governors have begun to challenge the school to do better rather than just offering good quality support. The school collects a lot of information about the effect of teaching on pupils' progress, but it is not evaluated successfully. Thus, monitoring is not a sharp enough tool for raising standards quickly. Nevertheless, the skills of evaluation are present within school and the impact from recent changes demonstrates a satisfactory capacity to succeed.

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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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

¹ 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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	4
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for your help when we inspected your school. We absolutely enjoyed our visit because everyone was so warm and good-humoured.

You go to a satisfactory school, which has experienced a lot of changes. Pupils that we spoke to told us that things have got better recently. We were very impressed to learn that you are so interested in global issues and that some of you had been to see Tony Blair about them. On a lesser note, we liked the pride shown by pupils on the Golden Table at lunch time and the way in which you spoke about how well your writing is coming along. In lessons, the Year 6 children seem dedicated to doing well in their end-of-key-stage tests and in several other classes, pupils seemed to be really enjoying the work. We were lucky enough to be present during Book Week: it was good to have a chat with Florence Nightingale. Here's hoping that you all enjoyed dressing up as book characters the day after we left.

We know everyone wants to do even better and we have suggested three things that will help. Your headteacher and staff need to help you do better in reading, mathematics and science to match what you have all achieved in writing. Children in Nursery and Reception classes need more opportunities to play outside, in all sorts of ways, and to make a more flying start when they reach Year 1. Your lessons need to be checked to see if you are all getting on fast enough, especially those of you who can tackle more difficult work. Last, you all need to do better in tests, particularly in Year 6, so the school's plans need to be smart enough to help you do this.

You can all help by thinking hard about how you are getting on with your targets, rising to the challenge if you are given harder work to do and trying your best in English, mathematics and science. We know you can do it.