



Lostock Hall Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number 111156
 Local authority Cheshire
 Inspection number 288874
 Inspection dates 7-8 March 2007
 Reporting inspector Graham Martin

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Mallard Crescent
School category	Community		Poynton
Age range of pupils	4-11		Stockport
			Cheshire
			SK12 1XG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01625 871010
Number on roll	129	Fax number	01625 858193
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Simon Barber
Date of previous school inspection	March 2001	Headteacher	Graham Hamilton

Age group 4-11	Inspection date(s) 7-8 March 2007	Inspection no. 288874
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average primary school and almost all pupils are from a White British background. Few pupils are eligible for free school meals. Nearly all attend a privately run nursery on the school's site before being admitted to the Reception class. The nursery provision was inspected separately in 2005 and a report is available from the school. Before-school and after-school care is also provided on the site and the school can provide a report from the separate inspection of this service carried out in 2006. A new headteacher was formally appointed to the school with effect from September 2006. The school holds the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark and was recently awarded Investor 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

The inspection agrees with the school's own judgement that it is a good school. It gives good value for money. Pupils' personal development is good, with outstanding features in their behaviour, social development and attitudes to learning. High quality care, guidance and support ensure that pupils enjoy learning and the good opportunities the school provides. Strong support for pupils' well-being enables them to quickly become confident learners, knowing that their interests are valued. The quality of teaching and learning is good, promoting good enjoyment of school which is seen in above average attendance. As a result, all pupils make good progress, and standards in English, mathematics and science are above average. The school is working well to close the small gap between the standards that boys achieve in reading and those of their writing. Pupils' learning in science is not quite as good as that in English and mathematics, particularly in investigative science. Also, the use of information and communication technology (ICT) is not yet embedded in the school's work as a teaching and learning aid but plans to address this issue are soon to be realised. There are valued and productive partnerships with community organisations and support agencies. A good quality of intervention by teachers and teaching assistants ensures that all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who have gifts or talents, thrive on success and achieve well.

An exceptionally good partnership with the on-site nursery ensures a smooth transfer into school for the four-year-old children. The good Reception class gets children off to a positive start in school. This good provision enables most of the children to meet or exceed the early goals for their learning by the end of the Reception year. The enjoyable opportunities provided in the early years establish good learning habits that stand the children in good stead. This approach is sustained throughout the school, enabling all pupils to succeed in differing fields of learning. This is why behaviour throughout the school is outstanding; good attitudes are founded on well understood principles that are consistently applied throughout the school.

In his first full year, the headteacher's good leadership is providing a clear sense of purpose and direction. He has re-focused the school on ensuring that learning is effective for every pupil so that each achieves as well as he or she can. This work is improving standards. Very effective support by the hardworking leadership team drives this objective forward. The good teamwork flowing from this shared leadership, along with positive support and challenge from governors, gives the school good capacity to improve. 'I can see the improvements we are making' said one governor, a reflection not only on the overall sense of purpose and commitment from staff but also on the impact of good teamwork within the governing body, which fulfils its duties well. The great majority of parents agree with the school's direction, though some would

value further improvements to communication and consultation to make the school's mission clear to the whole community.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve boys' writing to narrow the gap between their standards of writing and reading.
- Improve learning in the investigative aspects of science.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are above average because pupils achieve well. Children enter the school with skills similar to those expected for their age. They make good progress in all areas of learning because careful, detailed planning ensures that activities closely match their individual needs. So the majority reach and some exceed the early learning goals by the age of five. Good progress continues in Years 1 and 2 so that, by the age of seven, pupils reach standards above the average found nationally. In Years 3 to 6, emphasis on the basic skills of reading, writing and number ensures good achievement for all pupils so that, by the end of Year 6, they reach above average standards in English, mathematics and science, as seen in the 2006 national test results. These results also show that above average numbers of pupils attained the higher Level 5 in their tests. The progress of pupils currently in Year 6, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, shows that they are on course to achieve the school's high, challenging but realistic targets. However, standards of boys' writing are not yet as good as those in reading. Also, pupils' skills of enquiry are not as strong as their other work in science and this lowers overall standards in this subject.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' moral and social development is exceptional and their spiritual and cultural development is good. The school's mission is reflected in the exceptionally good ways that pupils respect and understand the feelings of others. This was noticed when one boy said to his friend that he hoped it wouldn't cause any pain when the friend went to have a stone removed from his hand. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding and they have exceptionally good attitudes to learning. Attendance is above the national average, with good systems to check absences so that any problems can be tackled effectively. The overwhelming majority of parents value the school's work to promote their children's personal development. Good partnerships with organisations in the wider community, such as a local church group, help to enrich pupils' spiritual and moral development. Pupils say that they thoroughly enjoy school and the learning opportunities it provides. They take good responsibility for others, too,

through the school council and becoming much respected peer mentors or play leaders. Although pupils in Year 6 say they are very happy at Lostock Hall, they agree that their school prepares them well for transition to Year 7 and beyond. Pupils feel safe and they value how the school helps them to understand the need for rules, they recognise risks and they appreciate healthy eating.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers have high expectations and pupils respond well to the challenges set. When the quality of teaching is outstanding, the teacher explains clearly the learning targets and what pupils need to do to achieve them. This enhances learning. Throughout the school, pupils develop good independent learning skills; teachers demonstrate clearly how pupils can make best use of these skills and they provide the resources needed to enable good achievement. Pupils' learning is enhanced when they respond well to the good guidance teachers give them to help them improve their work. Teachers establish good, orderly routines so that pupils move from activity to activity without fuss or disruption. Good planning ensures that the work set fits pupils' learning needs well, although there are too few opportunities for investigations in science to improve their scientific learning. Teachers and teaching assistants know their pupils well, working closely together to support them in all aspects of their learning. As a result, pupils make good progress in lessons and thrive on their success. Homework is used well to promote good achievement and pupils agree that the homework given helps them to progress well in their learning. The resources and skills for using ICT as an effective teaching and learning tool are limited, though the school has immediate plans to address this issue.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school has a good curriculum which meets the needs of pupils well and promotes good achievement. The range of learning activities in the Foundation Stage is very stimulating, providing lots of opportunities for children to develop their personal and social, communication and number skills. The physical, personal and social development of pupils is well supported through a good range of sports and after-school clubs. Good use of visiting experts and day trips enrich learning opportunities across the curriculum. A productive partnership with the local high school strengthens the use of drama to promote good speaking and listening skills. Pupils like the after-school clubs and these are well attended. They also appreciate the good opportunities provided for residential visits to Beeston and especially the one to a European ski resort! Good community partnerships further increase opportunities for pupils, including sports competitions and art festivals.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of personal, social and emotional care given to pupils at Lostock Hall is good, reflecting as it does the school's commitment to its stated mission and principles. This is demonstrated in how well each pupil is known to staff, so that all are treated with respect and as individuals, while at the same time learning their wider responsibility of care for each other. Support for academic development is evident in the way that assessment and target setting are used well to promote learning and good achievement. Good guidance and support is given to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with particular gifts and talents, leading to good learning for all. Pupils feel safe, secure and confident and they have profound respect and trust for their teachers. A parent was thrilled at how well she and her children had been welcomed as newcomers to the school, and this sentiment reflects the care and concern the school shows for its pupils in every aspect of its work. Procedures for child protection and for assessing risks are in place and national guidelines for the safe recruitment of staff and volunteers are followed.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership is good and the school is well managed. The headteacher leads well. He ably shares his high aspirations with staff, governors and the community. However, some parents would welcome further opportunities for consultation and communication to feel more involved in helping the school to achieve its aims. Good management of the roles of key staff strengthens teamwork, enabling the school to achieve its mission to promote good achievement for all and fulfil the potential of each pupil. Successful partnerships with other schools, the wider community and outside agencies help the school to thrive and improve. Parents value the school's palpable commitment to their children's needs and the curriculum that adds meaningful interest to their learning and achievement. The school seeks parents' and pupils' views and values their ideas about what aspects of its work could be improved. Pupils say they were pleased that their ideas for providing more playtime equipment were taken seriously. The headteacher has judged the school's effectiveness well and his good plans for improvement concentrate on the correct priorities to ensure even better outcomes for pupils. The strategies to bring about these improvements are already taking effect, indicative of the school's good capacity to improve. By developing the skills and teamwork of staff well and ensuring that all know their role in checking the school's effectiveness, the headteacher enables all staff to contribute to school improvement. Governors contribute well to this process. Their clear understanding of the school's work and their support for the headteacher's aspirations enables them to give the school good guidance, challenge and support.

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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness and efficiency of boarding provision	N/A
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
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	2

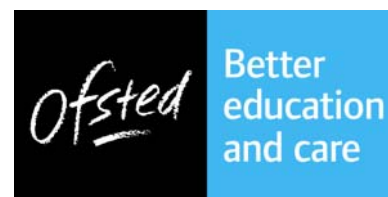
¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources 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



Lostock Hall Community Primary School
Mallard Crescent
Poynton
Stockport
Cheshire
SK12 1XG

8 March 2007

Dear Children

First of all, thank you very much for the welcome that you gave me when I visited Lostock Hall Primary School. You welcomed me very well when I recently spent two days inspecting the work of your school. I enjoyed my visit and learned that you enjoy learning very much. Thank you for all the discussions we had that helped me to find out how well your school works. You told me that you think you have a good school. I am sure that you will be pleased to know that I agree with you!

These are the things that most impressed me.

- Your behaviour is excellent and you are outstanding in the way that you take part with interest in the school's activities. This means that you learn well and reach good standards – well done!
- Your school cares for you well and helps you to do your best.
- The teachers are working well to make sure that you all learn as well as you should.

There are just two things that I would like your school to do better.

- You told me how much you enjoy doing well in reading and mathematics. I have asked your teachers to make sure that boys do just as well in their writing.
- I also think that, with the right help, you could become better learners in science.

I would like to send you my best wishes for the future. I hope that you all carry on trying your best and enjoying learning.

Yours sincerely

Graham Martin
Lead inspector