

Claremont Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105408
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	377238
Inspection dates	29 February 2012–1 March 2012
Lead inspector	Joanne Olsson HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	474
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr A Cross
Headteacher	Ms P Dempsey
Date of previous school inspection	15 June 2009
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Joanne Olsson
Allyson Ingall
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Her Majesty's Inspector
Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 18 lessons led by 18 teachers. Two of these lessons were joint observations with the headteacher. Inspectors also made several shorter visits to classrooms to observe the teaching of reading. Inspectors observed pupils at play and during lunchtime and heard pupils read. Meetings were held with different groups of pupils, representatives of the governing body and senior leaders and managers. Inspectors also spoke to staff and a number of parents and carers. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including arrangements for safeguarding, information about pupils' attainment and progress and pupils' books. They considered the responses to questionnaires from staff, pupils and 184 parents and carers.

Information about the school

This is larger than the average-sized primary school. It serves pupils from a range of minority ethnic groups. The majority of pupils are of African heritage. Almost three quarters of the school population speak English as an additional language. There are currently 23 languages spoken in the school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much higher than the national average. The number of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is also much higher than the national figure. More pupils move into and out of the school throughout the school year than found nationally. The school has received Healthy School status; Cultural Diversity Quality Standard; Artsmark; Eco School status and the Inclusion Award. The school meets the government floor standard, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

At the time of the inspection almost one third of the permanent teaching staff were absent, either through maternity leave or short-term illness. The school houses a privately run out-of-hours childcare provision, which is subject to a separate inspection. The latest report is available on the Ofsted website.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall Effectiveness	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key Findings

- This is a satisfactory school. Its strengths lie in the positive relationships that exist between adults and pupils. It is a cohesive school which welcomes all pupils and treats everyone as an individual. The school’s overall effectiveness is not good because attainment remains low and there are some gaps in achievement between some groups of pupils. Nonetheless, it is improving because pupils’ achievement and enjoyment has a high priority. The large majority of pupils are positive about all aspects of school.
- From exceptionally low starting points pupils make satisfactory progress to reach attainment levels which are well below the national average by the end of Year 6. Nevertheless, pupils’ achievement has improved year-on-year since the previous inspection. Their achievement in English, particularly in reading, is relatively weaker than in mathematics.
- Teaching is often good, but is satisfactory over time. This is because teachers plan interesting lessons which capture pupils’ interest. However, not all teachers match activities well enough to the needs of all pupils. This means some pupils, particularly the more able, do not always receive enough challenge.
- Pupils’ courteous and respectful behaviour makes a positive contribution to a safe and harmonious school. Different groups of pupils say they feel safe and bullying is dealt with effectively. Pupils have a well-tuned perspective on how to keep themselves safe and respond well to the school’s strategies for promoting good behaviour.
- The headteacher is successfully steering the school through a challenging period of staffing turbulence and public consultation. The leadership of teaching and the management of performance are satisfactory, because lesson observations are regular and lead to improvements over time. The majority of parents and carers who returned the questionnaire expressed their dissatisfaction with how the school communicates with them and responds to their concerns. Although the school has adequate communication systems, not all parents and carers have confidence in how the school tackles their concerns and responds to suggestions.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment and eradicate gaps in achievement by:
 - ensuring pupils have more opportunities to write for sustained periods across a range of contexts
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their comprehension skills as well as their reading fluency
 - extending the opportunities for pupils to use their basic skills across other subject areas
 - using the information about pupils' achievement more precisely to monitor the performance of groups and to measure the impact of intervention strategies.
- Improve the quality of teaching so it is consistently good by:
 - ensuring activities match the needs of all pupils and provide more-able pupils with sufficient challenge
 - limiting the amount of time teachers talk so that all pupils are able to contribute more to discussions and work independently
 - ensuring pupils know what is expected by teachers sharing clear success criteria.
- Improve the systems to engage and communicate with parents and carers.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils have good attitudes to learning. They are willing to work cooperatively and independently. In a Year 5 English lesson, all pupils were enthusiastic about producing an information book on mythical creatures. They were willing to share their ideas and keen to write their descriptions. Reception pupils were very excited about the book they had read on snakes. Their interest was evident in the number of facts they wanted to share and their desire to independently revisit and talk about the book. Activities such as these capture pupils' interest and motivate them to work hard. They allow them to develop their communication skills and provide opportunities for them to think through their ideas so they are ready and willing to work hard.

Some pupils make good progress from their starting points. However, pupils' progress is not consistently good across the school. This means they make satisfactory progress overall as they move from very low starting points to well below average attainment levels at the end of Year 6. Children get off to a flying start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make good progress from their very low starting points. They enter Year 1 with skills and knowledge which are lower than expected. Expected progress from this point means attainment levels by the end of Year 2 are well below average for reading, writing and mathematics. Typically, pupils are a year behind in their learning by the time they start Year 3. From this very low baseline pupils make strong progress across Key Stage 2, but attainment levels remain well below average by the time pupils leave Year 6. Attainment levels are improving over time and more pupils are reaching average levels. However, too

few gain the higher levels in reading and writing. This means attainment in English and in reading is much lower than the national picture by time pupils leave the school.

School based data confirms most pupils are working below and sometimes well below the expectations for their age. The attainment of African pupils is better than other groups in the school. Nonetheless, it is still low. Boys' attainment is lower than girls at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals make similar progress to their peers but they attain less well in some year groups and subjects. There is little difference in the achievement of pupils who speak English as an additional language. Disabled pupils and pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their peers. This is because of well-focused additional support in lessons and access to a wide range of intervention programmes. Many pupils are able to develop their writing and communication skills in other subject areas but this is inconsistent across year groups and underdeveloped for mathematics.

Quality of teaching

Most pupils and the majority of parents and carers believe teaching at the school is good. Inspection evidence shows teaching is often good, but it is satisfactory over time. All teachers are very effective in creating calm and purposeful classrooms which enable all groups of pupils to enjoy their learning. Lessons are interesting because teachers strive to link learning to everyday life. For example, a lesson on money was made more relevant because pupils found the total cost of food items from a shopping basket.

Teaching is most effective when teachers make their expectations of pupils very clear by providing sharp criteria at the start of the lesson. Teachers model new learning well and use a range of teaching styles to meet the needs and interest of all pupils. Teaching is less effective when activities are not pitched well enough to pupils' needs and some pupils, particularly the most able, do not receive enough challenge. Some teachers are very effective at providing pupils with opportunities that are organised well to talk before they begin their work. Occasionally, some teachers spend too much time talking and this limits the opportunity for all pupils to express their ideas or to work independently. Teaching makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The teaching of early reading is secure because there is an embedded system to help pupils learn the sounds that letters make. A love of books is effectively fostered in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Adults choose exciting texts and provide opportunities for children to listen to stories. Teachers across the rest of the school ensure pupils read regularly, but not enough attention is given to developing pupils' comprehension skills. Some teachers ensure pupils have ample opportunities to write for a specific purpose across different contexts. However, this practice is not consistent in all classes and some pupils do not have enough opportunity to practise their writing skills for sustained pieces of writing. Teachers mark pupils' books and celebrate their efforts. In writing, pupils often receive detailed guidance on how to improve their work further but this is less well developed in mathematics.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils are welcoming and polite. They show respect for each other and for adults. The large majority of pupils and the majority of parents and carers who returned the questionnaires feel behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils say there is some name-calling and arguments occur between pupils, but this only happens occasionally and is not typical behaviour in their school. Pupils have a clear understanding of how the school expects them to behave. Incidents of poor behaviour outside of lessons are rare because pupils have a range of appropriate equipment to keep them purposefully occupied and the playgrounds are supervised well. Pupils' behaviour during lessons is good. They are often excited by their learning, but even when they are not enthused they are compliant and sensible.

'Teachers are fantastic at sorting things out' is a comment typical of many pupils who are confident that any issues they raise will be dealt with. Teachers manage behaviour well because they have a good range of strategies to meet specific needs. Consequently, behaviour is improving over time and exclusions are a rare occurrence.

The large majority of pupils and the majority of parents and carers feel pupils are safe and the school deals well with all types of bullying. Pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes bullying and they know about different types of bullying. This means they are able to provide clear explanations why racist or homophobic comments are inappropriate. They have an equally good grasp of how to keep themselves safe. They talk with confidence about the dangers of talking to strangers, playing on railway lines and giving out personal details when they use computers at home.

The relentless drive to reduce absence means attendance is above average and no pupils are persistently absent.

Leadership and management

Despite a period of considerable turbulence, senior leaders and managers have held firm and driven improvements to pupils' achievement, behaviour and attendance, demonstrating a satisfactory capacity for further improvement. The headteacher's ambition is shared by members of the governing body and most staff. The systems to manage teachers' performance are used well to drive improvement because they are linked to whole-school issues. Teaching is regularly observed, which means teachers receive clear guidance to help them improve their practice. However, pupils' books are not scrutinised regularly enough to ensure inconsistencies in expectations and outcomes for pupils are eradicated. Professional development is matched well to the needs of the school and subject leaders have a key role in driving improvement by delivering training or coaching individual teachers and year groups.

The data systems to monitor pupils' progress have improved since the last inspection so the school has a better understanding of the achievement of individuals. Nevertheless, this information is not used well enough to identify the achievement of groups or to monitor the impact of intervention strategies. The school's provision for equality of opportunity is sound as there are few instances of harassment, and achievement gaps are reducing. Members of the governing body have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are increasingly holding the school to account through opportunities to

meet key leaders and managers on a regular basis. The systems to safeguard pupils meet statutory requirements.

The majority of parents and carers who returned the questionnaire expressed their dissatisfaction with how the school helped them to support their child's learning, how the school kept them informed and how the school responded to their concerns. Inspectors found that the school has an adequate range of strategies to work with parents and carers. Nonetheless, inspectors agree with senior leaders and managers that there is more to do to foster positive relationships with parents and carers to increase their confidence in the school and ensure a positive partnership to support pupils' learning.

The curriculum is generally well matched to the needs and interests of pupils. Improvements to the mathematics curriculum are bearing fruit in raised attainment, while a focus on spoken communication is helping pupils to develop their language and writing skills. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and moral development is good because it is prioritised from an early age. Consequently, pupils have a sound understanding of diversity and are prepared well to live in modern Britain.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes. The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



2 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Claremont Primary School, Manchester, M14 7NA

It was a real treat to see so many happy and smiling faces when we recently came to inspect your school. Thank you for being so welcoming and willing to talk to us. We really enjoyed seeing so many of you taking part in World Book Day. It was great to see the staff dressed up too! We consider Claremont to be a satisfactory school. These are the main things we found out during the inspection.

- You enjoy your learning; you are willing to work on your own and with each other and you are keen to do your best.
- You make satisfactory progress over time so that your attainment is lower than average by the time you leave Year 6. The achievement of pupils in your school is getting better each year. It is improving most in mathematics.
- Your attendance is above average and you are punctual to lessons.
- Your teachers are good at making your learning interesting and making sure you can see how your learning fits in with your everyday life.
- You know how the school expects you to behave and believe most pupils behave well most of the time. You are polite and respectful, so behaviour in classes and around the school is good on a day-to-day basis and over time.
- You feel safe and think bullying rarely happens. You think teachers are 'fantastic' at sorting out problems!

To get even better we have asked the people in charge of your school to improve teaching so it is good in all classes. We have also asked them to continue to raise your achievement so more of you reach average levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the time you leave school. Finally, we have asked them to work more closely with your parents and carers to support you in your learning.

It really was a pleasure to meet you. Please accept our very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Joanne Olsson
Her Majesty's Inspector

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