

# Mather Street Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105649
<b>Local Authority</b>	Oldham
<b>Inspection number</b>	355811
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 October 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Lynne Read

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	198
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs S Gibson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss J Adams
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 April 2008
<b>School address</b>	Mather Street Failsworth, Manchester Lancashire M35 0DT
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 9113266
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<b>Email address</b>	head@matherstreet.oldham.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 12 lessons and observed eight teachers. They held meetings with members of the governing body, managers, staff, the School Improvement Partner and groups of pupils. In observing the school's work, they looked at pupils' workbooks, assessment records, school policies, school development plans and reports. In total, 50 parental questionnaires were received, analysed and considered, alongside 87 questionnaires completed by the pupils and six completed by staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- Whether self-evaluation procedures are thorough and accurate and how effectively the information gathered is used in school improvement planning.
- Whether the quality of teaching and the curriculum helps all groups of pupils to achieve their best, especially in reading and writing.
- If the Early Years Foundation Stage prepares pupils well enough for their National Curriculum work and makes best use of the outdoor classroom.

## Information about the school

Mather Street is an average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is twice the national average. A very large majority of pupils are of White British backgrounds with around 10% belonging to minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than average.

The school is accredited for its work through the Healthy Schools status, a Dental Health award and the Activemark award. It is also recognised for its participation in a local business challenge. Governors offer before and after-school care clubs on the premises. These are referred to within the text of the report.

**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: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

### Main findings

Mather Street Primary provides a satisfactory quality of education. It has strengths in pastoral areas. Behaviour is good, as is pupils' personal development. Provision and learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. There has been a concerted effort to boost pupils' achievement and this has resulted in some good improvements recently. Senior leaders keep a close eye on pupils' ongoing achievements and systems for evaluating the performance of the school are satisfactory. At present, the monitoring of the quality of teaching is not effective enough in eliminating variations in teaching or in facilitating the sharing of good practice. Governors and staff share a clear vision and ambition for the future and are keen to build on the improvements already made. The capacity for sustained improvement is satisfactory.

Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They have interesting opportunities to engage in purposeful play and explore their world, both indoors and out. Throughout Key Stages 1 and 2 achievement is satisfactory overall and there are pockets of good progress, especially for the older pupils. Standards are broadly average by Year 6, but too few pupils are working at the higher levels in writing in Key Stage 1 and in mathematics at Key Stage 2. Teaching is satisfactory overall with some good practice. Managers recognise that the proportion of good teaching needs to rise further if the school is to meet its own challenging targets. Although there are some lessons where pupils are given sufficient opportunities to write independently, especially in their topic work, this is evident in too few lessons. On occasions, more-able pupils are not fully challenged. When pupils work in focused ability groups for letters and sounds, they make good progress in reading and writing but when they are taught in a large mixed-ability group, learning is slower. Some Key Stage 2 pupils have useful targets to help them improve their work, especially in mathematics. Others, however, have insufficient guidance to support their progress.

The satisfactory curriculum includes a well-organised programme for promoting personal development. It is well enhanced by themed weeks, visits to places of interest and clubs out of school time. The use of information and communication technology is a strength and permeates the curriculum. Staff are beginning to link different subjects together but opportunities for pupils to write at length when studying subjects other than English are limited. The good quality care includes a nurture group and ensures the needs of all pupils, particularly those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, are well supported. Pupils feel secure within the safe environment and enjoy their learning. Good partnerships with other schools and agencies bring many benefits to pupils' academic and personal development.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve progress and attainment in writing for the more-able pupils in Key Stage 1, by:
  - ensuring that all pupils are taught letters and sounds in focused ability groups
  - giving pupils more opportunities to write, especially in their topic work.
- Improve progress and attainment for more-able pupils in mathematics in Key Stage 2, by:
  - ensuring that they are challenged to the full in every lesson
  - providing these pupils with long-term improvement targets for learning in every class.
- Improve the proportion of good teaching in school, by:
  - ensuring that pupils have enough time to work independently
  - increasing the rigour of checks on the quality of teaching to ensure better consistency and facilitate the sharing of good practice.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

Pupils have good attitudes to their learning and enjoy their lessons. For example, Year 5 pupils collaborated very well as they investigated numbers to solve a challenging puzzle. Most pupils concentrate well in lessons but sometimes they drift off-task, especially when they sit listening for too long during whole-class introductions.

On entry to the Nursery, children's development is generally below that expected for their age. By the end of the Reception Year, their attainment is broadly average and is maintained at this level to the end of Year 6. Progress is satisfactory but there is scope for improvement. Some more-able pupils in Key Stage 1 work at the higher level in reading but very few do so in writing. At Key Stage 2, some shortcomings in pupils' previous learning have been overcome and progress has improved. However, too few of the more-able pupils are attaining above average standards in mathematics. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress and meet their individual targets. Boys and girls show the same interest in their work and they progress at equal rates.

Pupils are considerate of each other and harmonious relationships exist between the different age and ethnic groups. They show great respect for cultures and beliefs that are different from their own. Pupils have a strong awareness of moral and social issues and their good understanding of healthy living means that they enjoy plenty of exercise. Pupils assert that they feel safe and have a good awareness of potential dangers, for example, when using the internet. They are actively involved in the local community and, for instance, offered advice on healthy meals to locals, parents and carers during the school's Health and Well-being week. Attendance has improved and is in line with the national average. Pupils are effectively prepared for their future education and those in Year 6

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experience the world of work by engaging in a business challenge. By taking responsibility for jobs, they help in the day-to-day running of the school. The elected council members ensure that pupils' views are considered in the process of decision making.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

**How effective is the provision?**

Teaching is satisfactory and there are examples of good practice. Teachers make the purpose of lessons clear so that pupils know exactly what is expected of them. Relationships are good and pupils trust their teachers. Teaching assistants provide effective, targeted support for groups for pupils who need extra help. There are several other good elements to teaching but they are not consistently evident and this leads to variations in progress between subjects and year groups. For example, tasks are generally planned to challenge pupils of different abilities but there are still occasions when the more-able pupils are not given sufficiently challenging work. There are good examples of marking that help pupils improve their work, but again, this is not equally effective across all subjects and classes.

The curriculum is satisfactory. Several special teaching groups have been established to help lower-ability pupils catch up with their learning and these have resulted in more pupils attaining the expected level for their age. However, there is no similar provision to boost learning at the higher level of attainment. The focused group work for letters and sounds is very effective. However, when pupils at different levels of competence are

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taught together, their needs are not fully met. As a result, some find the work too easy and for others it is too difficult. Outside specialists provide varied opportunities, for example in sport and music, to enrich learning. Links between subjects are developing, but there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to write at length during their topic work.

Pupils' welfare is at the heart of this school's work. All pupils who filled in their questionnaire agreed with the statement that 'adults in school care about me'. Staff go to great lengths to secure specialist support, for example from social, educational and medical agencies, to meet individual needs. Pupils who have emotional or behavioural difficulties are well supported because staff are skilled in identifying and acting upon small issues before they escalate into problems. A good system of merits encourages positive behaviour, effort and thoughtfulness and pupils are proud of the awards they receive. Many pupils take advantage of the before and after-school club, which provides a good start to the day. The before and after-school care facilities provide a good standard of welfare and an interesting range of practical activities, both indoors and out.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## **How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher is instrumental in maintaining the good standard of care for the school, and staff and governors share her ambitious view of long-term improvement. Plans for raising attainment and for further school development set a clear agenda and ensure that all staff know what is required. However, subject leaders are not sufficiently involved in monitoring day-to-day teaching in order to ensure that practice is consistent across school and that best practice is shared among staff.

The rigorous implementation of the equalities policy ensures that groups of pupils have full and equal access to all activities. The more-able, however, do not consistently have the challenge they need in all lessons. Community cohesion is successful in promoting harmony in school and in providing good opportunities for pupils to engage with pupils from different cultures and backgrounds. Links with communities around the world are in the early stages of development.

Value for money is satisfactory. The school is efficiently run on a day-to-day basis and provides a bright, pleasant environment for learning. Safeguarding policies and procedures are satisfactory; the buildings and grounds are secure. Governors are supportive and have a thorough overview of safeguarding, standards and achievement. They are keen to develop more systematic methods for gathering the views of parents and carers and consulting them when planning improvements.

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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

When they start in the Nursery, children's development varies widely. Overall, they have a range of skills that is below expectations for the age group and several have difficulties with speech and language. Good induction procedures ensure that children settle quickly. Teaching is good and tasks, both indoors and out, include lots of opportunities for active learning through play. For example, children manoeuvred their wheeled toys around obstacles while others practised writing in foam or 'crossed the golden river' by identifying letter sounds within words. Planning takes careful account of children's interests and their stage of learning in order to keep them well motivated and challenged. Children's independence is promoted successfully, in that they are constantly encouraged to follow their own lines of enquiry and explore their world. As a result, they make good progress. By the time they enter Year 1, children are generally working at expected levels. Good accommodation and a carefully chosen range of resources create an exciting learning environment and ensure a good standard of welfare. Management is good and strong teamwork ensures that routines, policies and procedures are consistently followed. There are good systems for sharing information with parents and carers, many of whom stay to share the first session each day with their children. During inspection, for example, they enjoyed choosing and reading library books together. Thorough monitoring and evaluation of performance are regularly carried out by the senior leader who has responsibility for this key stage.



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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## **Views of parents and carers**

A small minority of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. They have a generally positive view of the school. Most agree that their children's experience of school is a happy one. They feel that their children are encouraged to live healthy lifestyles and are effectively prepared for the move into high school. Inspectors endorse these views. Several parents feel that their opinions and concerns are not always taken into account, and would like more support so they can help their children's learning at home. Governors and staff are currently looking at ways of addressing both issues. Some parents and carers disagreed with the statement that the school meets their children's needs while others praised the support provided for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Inspection evidence indicated that there are occasions when the more able are not fully challenged.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Mather Street Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 50 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 198 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	27	54	21	42	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	26	52	20	40	3	6	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	22	44	22	44	3	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	28	56	17	34	4	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	26	52	21	42	2	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	26	52	16	32	6	12	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	26	52	21	42	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	25	50	22	44	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	28	56	12	24	7	14	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	42	24	48	3	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	34	22	44	6	12	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	28	56	19	38	2	4	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	25	50	19	38	2	4	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Judgement</b>	<b>Description</b>
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

<b>Type of school</b>	<b>Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)</b>			
	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.

**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.**



14 October 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Mather Street Primary School, Manchester, M35 0DT**

Thank you for the very warm welcome and lovely smiles you gave my colleagues and I when we inspected your school. We thoroughly enjoyed our time with you and appreciated all the help you gave us. In return, I would like to tell you what we found out.

Mather Street Primary is a happy and safe school. It provides you with a satisfactory standard of education and promotes your personal development well. You get on very well together and your behaviour is good. Thank you to the pupils who filled in their questionnaire and those who chatted with us. It was good to hear that 'our teachers give us lots of help' and 'we've got loads of good friends'. I'm glad that the older ones enjoy their Friday Fun days when they use their skills in information and communication technology to the full.

You are keen to learn and work hard. You are learning at a faster rate now but we think that there are some areas for further improvement so we have asked your teachers to:

- make sure that those of you who learn faster than most have lots of challenge in lessons, especially in writing at Key Stage 1 and mathematics at Key Stage 2, so that you can take your work up to the higher level
- provide all of you with those helpful target cards so you know how to improve your work
- make sure the letters and sounds work in Key Stage 1 is the best it can be
- provide lots of opportunities for you to write and work independently in lessons
- make more regular checks in lessons to ensure that all of the above is happening and you are all learning as well as possible.

You can help by continuing to attend regularly, being keen to learn and working hard. Thank you once again for the interesting conversations we had. Please accept my best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Lynne Read

Lead inspector

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