

Charlestown Community Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 105405 |
| Local Authority | Manchester |
| Inspection number | 355771 |
| Inspection dates | 13–14 January 2011 |
| Reporting inspector | Jim Kidd |

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

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|--|--|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 294 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mr Ken Power |
| Headteacher | Mrs Sarah Starkey |
| Date of previous school inspection | 22 January 2008 |
| School address | Pilkington Road Blackley Manchester M9 7BX |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 14 lessons and each of the 12 teachers was seen at least once in their classrooms. Meetings were held with teaching and support staff, pupils, parents, two members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including school improvement planning, safeguarding and child protection policies, pupil progress monitoring data and pupils' workbooks. They also analysed 89 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, 33 completed by staff and 97 returned by pupils in Key Stage 2.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Whether the school's view that pupils' progress, learning and achievement are satisfactory is justified.
- How and with what impact the school is attempting to improve attendance.
- Challenge in teaching and whether it is good enough to accelerate progress, particularly of more-able pupils.
- The impact of subject leaders on promoting improvement.
- The effectiveness of the school's support for the significant number of relatively inexperienced staff.

Information about the school

This primary school is larger than average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above that usually found. There is a below average number of pupils from minority ethnic groups and few pupils at early stages of learning English. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. Charlestown Community Primary is an accredited Healthy School, holds the Eco School (Bronze) award, has the Manchester Inclusion Standard and received Activemark for its work in physical education. It is also a 'Barrier Free' institution and welcomes pupils with physical disabilities who are supported by a local special school.

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

2

Main findings

This is an improving school, which provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. They feel safe, have an accurate understanding of e-safety, behave well in lessons and around school and willingly take on a wide range of responsibilities to support their classmates and other pupils. Parents and carers have a high regard for most aspects of the school's work and comment, 'Our children enjoy school and come back home excited to tell us what they have learned.' Care, guidance and support are good and support staff place equal emphasis on fostering pupils' progress in both personal and academic terms. The curriculum places an adequate emphasis on the development of pupils' skills in English and mathematics but also provides a good range of enrichment activities.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory across the school and is beginning to accelerate. There is now greater consistency in progress across all years and, although attainment by the end of Year 6 remains below average, it is improving. Pupils do better in English than in mathematics and more-able pupils do not always reach the National Curriculum levels their abilities warrant.

A wide variety of successful strategies has been established to encourage pupils to come to school regularly. As a result, attendance has improved by 3% since the previous inspection. It is now broadly average and is rising further. Pupils speak highly of their school and, when asked what their favourite aspect of school life is, they reply, 'We like all the people in it because they help us and look after us.'

Teaching is satisfactory overall but pupils do not always receive sufficient opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning and progress in lessons. The school has placed considerable emphasis on improving assessment and marking and, as a result, pupils are now more aware of what they need to do to improve their work. The school recognises, however, that parents and carers are not always fully aware of the progress of their children and opportunities remain for them to be more involved in their children's learning.

Senior leaders drive improvement well and support the relatively inexperienced staff effectively. They are aware, however, that the impact of subject leaders across the curriculum, to advise staff on how they can build on pupils' prior knowledge is underdeveloped. They recognise, too, the importance of ensuring that the governing body further develops its understanding of whole-school performance. Charlestown provides satisfactory value for money. However, rising attainment, marked improvements in behaviour, assessment, marking and attendance demonstrate that the school has good capacity to improve further.

Up to 40% of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further accelerate pupils' academic progress and achievement by:
 - providing greater challenge in lessons for more-able pupils to motivate them to reach the higher National Curriculum levels
 - giving pupils more responsibility in class for their own learning and progress
 - embedding the recently-introduced calculation policy to foster higher levels of achievement in mathematics
 - building upon the improvements in assessment to ensure parents and carers are more aware of how their children are doing and thus enable them to become more involved in their learning
- Enhance the impact of leadership of management by
 - improving the knowledge of members of the governing body of the school's performance in all areas of its life
 - developing the leadership skills of subject coordinators so that they can offer staff more advice on how they can build on pupils' prior learning increasingly effectively in all subject-areas.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils generally look forward to their lessons and in the majority are keen to learn. When given the opportunity, they enjoy working in pairs and groups. Many show confidence when offering their opinions for the benefit of their classmates, such as when using the internet to research the weather in different countries. They enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills which are well below age-related expectations and they make satisfactory progress across the school to reach below average, but improving, attainment by the time they leave at the end of Year 6. The 'Big Write' lessons are popular among pupils and are having a most positive effect on their literacy skills. As a result of improvements in teaching, progress and achievement are becoming more consistent across all years but pupils' attainment in mathematics continues to lag behind that in English. Good support from teaching assistants ensures that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same satisfactory progress as their peers.

Pupils' behaviour and engagement in lessons and around school have improved since the previous inspection and they are now good. They get on well with others and value the relationships they have with those pupils who attend the school as a result of the 'Barrier Free' initiative. They willingly take on a variety of responsibilities, for example as school councillors, junior wardens and zone park players. They display an enviable social conscience and support a range of local, national and global charities. They also talk openly about how the school teaches them to be kind and considerate to others and to respect cultures and religions which are different from their own. Older pupils support younger ones well and even make sure the dining room is ready for the children in nursery and reception when they enter at lunchtime. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good: pupils have a keen sense of right and wrong, enjoy the annual school productions, the instrumental music tuition and are delighted to tell visitors about their links with a school in Sierra Leone.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

| | |
|---|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 3 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attainment ¹ | 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 |
| The extent to which pupils feel safe | 2 |
| Pupils' behaviour | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles | 3 |
| The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 3 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attendance ¹ | 3 |
| The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |

¹ 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?

The school has worked hard, and with success, to improve the quality of teaching since the previous inspection. The quality of teaching is now satisfactory overall but there are examples of good practice in all key stages. Relationships are good and teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are rising. This is a result of better assessment and of the senior leaders' emphasis on checking pupils' progress more closely against national norms. The best practice, in a Year 6 literacy lesson for example, comprises paired work and opportunities for pupils to gauge the progress and attainment of their peers. In lessons such as these, pupils are fully engaged and are quite desperate to learn. On occasions, teachers direct learning too much and pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to take responsibility for their own progress. Similarly, in a minority of lessons, challenge for more-able pupils is not high enough and does not motivate or enable them to reach for the standards their abilities warrant. Marking has improved since the previous inspection and pupils themselves say they now receive more advice on how they can improve their work.

The curriculum places an adequate emphasis on the development of pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy but the recently-introduced calculation policy is not completely embedded and it is too early to see its full impact. The curriculum is under continuous review and themed and topic activities are enabling pupils to see the links between

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subjects more clearly. Subject coordinators have a developing leadership role but do not provide enough advice to other staff to ensure planning builds effectively on pupils' prior learning. There is a good range of enrichment activities, including educational trips and visitors, and these also do much to develop pupils' personal, social and emotional skills. There is a strong assembly programme and the celebration session each Friday is very well received, gives pupils credit for their efforts and encourages all pupils to feel proud of the achievements of their peers.

Care, guidance and support are good and the sterling work of the committed teaching assistants, the excellent learning mentors and the highly regarded family support worker ensures that all groups of pupils can take full advantage of what the school has to offer. The school reaches out to parents and carers but recognises that there is more to be done if they are to have a greater understanding of the progress of their children and become even more involved in their learning. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those identified as vulnerable receive good support from both adults and other pupils; induction procedures enable youngsters new to the school to settle down quickly and there are effective strategies to facilitate pupils' transition to their next stage of education.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The perceptive and industrious headteacher, ably supported by her talented senior leadership team, continues to be successful in ensuring ongoing improvement and in embedding ambition among both teaching and non-teaching staff. Relatively inexperienced staff, who make up half of the teaching force, receive bespoke support from, in their words, 'An approachable senior leadership team, which wants the best for our pupils and our staff and which ensures that everyone is valued equally.'

The governing body offers sound support for the school and is beginning to challenge the leadership with increasing rigour. It recognises that further development of its understanding of school performance is of the essence if its impact is to be seen fully.

There is a range of partnerships with other institutions, but their effect on pupils' attainment and achievement are only beginning to become apparent. The strong partnership with a local special school demonstrates a two-way impact: pupils can take full advantage of the primary school's facilities and pupils at Charlestown benefit from engagement with those who have disabilities.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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The school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination satisfactorily overall, but more-able pupils do not always reach the standards of which they capable. Safeguarding and child protection procedures are good and relevant training for all staff is fully up to date.

The promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory. Pupils are proud of their links with their partner school in Sierra Leone. There are close contacts with local schools, too, but staff recognise that links with schools whose pupil populations are economically and culturally different are underdeveloped.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

This is a satisfactory and improving setting. Children enter the nursery with well below average skills for their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy and also in their personal, social and emotional development. There has been much focus since the previous inspection on improving the quality of teaching and on developing the large outdoor area as an additional learning resource. As a result, provision in both year groups is now good and children are making satisfactory progress. Their enjoyment in learning, both indoors and outdoors, is increasing apace. Safeguarding and welfare practice are good and impressive induction procedures ensure that children settle down quickly into their new surroundings. They play happily with their peers and also enjoy the support they receive from older pupils, the zone park players, for example.

Activities provide a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated sessions: children are learning to make choices, take their turn and share with each other. Their engagement in lessons is good and relationships between children and between children and adults are strong. They behave well in the dining hall at lunchtimes and cooperate with each other willingly. There are effective relationships with parents and carers, who

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speak highly of the setting. In their words, 'The teachers really make our children feel welcome and they are very happy as a result.' Leadership and management are satisfactory overall but improving. Some staff are relatively inexperienced, but there is already an overriding desire, shared by all, to foster further improvement and to raise children's academic and personal progress.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

| | |
|--|----------|
| Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |
| The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 2 |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 3 |

Views of parents and carers

An overwhelming majority of parents and carers believes that the school meets their children's particular needs and most are entirely satisfied with their children's experiences at Charlestown. Similarly, almost all are of the view that the school keeps their children safe. For example, one parent spoke for many with the comment, 'The family support worker is excellent, is bringing my daughter on and helps us a lot at home too.' A small minority of parents and carers believes that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. The inspection team observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and also around school at breaks and lunchtimes. They judge pupils' conduct to be good overall and, in some cases, outstanding.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Charlestown Community 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 89 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 294 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|----|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 41 | 46 | 46 | 52 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 40 | 45 | 48 | 54 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| My school informs me about my child's progress | 36 | 40 | 50 | 56 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 36 | 40 | 48 | 54 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 33 | 37 | 54 | 61 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 29 | 33 | 52 | 58 | 6 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 26 | 29 | 58 | 65 | 5 | 6 | 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) | 26 | 29 | 58 | 65 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 24 | 27 | 62 | 70 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 19 | 21 | 50 | 56 | 12 | 13 | 6 | 7 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 21 | 24 | 54 | 61 | 6 | 7 | 5 | 6 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 28 | 31 | 55 | 62 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 4 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 36 | 40 | 48 | 54 | 4 | 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

| 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 | 59 | 35 | 3 | 3 |
| Primary schools | 9 | 44 | 39 | 7 |
| Secondary schools | 13 | 36 | 41 | 11 |
| Sixth forms | 15 | 39 | 43 | 3 |
| Special schools | 35 | 43 | 17 | 5 |
| Pupil referral units | 21 | 42 | 29 | 9 |
| All schools | 13 | 43 | 37 | 8 |

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support. |
| 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.



17 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Charlestown Community Primary School, Manchester, M9 7BX

Thank you so much for the really warm welcome you gave us when we came to inspect your school recently. We are particularly grateful to those of you who came to talk to us at lunchtime on Thursday. You told us how much you like Charlestown and how much you value those children who are supported by Lancastrian Special School staff. I promised I would tell you what we found about your school. Here is my 'Big Write'!

Charlestown provides you with a satisfactory education and it is improving all the time. The grown-ups take good care of you and they plan many educational trips for you. The teaching you receive is satisfactory and you make satisfactory progress but I think you could do better in mathematics. You feel safe in school, behave well and take on so many jobs to support your classmates and younger children. Your attendance has improved a lot over the past three years and most of you are punctual to school in the morning.

Your headteacher and all the other staff want to make Charlestown better and better for you. I have asked them to help you make even more progress by giving you more chances to take responsibility for your own learning and by challenging those of you who often find the work easy to reach even higher levels. I have also asked them to make sure that your parents and carers know exactly how well you are doing and to encourage them to become more involved in your schoolwork. I also think it would be a good idea if those teachers who lead different subjects help your other teachers to plan activities which build on what you have already learned.

Thank you once more for being so kind and polite to us. Please keep working hard, looking after each other and enjoying school.

Yours sincerely

Jim Kidd

Lead inspector

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