

St Malachy's RC Primary School

Eggington Street, Collyhurst, Manchester, M40 7RG

Inspection dates 11–12 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Teaching does not take enough account of pupils' prior knowledge and skills to move them on to the next steps in their learning.
- Lessons are not planned in enough detail to ensure that all groups of pupils are challenged well and develop new skills and knowledge.
- The pace of learning in lessons is variable and in some, it is not quick enough.
- Pupils' progress varies across Key Stages and there has been a decline in attainment in Key Stage 1 since the last inspection.
- The leadership and management of the school require improvement because despite the recent improvement in pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Key Stage 2, leaders' monitoring of outcomes and the performance management of teachers have not had sufficient impact on improving the quality of teaching to ensure that it is consistently good throughout the school.
- The governing body does not hold the school to account well enough for the variation in standards of attainment and rates of pupils' progress.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher has accurately identified the school's strengths and weaknesses and has a clear vision for improvement.
- Pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Key Stage 2 have improved as measured by the unvalidated national test results in 2012.
- Pupils feel safe, their behaviour is good, both in lessons and around the school, and they show good attitudes to learning.
- Pupils enjoy school and attendance is above average.
- Children in the Nursery class make good progress as the result of good teaching.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons taught by seven different teachers. Of these observations, three were joint observations with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with a representative of the local authority, three groups of pupils, three governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body and teachers, including senior leaders.
- Inspectors took account of the five responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. Also, inspectors took account of the responses to two parent/carer surveys previously distributed by the school.
- Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a number of documents, including safeguarding records, minutes of governing body meetings, the school development plan, teachers' planning, data on pupils' attainment and progress and records relating to behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Andrée Coleman, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Bimla Kumari

Additional Inspector

Full report

- This is a smaller than average sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported by school action is below average. The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- Almost half of all pupils is from minority ethnic groups and a quarter of pupils speaks English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Year 6. This is the minimum expected for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the last inspection, there have been significant staff turnover and absence. An executive headteacher was in post for a year, followed by an acting headteacher for one year. The new, substantive headteacher took up her post in the week prior to the inspection along with a new teacher and two teaching assistants.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, in order to raise standards in English and mathematics by ensuring that:
 - the pace of learning is brisk
 - teaching is consistently good or better in all classes and subjects and in Key Stage 1 in particular
 - teachers use information about pupils' prior knowledge and skills in planning challenging activities that meet the needs of all groups
 - teachers' expectations are consistently high as to the progress that pupils should make
 - pupils are given regular opportunities to evaluate and improve the quality of their work
 - existing good practice in teaching is shared throughout the school.
- Improve the rigour and effectiveness of the school's leadership by:
 - undertaking regular monitoring of teaching and learning with a focus on pupils' outcomes
 - ensuring that the management of teachers' performance is effective in improving the quality of teaching in order to raise standards
 - closely linking the evaluation of the quality of teaching to pupils' achievement
 - ensuring that the leaders and managers of each Key Stage are effective in holding teachers to account for the progress that pupils make.
- Improve the effectiveness of governance by:
 - sharing more detailed data on pupils' attainment and progress and evaluating the progress of different groups more regularly with the governing body
 - ensuring that the governing body becomes more knowledgeable about the use of data to set targets and to improve pupils' attainment.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' attainment and progress are variable across classes and Key Stages. Standards of attainment have declined in Key Stage 1 since the last inspection, especially in reading overall, although the proportion of higher-attaining pupils reaching Level 3 is in line with the national figure.
- Pupils' attainment in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 shows an improvement in 2012, with more higher-attaining pupils, in particular, reaching the higher Level 5, in reading, writing and mathematics. Overall attainment is in line with expected national levels.
- In 2012, all pupils in Year 6 made expected progress in English and most made expected progress in mathematics which is above average. However, progress was slower in Key Stage 1 and attainment was below average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge that are well below that typical for children of that age. They make good progress in the Nursery class, but progress is not as rapid in the Reception class.
- Pupils who do not speak English as their first language are supported well in lessons and make similar progress to that of their peers. Teachers encourage them to contribute in lessons which they do with confidence.
- Pupils in receipt of pupil premium, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make progress at a rate similar to that of their peers. Intervention programmes are well-matched to their learning needs and systems to check on their progress are effective. In some lessons, there is too much reliance on teaching assistants to support these pupils and work is not modified enough to meet their needs.
- Although by the end of Key Stage 2 the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 is average, in some classes higher-attaining pupils are not challenged enough. Their learning activities are not well-matched to their previous knowledge and skills and they do not move into the next level of their learning quickly enough.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The overall quality of teaching over time requires improvement. There is a variation in quality with some teaching being good and some requiring improvement.
- In lessons where pupils make good progress, work is carefully matched to the different ability groups so all are well-challenged. Teachers know the levels at which pupils are working and use this information to help them to take the next steps. However, this is not the case in all lessons and sometimes activities are routine and most pupils are working at a similar level.
- In the Nursery class, detailed assessment information is used very well to plan precisely the next activities for the children in order for them to make good progress. However, in other parts of the school, teachers' planning lacks detail and objectives are broad. Such planning does not focus enough on the precise skills and knowledge that the pupils need to develop next.
- In most lessons, pupils have insufficient opportunities to reflect on and evaluate their work in order to improve it. However, pupils in one lesson observed in upper Key Stage 2 made good progress as the result of sharing ideas to help them complete an activity on the use of imperative verb forms. In addition, they had annotated their work correctly, which showed a good level of independence in evaluating how well they had completed the task.
- In the most effective lessons, the pace of learning is brisk as seen in a Key Stage 2 lesson when pupils had to identify quickly the punctuation that was missing from a number of sentences. They had to identify at least three types of punctuation rapidly and teaching assistants were used to simplify the task for the lower-attaining pupils so that they could be successful. In other lessons, the pace of learning is not as quick and teachers' expectations

- are not high enough as to the quality and quantity of work expected.
- Only in the best lessons are all ability groups of pupils well-challenged and make good progress through work on interesting tasks. This was seen in a Key Stage 1 lesson where the tasks included sequencing a series of pictures in order, drawing appropriate scenes from a book to match specific sentences and making and talking about characters from a story in play-dough.
 - In most lessons, teaching assistants are deployed very well. They give very effective support to disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and pupils who do not speak English as their first language through re-phrasing explanations and good questioning. However, in some lessons, pupils are too dependent on the support they receive and are unable to work independently because work is not well-matched to their needs.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils routinely behave well both in lessons and around school. They show good attitudes to learning and their enjoyment of school is shown by their above average attendance.
- Pupils are polite and listen carefully to their teachers and other adults. They participate respectfully in prayers and in one lesson observed, they reflected quietly on the choices that they make when encouraged to do so by the teacher. They move around the school conscientiously taking care to move very sensibly on the stairs.
- The youngest children in the Nursery class are well-supervised when playing outdoors on equipment, such as bicycles, and use the equipment safely. They are given clear direction as to how to line up sensibly and take care when moving back to their classroom from outside.
- The school's records and pupils' questionnaires and comments indicate that bullying is rare and dealt with well. Pupils understand the school's behaviour policy and say that it is effective for most pupils. In two surveys presented by the school, parents and carers agree that behaviour is good and, in the most recent survey, all parents said that their child was happy and safe in school.
- Although bullying is rare, pupils do understand the different types of bullying, for example, 'cyber-bullying.' They know what to do should they receive a hurtful message on the Internet or in a text on a mobile phone.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in a variety of ways, including when using the Internet. They were keen to point out information that is displayed in school to remind them about Internet safety.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Although pupils' attainment and progress is improving in Key Stage 2, school leaders and managers have not ensured that the progress of all pupils is consistently good across the school. There is too much variation. Teachers have not been held to account sufficiently well for the progress that pupils make.
- The new headteacher has made an initial, accurate assessment of the school's strengths and weaknesses and has a clear vision for improvement. She has overwhelming support from a committed staff as shown by the high volume of positive staff responses to the questionnaire.
- Over time, training for staff, performance management and monitoring have not been effective in improving the quality of teaching to ensure that it is consistently good. Where good practice exists, it has not been shared or used to train other staff.
- The local authority has provided enhanced support to the school and has helped to ensure that self-evaluation is accurate. A partnership with another school was supported by the local authority and the diocese and this, together with the accurate self-evaluation, contributed to achieving some improvements in attainment and progress.

- The school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination appropriately and tracking systems are very effective for checking on the progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. This good practice is not as well-developed for other groups, although no group makes significantly less progress than others.
 - The funding used to support pupils receiving the pupil premium has been identified and there is some evaluation of its impact on improving progress for these pupils. This is mainly in the form of an evaluation of the good impact of intervention programmes. Other actions, such as spending on educational visits and sports provision have not been evaluated to the same standard, so it is difficult to judge the full impact.
 - Procedures for safeguarding pupils meet government requirements and training for staff in child protection is up to date. Several governors have been trained in safer recruitment and sit on the interview panels for new staff.
 - School leaders have ensured that the curriculum is suitably broad, balanced and enriched and contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils speak enthusiastically about the range of educational visits that they participate in, such as the train ride to experience an element of being a wartime evacuee. A number of extra-curricular clubs takes place and inspectors observed the large number of pupils who participate in the school band and the very high standard of music produced.
 - **The governance of the school requires improvement because:**
 - the governing body has not challenged the school sufficiently well to ensure that all pupils make consistently good progress across the school
 - there is insufficient evaluation of detailed pupils' performance data to improve the progress of all groups.
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What inspection judgements mean

School

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	105532
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	400782

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	198
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nadia Caserta
Headteacher	Nicola Madden
Date of previous school inspection	9-10 February 2010
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Fax number	0161 2051649
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