

The Divine Mercy Roman Catholic Primary School

20 Blue Moon Way, Manchester, M14 7SH

Inspection dates 19–20 September 2012

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Almost all pupils make at least good progress. Children make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and pupils progress particularly well in Key Stage 2.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make excellent progress as do those supported through pupil premium funding.
- The quality of teaching is good, as a result of accurate and effective performance management of all staff. Overall, teachers have high expectations of pupils and teach lessons that are motivating and which prompt pupils to do their best.
- Behaviour and safety are good. As a result of effective supervision around the school, pupils behave well and feel safe and happy. They have strong, caring relationships with adults and their peers. Pupils are well aware of health and safety issues and procedures, such as internet safety.
- This is a very welcoming and caring school. It works with good effect to reflect the needs of its local community. It is fully inclusive, to which the diverse communities represented respond positively.
- All leaders and managers work harmoniously to ensure that all pupils achieve well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is insufficient challenge for higher-ability pupils at Key Stage 1. As a result, too few reach the higher levels by the end of Year 2 in writing and mathematics.
- The use of support staff is not always fully effective.
- There are not enough information and communication technology (ICT) resources in classrooms. As a result, opportunities are missed for pupils to develop their independent research skills.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 20 lessons, of which two were joint observations with senior leaders. In addition, the inspection team also made a number of visits to different classrooms.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, the local authority representative, the Chair of the Governing Body, senior leaders and subject managers.
- Inspectors looked at a range of the school’s documents relating to self-evaluation, performance management, pupils’ attainment and progress tracking, assessment, school policies and records on behaviour and safety, attendance and monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning, as well as safeguarding documents.
- Inspectors scrutinised 41 questionnaires completed by staff.
- Inspectors took account of one response to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and had informal meetings with parents after school, as well as a requested meeting with one parent.

Inspection team

Zahid Aziz, Lead Inspector

Additional Inspector

Steve Rigby

Additional Inspector

Jennifer Platt

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The Divine Mercy Roman Catholic Primary school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- There are more girls than boys.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is well below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- Most pupils are from minority ethnic groups and there is a higher proportion than average of Traveller pupils. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above average. There are a small number of pupils from White British heritage.
- The school has a breakfast and an after-school club.
- The school uses a local Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) to help pupils who have additional needs.
- The school meets the government's current floor targets for expectations of pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Enable a greater proportion of more-able Key Stage 1 pupils to reach the higher levels in writing and mathematics by providing appropriately challenging tasks and more effective support.
- Create more opportunities for pupils to develop their independent research skills in the classroom.
- Make more effective use of support staff in the classroom during whole-class teaching sessions.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Taking account of their different starting points at Key Stage 2, almost all pupils make or exceed the expected progress when compared with the national average. Pupils have made good progress and their attainment has improved year on year since the last inspection.
- Pupils are very keen to learn. They enjoy using practical resources and employing a range of strategies to improve their work, especially in mathematics. The work in pupils' books shows progress in mathematics and English to be strong overall, although too few higher-ability pupils in Key Stage 1 reach the higher levels in writing and mathematics. Lesson observations indicate that most pupils make good progress.
- Those pupils who speak English as an additional language make excellent progress and those supported by the pupil premium make equally good progress. By the end of Year 6 pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is close to the national average, with a much higher proportion of pupils than the national average making better than expected progress in Key Stage 2.
- On entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage children's knowledge and experience are below that expected for their age, particularly in their language and social skills. Children make good progress in this key stage, particularly in their social and communication skills. Pupils' achievement through Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, and especially in Key Stage 2, is good overall.
- By the time they leave Year 6 pupils' attainment in English and mathematics is average overall. Pupils' independent research skills are a relative weakness.
- Disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and Traveller pupils make excellent progress due to the excellent early interventions and support which is highly personalised and effective. This is one of the strengths of the school. These pupils are fully integrated into the life of the school. White British pupils also make good progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils enjoy their lessons because teaching, especially in English and mathematics, is good. There is some outstanding teaching. Teachers have high expectations for most pupils. As a result, the majority of pupils make good progress. In Key Stage 1 the teaching of more-able pupils is satisfactory because they are not always challenged effectively. Lessons are well planned and learning objectives clearly shared with pupils so that they have a clear idea what is going to be learnt. There is clear focus on practical activities and enjoyment at the Early Years Foundation Stage. This helps to improve language and social skills so that children are able to share ideas with others.
- In a Year 3 lesson pupils improved their descriptive writing as a result of the teachers' good use of adjectives related to a big bird. As a result, pupils were able to express their opinion and improve their own vocabulary with words such as 'overwhelmed', 'thrilled', and 'shocked'.
- There is regular assessment through classroom questioning and teachers' feedback in pupils' books. As a result, pupils know how to improve further. Overall, the quality of teaching for almost all groups of pupils is enabling them to make at least good progress.
- The support staff provide effective help for pupils during individual or group work. However, during whole-class sessions their time is not always used efficiently and the support for higher-ability Key Stage 1 pupils is not always effective.
- The school provides a good range of activities before and after school, such as the breakfast club, extra-curricular clubs and enrichment visits, to enhance pupils' learning. This improves their experience of the wider world and their social skills.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour is positive in the classrooms and around the school. They have a good understanding of how to stay safe and this is reinforced by good supervision throughout the school. As a result, pupils enjoy being in school and feel safe.
- Notably, the school is a very harmonious community with pupils from a very wide range of backgrounds and religions. They integrate well and make a positive contribution to the life of the school. They take responsibility such as running the student council. As result, they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Adults and pupils have a very good relationship and pupils follow adults' instructions promptly. Pupils show a good understanding of different forms of bullying. Pupils confirm that instances are rare and any are dealt with swiftly.
- Pupils have a good understanding of health and safety procedures and an awareness of issues relating to drugs. They know how to keep themselves safe. They have up-to-date knowledge of the safe use of the internet.
- The school has been proactive in improving pupils' attendance. The measures taken include making better links with parents by using the services of a parent support advisor, and the provision of the Walking Bus. This has helped to improve attendance and punctuality and to reduce persistent absence since the last inspection.
- Pupils are polite and respect adults. They are eager to support their peers. Parents and staff say that behaviour is good. 'This is a caring and loving school', said one pupil.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and the senior leadership team have worked successfully to bring about improvements since the last inspection. Almost all pupils now make good progress, the quality of teaching has improved to good overall, and behaviour and safety are good.
- Self-evaluation is accurate and, as a result, leaders and managers address appropriate priorities to improve the school. There is a common vision shared by all. The school has successfully used a whole range of strategies to improve pupils' attainment and to accelerate their progress.
- Strategies include the employment of adults to help those pupils who are supported by the pupil premium, drama therapy, adults' targeted support and Easter booster classes. However, pupils with higher ability are not given sufficient challenge in Key Stage 1 and, as a result, their progress is not as good as in Key Stage 2.
- Leaders rigorously and frequently monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching. The evaluation takes note of information from pupils, parents, the local authority and professional visitors. Monitoring is linked to teachers' performance management review and subsequent staff training is relevant and productive.
- The capacity for further improvement is very good as demonstrated by the improvements made since the last inspection.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is because of inclusive values and parental support provided by the school ensures that all pupils have the chance to do as well as can be expected in their personal circumstances. Pupils' work is valued, and multicultural festivals are celebrated, such as Eid and Black History Month. On the whole, the curriculum meets the academic and personal development needs of pupils well. However, limited ICT classroom resources restrict opportunities for pupils to develop independent research skills.
- The local authority has given effective support to the school to help to ensure pupils' higher attainment and better progress. As a result of this, the local authority now provides light- touch support.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body is well aware of its responsibility and obligations towards the school community. It sets demanding targets for the headteacher to enable the school to improve even further.
- Governors ensure the efficient management of financial resources, such as the pupil premium.

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	135648
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	406616

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	419
Appropriate authority	Governing Body
Chair	Mr G Young
Headteacher	Mrs A Walsh
Date of previous school inspection	20 January 2011
Telephone number	0161 245 7170
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