

St Matthew's CofE Primary School

Poplar Road, Stretford, Manchester, M32 9AN

Inspection dates

12–13 March 2013

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.

- Over the past three years, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has improved. By the end of Year 6, an above average proportion of pupils now reach the nationally expected level of attainment in English and mathematics.
- Children get off to a good start in Early Years Foundation Stage and continue to make good progress through to the end of Year 6.
- The proportion of pupils making expected and better than the expected rate of progress compares very well with national figures.
- Teaching has improved and is now good. There are also examples of excellent teaching across the school.
- An excellent range of one-to-one and small group sessions ensure that pupils' different needs are well met.
- Pupils behave well in and around the school. They feel safe and well cared for. Moreover, they say that they enjoy learning and like their teachers.
- The school contributes well toward pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Leaders and governors have worked well to improve the school since the previous inspection. They have successfully improved pupils' progress and the quality of teaching.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A small minority of teaching requires improvement and there is not yet enough that is outstanding.
- Teachers do not always provide pupils with lively and stimulating activities that challenge their thinking.
- Sometimes teachers talk for too long and this limits the amount of time pupils have to work things out for themselves or to learn by working together, such as in groups.
- Systems used by school leaders to collate and review information about pupils' progress do not show clearly enough how well pupil groups are progressing.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 15 lessons, visited a number of small group and one-to-one sessions and listened to pupils reading.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, a local authority representative and school staff.
- The inspectors took account of 15 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and 16 staff questionnaires.
- A range of documents were looked at, including the school's analysis of how well it is doing and the improvement plan, pupil progress information, checks on the quality of teaching, minutes of the governing body meetings and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding. The inspectors also examined work in pupils' books.

Inspection team

Louise Murphy, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Bimla Kumari

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding provided for children in local authority care, those from services families and those known to be eligible for free school meals) is well-above average.
- The large majority of pupils are White British.
- Above average proportions of pupils are from a minority ethnic background and speak English as an additional language. However, there are very few pupils in the early stages of learning to speak English.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is well-below average.
- The proportions of pupils supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs are above average.
- Above-average proportions of pupils start and leave school at times other than expected.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good and much is outstanding and so that pupils' progress is outstanding by:
 - ensuring all pupils are given lively and stimulating activities that challenge their thinking
 - reducing the amount of time that teachers talk to pupils within some lessons so that pupils have more time to work things out for themselves
 - providing even more opportunities for pupils to discuss their learning together, such as in groups.
- Improve the systems used to track pupils' progress so that leaders can track, review and analyse the progress of different groups more easily.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children start nursery with skills and knowledge below those typically expected for their age and some are well below. They make good progress across the Early Years Foundation Stage. Teaching is good and sometimes outstanding; adults question children carefully and provide a range of stimulating activities that help children to make choices and develop their communication skills well. Pupils are well prepared for learning in Year 1.
- Pupils who start school at times other than expected can impact on standards reported in national tests because these pupils sometimes join with lower standards. However, in recent years, standards by the end of Year 2 and 6 have risen at a good rate because pupils now make good progress.
- In Year 6 in 2012, an above-average proportion of pupils reached the nationally expected Level 4 in English and mathematics. A slightly above-average proportion also reached the higher Level 5. More pupils made the expected rate of progress from their previous starting points than did so nationally. Similarly, an above-average proportion made more than expected progress than nationally. This is an improvement on progress in previous years. School data and work seen in pupils' books confirm that pupils currently across the school are also making good progress.
- Pupils make good progress in reading, which is given a high priority across the school. Younger pupils are effectively taught to match letters to the sounds they make. As a result, attainment by the end of Year 2 has risen significantly in the past two years and is now broadly average. Pupils continue to use their reading skills well as they move up through the school. Older pupils read regularly in small groups that are guided effectively by an adult. Year 5 and 6 pupils confidently help their Year 1 friends to improve their reading skills. Year 6 pupils who read to inspectors did so fluently and were able to discuss their favourite authors and types of books.
- The school provides very good support for disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and pupils who speak English as an additional language. The individual needs of pupils are quickly assessed and actions put in place to make sure that these pupils are able to make the same good, and sometimes outstanding, progress as other pupils in school.
- Pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium funding achieve well. In Year 6 in 2012, the attainment of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals was above similar pupils nationally in English and in mathematics. Although this was about two terms behind other pupils in Year 6 at the school, overall in English and mathematics the gap is narrower than between these groups of pupils nationally, especially in English.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching, including the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics has improved since the last inspection, it is now good and some is outstanding. Pupils now achieve well in these subjects.
- Teachers make sure that they use their knowledge of what pupils know and can do to provide challenging tasks and activities that meets the varying needs, abilities and interests of their pupils. They introduce new learning at a good pace so that pupils are able to get on quickly with activities that enable them to work things out for themselves.
- Teachers often provide pupils with exciting activities to help them improve their writing skills. For example, pupils were able to describe how they felt when they believed that a classroom had been broken into. Pupils reflected well upon their feelings about what they had witnessed in order to make their writing even more gripping.
- A small minority of teaching requires improvement. This is because teachers sometimes talk for too long and this means that pupils do not have enough time to work things out for themselves. Although pupils are provided with different tasks that are well matched to their varying abilities, they do not always have enough opportunities to engage in lively discussions with other pupils.

This limits pupils' opportunities to reflect on their learning, share their ideas and deepen their understanding. Occasionally, activities are not exciting or inspiring enough to challenge pupils' thinking so that they learn at a good rate.

- Teachers mark pupils' books regularly and provide good guidance to pupils on how to improve. Pupils respond to these comments by editing their work and following teachers' advice in their next piece to make it even better. Pupils also regularly get the opportunity to assess how well they are doing themselves and to comment upon the work of their friends, which helps them to think more carefully about how well they understand their learning.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work closely to provide focused tasks for pupils who speak English as an additional language and disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. A wide range of extremely effective small group and one-to-one sessions is carefully planned and delivered well to meet the needs of these pupils. For example, four pupils were very busy pairing up picture cards showing different items with rhyming names. Although this was a challenging task, pupils achieved well because the teaching assistant prompted and praised them very well, giving them the confidence to have a go. Their delight in reaching the correct answer was clearly evident.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Pupils who spoke to inspectors said that they like their teachers because, 'they look after you like mums and dads do', and they enjoy school because they play games that make learning fun.
- Pupils are polite and courteous. During the inspection they behaved well at all times, showing respect for each other and the adults around them. School records confirm that this is typical behaviour. Occasionally, when teachers talk for too long or lessons are not inspiring enough, a few pupils become distracted from their learning.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the different forms that bullying can take, including cyber-bullying, name-calling and discrimination. They are confident that these things do not happen in their school. The recent 'Stamp out Bullying' initiative, along with the colourful display in the school hall provides a helpful reminder.
- Pupils feel safe in school because they say, 'teachers can protect you', and, 'no one is alone.' Most parents agree that their children are well looked after. Effective partnerships with parents and external agencies ensure that pupils who give any cause for concern are identified early and appropriate support is provided. Pupils are confident that if they had any problems an adult would listen to them and help them to resolve their issues effectively.
- St. Matthew's provides good opportunities to develop pupils' sense of responsibility. They are keen to contribute to the school community, such as by becoming school councillors or head boy and girl. Pupils are proud of their fund-raising efforts; they contribute toward buying equipment for school and donate to charities, such as Children in Need.
- Attendance, although slightly below average, is rapidly improving. Actions that the school is taking to improve it, such as staff walking groups of pupils to school in the mornings, are being particularly effective.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has a very clear view of the direction that he wants the school to take; he has accurately identified the school's strengths and areas for further development. The improvements that have taken place in pupils' achievement and quality of teaching confirm that the leadership team is in a good position to improve the school further.
- Senior leaders know all pupils very well and have effective systems in place to check the progress of each individual pupil regularly. This means that an excellent level of additional support is provided when necessary to ensure that no one falls behind. This shows the school is committed to providing equal opportunities. Even so, while the system provides leaders with

detailed information on individual pupils' attainment and progress and also the attainment of different groups of pupils, it does not routinely provide information on the rates of progress made by different groups of pupils. This means that leaders are not yet able to check well enough that all groups of pupils are achieving equally well.

- Senior leaders rigorously check upon the quality of teaching and learning. The headteacher uses this information well to develop an appropriate programme of staff training and development. Teachers are encouraged to share good and outstanding practice and to learn from each other. Staff really appreciate the support provided to help them develop their teaching skills and as a result, since the previous inspection it has improved and is now good. The headteacher makes sure that teachers progress through the pay scales only when their work is effective.
- The curriculum has improved since the previous inspection. It provides good opportunities for pupils to develop literacy and numeracy skills when they complete work in other subjects. The outdoor classroom is now complete and supporting an even wider variety of exciting activities. The school contributes well towards the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. This is seen, for example, in the way that pupils of all backgrounds socialise together and care for each other.
- The local authority has provided effective support to help the school improve, such as to develop the Early Years Foundation Stage and improve the quality of teaching in English and mathematics.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have gained more experience, skill and understanding in their role since the previous inspection and now provide a good level and balance of support and challenge. They know the school's strengths and what it needs to do to improve. They have a good understanding of the quality of teaching. They visit school on a regular basis and receive regular reports and updates from school leaders. Governors manage the school's finances well. They have agreed how to allocate the pupil premium funding, such as to pay for additional staffing and to provide enrichment activities to benefit those for whom it is intended. They make sure that teachers' progression through the pay scale is linked to how well pupils achieve. The governing body fulfils all statutory duties including safeguarding, which meets requirements.

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	106337
Local authority	Trafford
Inspection number	400842

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	202
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bernice Garlick
Headteacher	Stuart Madden
Date of previous school inspection	19 July 2010
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