

St Dunstan's RC Primary School

Bacup Street, Moston, Manchester, M40 9HF

Inspection dates 27–28 November 2013

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.

- Progress is not yet consistently good in reading, writing and mathematics. Not enough pupils make better than the expected rate of progress across all classes.
- Teaching requires improvement across the Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- Teachers do not always plan work that meets the needs of all pupils so that progress in lessons is not always good. Teachers' use of questioning and marking does not always evaluate learning accurately enough so pupils are often not clear about how to improve their work.
- Turbulence in the leadership of the school has meant that monitoring of pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching has not been robust enough to fully address weaknesses that have emerged over time.
- Staff who have good leadership skills have not been given appropriate opportunities to lead and manage subjects in the school and as a result, the leadership of these areas requires improvement.
- The current leadership of the school has not had enough time to ensure that improvements are sustained and lead to improved results for all pupils.
- Governors have not always held the school to account well enough for the performance of pupils. Their monitoring has had a limited effect on improving the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium and the most able pupils make good progress. Pupils behave well and feel safe. The introduction of the families and elders initiative ensures that pupils work well together, collaborate and have a strong sense of community.
- Attendance is above average and has risen steadily in recent years.
- Current leaders have accurately identified what the school needs to do to improve and have acted swiftly to make changes, raise achievement and improve teaching.
- School leaders, including governors, are very well supported by the local authority and diocese to make rapid improvements.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons or part lessons.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of staff, members of the governing body and representatives of the local authority and diocese.
- Responses from 13 parents via the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) were also taken into account, along with the most recent parental and pupil surveys undertaken by the school and letters from parents received during the inspection.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation including: assessment data, the school's evaluation of its work, minutes of governing body meetings, safeguarding documentation, reports from the school improvement partner, information about the management of teachers' performance, monitoring records and the school's improvement plan.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and also reviewed samples of their work.
- Inspectors also observed an assembly and family time in a class.

Inspection team

Clare Daniel, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sheila O'Keefe

Additional Inspector

Susan Walters

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (funding to help raise the achievement of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children of service families and children looked after by the local authority) has risen in recent years and is above average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils who do not speak English as their first language is above average.
- A below average proportion of pupils are supported through school action.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The school is currently led by the deputy headteacher in an acting headteacher role and an associate headteacher from Mount Carmel RC Primary School, Blackley. The associate headteacher is based at St Dunstan's RC Primary School for two days each week.
- The local authority and diocese have been supporting the school closely through a period of turbulence in leadership.
- The school is accredited with the School Games Gold Kitemark.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that all is good or better by:
 - ensuring that all work is always planned to meet the needs of all pupils in each class
 - using more effective questioning in lessons so that teachers have a clear view of pupils' learning and progress
 - ensuring that marking and feedback always evaluates the progress made by pupils and gives clear next steps for development so that pupils know how to improve their work.
- Build on the effectiveness of the current leadership of the school by:
 - providing appropriate support and training for staff in leadership roles so that they can monitor the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement more successfully
 - ensuring that all staff who hold specific posts of responsibility are fully accountable to school leaders for the achievement of pupils in their care
 - enabling governors to more rigorously challenge the school's performance.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement is not yet consistently good across the school. Since the very recent leadership changes, there have been improvements in achievement for most pupils but these have not yet been sustained.
- Children join the Nursery class with skills that are well below those expected for their age, particularly in their awareness of the world around them and in their creative development. Although they make good progress in most areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage, overall children's achievement requires improvement because a minority of children are still working below the expected level in reading and the majority are still working below the expected level in writing.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are average overall but with a dip in 2013. In 2013, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level in mathematics was in line with the national average, but in reading and writing, this proportion was lower than the national average. Recent actions by new leaders have ensured that rapid progress has now been made by Year 6 pupils and most of them are on track to again achieve at least expected standards in the end of Key Stage 2 tests.
- The proportion of pupils making the expected amount of progress between Key Stages 1 and 2 in reading and writing has been in line with the national average, however, it has been slightly lower in mathematics. Not enough pupils have exceeded the expected amount of progress in reading, writing or mathematics. This picture is now improving.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs has been uneven. A few pupils make very good progress, especially in mathematics, however, their achievement and progress in reading and writing is more variable. Support for pupils with disabilities is now more effective because current leaders are monitoring their progress and achievement much more closely. Almost all of the most able pupils achieve well, especially in reading.
- The school does not yet ensure that all pupils have an equality of opportunity to succeed, because progress still varies between groups.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about reading and groups of current Year 2 and Year 6 pupils demonstrated secure skills when reading to inspectors. Overall, pupils read regularly at home and at school and are making more rapid progress than previously.
- The achievement over time of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and are supported through the pupil premium is good, especially in writing and mathematics. By the time they leave Year 6, these pupils' reading skills are approximately one year behind their classmates and their writing and mathematical skills are one term behind. This represents good progress from their overall low starting points, with gaps in attainment narrowing.
- The proportion of Year 1 pupils achieving the expected standard in the 2013 national check on how pupils develop the skills of linking letters with sounds (phonics) was slightly above the national average. This is because the school has reviewed how it teaches phonics in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1, and has adopted a more structured and effective approach. Despite better progress, this has yet to impact fully on improving reading skills throughout the school.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Although there are some examples of good teaching, too many lessons are not planned to meet the needs of all pupils in the class effectively enough and, therefore, not all pupils are able to make good or better progress.
- Where teaching is not yet good, teachers do not use effective questioning to assess pupils' understanding during a lesson and are, therefore, unaware of how to help pupils progress at an appropriate pace. As a result, teachers do not recognise when pupils have not fully understood

what is being asked of them until a significant amount of time has passed, neither do they effectively identified any misconceptions that pupils may have.

- The quality of marking is variable across the school and different subjects. Some excellent marking was evident in upper Key Stage 2 in both English and mathematics, where comments evaluated the learning that had taken place, gave clear next steps for improvement and invited pupils to undertake a challenge or an extension activity. As a result, pupils were making rapid and sustained progress. However, this is not always the case across the school, and these inconsistencies mean that pupils make variable progress.
- Where teaching is good, pupils are enthusiastic and motivated to do well, there are opportunities for pupils to explore and work independently on tasks that have been well planned to meet their needs effectively and enable them to make good progress. The level of challenge is appropriate for the most able pupils and the support for lower ability groups is directed effectively so that all groups make significant steps in learning.
- In an English lesson for lower ability Year 3 and 4 pupils, the quality of teaching was good because it built on what pupils already knew and could do, and the tasks were planned to meet the needs of each group within the small class. The teacher understood how the pupils would learn best and gave them activities that were practical so that they were involved and enthusiastic about what they were learning. Potentially challenging behaviour was managed exceptionally well by the teacher and even though the level that the pupils were working at was well below that expected for their age, all pupils made good progress and ended the lesson with very secure skills, knowledge and understanding.
- There have previously been inconsistencies in how the quality of teaching has been monitored; however under the current leadership, this is far more rigorous and because school leaders now have an accurate picture of strengths and weaknesses they are more able to direct support effectively to ensure that teaching is improving rapidly.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are willing and keen to learn even in the lessons where teaching requires improvement. They have positive attitudes to learning and are enthusiastic in lessons when given the best opportunities.
- Pupils are polite, courteous and well-mannered around the school and have a genuine pride in the school which they value as a nurturing and safe community. Pupils respond well to the system of families and elders that each one belongs to and the family sessions contribute strongly to the pupils' social and moral development.
- Pupils say that they feel safe at school and that behaviour is mainly good. They are very clear about rewards and sanctions for behaviour and think that the system is fair and is used consistently by all staff.
- Pupils interact well with each other at playtime although they say that they would like some equipment to play with in order to make playtimes more enjoyable.
- The school keeps comprehensive records of behaviour issues which include details of the incident, how the school has worked with parents to resolve the issue and the outcomes for pupils.
- The majority of parents who completed the on-line questionnaire agreed that the school makes sure that its pupils are well behaved; however only a minority agreed that school deals well with bullying. There were 13 responses to the on-line questionnaire, which represents a very small proportion of parents with children registered at the school. Inspectors spoke to pupils, staff and to parents at the start and end of the day and judged that the school does deal effectively with any incidents of bullying that occur.
- Pupils have a good understanding of internet use and on-line safety and are well supported by other agencies such as the Fire Service in developing strategies for keeping themselves safe outside the school environment.
- Attendance is above average and has improved steadily in recent years. The proportion of pupils

who are late for school is low and the school has effective strategies for working with families to support them with school attendance and punctuality. Support staff know the families in school well and work effectively alongside them to support both parents and pupils with their learning.

- Pupils have a range of responsibilities including the role of sports ambassadors and elders within the school community. Pupils respect the elders within the community and say that they are good role models for others.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Although current leaders, including the associate headteacher, have identified the right priorities for improvement, until very recently this has not been the case. Previously, the pace of improvement has been too slow and effective systems to check on the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement have not been securely in place.
- Monitoring of the quality of teaching is now more thorough and accurate, although leaders recognise that this has not always be the case. Previously the systems for monitoring the quality of teaching have not been rigorous enough to ensure that teaching has been consistently good or better. Teachers have not been given clear direction or training to help them to improve.
- Teachers and school leaders now have targets based on the link between their performance and pupils' progress. In the past, targets have not been sufficiently focused to ensure that teachers and leaders could be effectively held to account for pupils' achievement. This has improved very recently and the progress that teachers and leaders make against meeting their performance targets is now much more closely monitored.
- Staff who have held middle leadership posts previously and who have had experience of monitoring teaching and achievement effectively have not had the opportunity to continue with these roles in recent years. This has resulted in the middle leadership roles in the school being underdeveloped and lacking significant impact until very recently.
- The associate headteacher and acting headteacher have used information about pupils' progress to swiftly identify groups that need additional support, such as children who are not making good progress in communication and language development in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Leaders have put focused short-term improvement plans in place to address these weaknesses and progress is monitored closely.
- School leaders, supported by the local authority and the diocese, have now identified opportunities to work with improvement partners, including the associate headteacher's school, to improve teaching and raise achievement. As a result, there is clear evidence of an improvement in the proportion of pupils making and exceeding the progress expected of them, particularly in English. This demonstrates the positive impact of current leaders in improving previous inconsistencies in performance.
- All safeguarding requirements are met.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well and is enriched with a wide range of clubs and visits. In the last school year, every pupil in the school has attended a sporting activity or club outside lesson time. The staff member responsible for managing the new Primary School Sport funding has clearly focused plans to spend the funding on raising achievement and increasing participation even further.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is very supportive of the school but has lacked sufficient understanding of pupils' achievement or the quality of teaching to be able to challenge the school effectively. Governors have relied too heavily on information that has been presented to them and recognised recently that they have lacked sufficient training to help them to be more effective in the leadership of the school. This is starting to improve as the local authority and diocese have supported the governing body closely through significant turbulence in the leadership of the school. The associate headteacher and acting headteacher ensure that the information now given to governors is accurate and based on a thorough analysis of performance. Governors now understand how to use information about teachers' performance to improve

the quality of teaching and raise achievement. Some governors visit the school in a monitoring role but this is currently at a developmental stage and the impact has not yet been sustained. The governors regularly review how the school spends pupils premium funding but do not monitor the impact on pupils' achievement rigorously enough to ensure that those pupils eligible achieve as well as their peers.

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	105526
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	426089

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	289
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Fr D Featherstone
Headteacher	Lynn Elder (Acting)
Date of previous school inspection	5 October 2011
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