

St Monica's RC Primary School

Woodsend Road South, Flixton, Urmston, Manchester, M41 6QB

Inspection dates 30 September – 1 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Children develop a love of learning from a young age in the early years where they can explore and find out things for themselves. They achieve well.
- By the time they leave Year 6, most pupils attain above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those supported by extra funding make good progress owing to high-quality support.
- The quality of teaching is good and some is outstanding. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to plan activities for pupils.
- Pupils behave well and are keen to learn. They say they feel very safe in school and learn how to keep safe elsewhere.
- The school is well led by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors. All staff share their vision for bringing out the best in pupils' personal development and academic achievement.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils make a positive contribution to the local community and are aware of national and global issues.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet strong enough in all classes to ensure that the most able pupils make outstanding progress.
- Marking does not always make it clear to pupils how to make their work better or allow pupils to act on advice given.
- Some senior leaders are new to the role and at an early stage of developing their areas of responsibility.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all classes and saw 19 lessons or parts of lessons.
- Discussions were held with pupils in lessons and their work was also discussed with them.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders and middle leaders, members of the governing body, teaching and support staff, pupils and a member of the local authority.
- Pupils' work was scrutinised in writing, mathematics and a range of other subjects.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and checked reading progress records.
- A wide range of documentation was reviewed, including national assessment data, the school's information about pupils' progress, monitoring records of the quality of teaching and the progress of pupils, and the school improvement plan. In addition, the minutes of the governing body meetings, safeguarding documentation and external reports from the local authority were reviewed.
- The inspectors took account of 65 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), and spoke informally to a number of individual parents at the start and end of the school day.

Inspection team

Gillian Hunter, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

John Shutt

Additional Inspector

Steven Ellis

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- Early years provision is available through both part-time and full-time places.
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action, school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium funding is very low compared to the national average. The pupil premium is funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Year 6.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been changes in school leadership, including the headteacher and deputy headteacher, governors and staff.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching further so that more pupils make outstanding progress by:
 - ensuring that the most able pupils always do work that challenges them to reach the highest standards of which they are capable
 - making full use of marking to help pupils improve their work.
- Improve further the effectiveness of leadership and management by developing the skills of new and less experienced senior leaders to ensure that new initiatives are fully implemented and their impact on raising achievement is measured.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- School leaders, including governors, have high expectations for themselves, staff and pupils. Staff strive to raise standards and give pupils the best academic and social education they can.
- Systems of appraisal ensure that all staff are held to account for the quality of their teaching and pupils' progress. Termly assessments are analysed by teachers and leaders who then provide appropriate support for pupils who are at risk of underachieving. Meetings are held for teachers to account for pupils' performance. These processes provide opportunities for leaders to identify any additional support individual staff members might need.
- The recently restructured senior leadership team is working well. The headteacher is aware of the need to develop the skills of the new and less experienced leaders further. Together they are committed to making sure that all staff raise their expectations of the most able pupils throughout the school so that they attain higher standards and make better progress.
- Middle and senior leaders work well together and with their colleagues to plan lessons and check on pupils' progress. They have made a good start in delivering the new national curriculum.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, preparing them well for secondary school and for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life in modern Britain. For instance, it encourages pupils to develop good attitudes to learning, to behave well and keep safe, to learn about a variety of faiths and cultures as well as to learn tolerance and the differences between right and wrong. Pupils contribute to the community through activities like raising funds for charity or helping other children in the school.
- The local authority provides effective support and the linked improvement partner has a clear and accurate overview of the school's performance. Reports provide the school and the governing body with an accurate picture of the school's effectiveness.
- Parents who spoke to inspectors were very positive. They appreciate the work of the school in teaching, behaviour and the curriculum.
- The pupil premium funding is used effectively to provide additional support. External specialist support is funded as appropriate. As a result, achievement gaps between eligible pupils and their classmates are closing rapidly.
- The primary school sport funding is used well. The school has an effective leader who is coordinating the work of sport development. They have employed a specialist sports coach to train teachers to improve their teaching skills and to offer pupils the opportunity to be involved in a variety of sporting activities. New equipment, including sports kit for pupils, has been purchased. The school enters pupils for competitive sporting activities against other local schools. These opportunities have increased pupils' participation and are improving their physical well-being.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is highly effective and consists of a range of experienced professionals including parents with a wide range of valuable skills and a passion to provide the very best for the children and pupils in the school.
 - Governors are actively involved in school life and are well known to staff and pupils.
 - Governors hold the headteacher to account to ensure that improvements are made. They are well informed and have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and pupils' progress.
 - Governors have a clear understanding of the systems and processes used to determine teachers' effectiveness in enabling pupils to make good progress. Decisions about teachers' pay are appropriately linked to performance and responsibilities and, where weaknesses have been identified, the governing body has been appropriately involved.
 - Governors track finances well and are fully involved in decisions about how to spend additional money, such as the pupil premium and sports funding. They are clear about how funds have been used and the subsequent improvements made to pupils' attendance, behaviour and progress.
 - The governing body ensures that safeguarding procedures are in line with regulations in all respects.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils behave sensibly in lessons and the majority behave well at breaks and lunchtimes.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and proudly wear their uniform, take care of the school's environment and neatly present their work in their books.
- The relationship between pupils, teachers and other adults are positive and respectful. Pupils arrive punctually to school and to their lessons, and are keen to learn. They happily work with their classmates and help each other with their work. Their positive attitudes help them to make good progress.
- Good systems and strategies are in place to reward and improve pupils' behaviour.
- Attendance is above the national average overall. The number of vulnerable pupils who have had high levels of absence has reduced considerably over the past year.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils know that if they have any concerns, they can approach an adult who will help them sort out any difficulties that they may be experiencing. Through assemblies and the curriculum, they learn how to keep themselves safe both in and out of school, such as when using the internet and when on the roads.
- Pupils are aware of the various forms of bullying, including cyber bullying. Pupils, parents and staff report that bullying is rare and, in the few instances when this may occur, it is dealt with quickly and appropriately.
- Most parents spoken with during the inspection and through responses to the online questionnaire indicated they believe behaviour is good. Parents think their children are kept safe and commented on how their children enjoyed school.

The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils have a very positive attitude to their learning; they work hard and cooperate well with each other.
- The teaching of phonics (sounds that letters make) is strong in the early years and throughout Key Stage 1. This gives children an excellent start, especially in reading.
- Pupils make good and sometimes better progress when the challenge in class requires them to think more deeply about their learning. In a Year 6 English lesson, for example, pupils were encouraged to use increasingly complex sentences in their writing as they considered the thoughts and feelings of an elderly man as he reflected back on his life: 'His eyes close and his heart opens with emotional memories which are clinging on and will never let go.' The most able pupils in particular rose to the challenge.
- Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and work and there is mutual respect between pupils and their teachers. As a result, pupils are generally keen to get on with their work and try to learn successfully by following their teachers' instructions.
- Pupils needing additional help, such as those with special educational needs, are given well-targeted support by teaching assistants or other adults so that all can learn well and make good progress.
- Pupils' work is regularly marked; feedback is given verbally and sometimes in writing. However, this does not always consistently identify clearly what pupils must do in order to attain higher-level skills and improve.
- Effective teamwork by teachers, teaching assistants and volunteers ensures a high level of support for all groups of pupils.
- Teachers mainly prepare activities that engage and interest pupils well. Teachers prepare work at different levels of challenge for pupils. For the most able, however, the work set is not always challenging enough in all classes to stretch them sufficiently to ensure that they make rapid progress.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children make good progress in the early years. By the end of the Reception Year, most children achieve a good level of development for their age.
- Progress and the pace of learning continue well in Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics, so that achievement is above the national average. From the school's assessment records and from pupils' work in lessons and books, this looks set to continue.

- The proportion of pupils reaching standards typical for their age is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils who are attaining above the national expectation is now broadly average, which is an improvement on 2013. Improving the progress of the most able pupils has been identified as a continuing priority for the school. Inspection evidence shows that their progress is continuing to improve, especially by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to reading and make very good progress. Their knowledge and understanding of phonics are outstanding and provide pupils with a good base for future reading development. Older pupils acquire and apply more advanced reading skills, such as deduction and inference.
- By the end of Year 6, the proportion of pupils reaching expected levels for their age are well above the national average in reading and are above the national average in writing and mathematics. The proportion reaching the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics is average.
- Pupils make good progress during their time at the school. This is because learning is well planned, support is well targeted and pupils have good attitudes to learning. They try hard and want to succeed. Some of the most able pupils do not consistently make the rapid progress needed to reach the highest standards of which they are capable; this is because teachers do not always give these pupils work that challenges them sufficiently and, too often, they are expected to repeat work which they have already fully mastered.
- There are few disadvantaged pupils in the school. The school's data showing current and the previous years' achievement show very little difference in the attainment and progress of these pupils and those of non-disadvantaged pupils both in the school and nationally. As a result of well-targeted support, most groups, including low attainers, pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs make very good progress and attain well. This demonstrates the school's commitment to equality of opportunity.

The early years provision

is good

- Children enter Nursery with knowledge and skills that are overall below those typical for their age.
- Children are offered a wide range of learning activities and adults regularly check children's attainment. This has a positive impact on children's achievement and enjoyment.
- Adults have established good-quality relationships with the children and create a positive and stimulating environment for them to learn and flourish. The children feel safe, grow in confidence and relate well to adults and other children. Their behaviour is positive.
- Children are making good progress in the different areas of learning. This is because of good teaching and the interesting range of indoor and outdoor activities. Children make good progress in speaking and listening because adults encourage them to talk about their learning.
- The early years is well led and managed. There are strong links with parents, families and other settings. All adults motivate and nurture children as they engage in their activities. The experiences provided are based on accurate assessment of their learning and development needs. Adults foster positive attitudes to learning and ensure that children are able to make choices and decisions and to think critically.

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	106356
Local authority	Trafford
Inspection number	448899

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	325
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Fahey
Headteacher	Louise Davies
Date of previous school inspection	16 June 2010
Telephone number	0161 748 3353
Fax number	0161 747 7860
Email address	stmonicas.admin@trafford.gov.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2014

