



Inspection report

Arundale Community Primary and Nursery School

**Better
education
and care**

Unique Reference Number 106184
LEA Tameside

Inspection number 273647
Inspection dates 2 and 3 March 2005
Reporting inspector Mr D Simpson HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 3 of the School Inspections Act 1996 and was deemed a section 10 inspection under the same Act.

Type of School	Primary	School address	Lowry Grove
School category	Community		Mottram
			Hyde
Age range of pupils	3 to 11 years		Tameside
			SK14 6PW
Gender of pupils	mixed	Telephone number	01457 762328
Number on roll	177	Fax number	01457 766439
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs N Hargreaves
Date of previous inspection	February 2004	Headteacher	Mrs J Connor

Age group	Published	Reference no.
3 to 11 years	13 April 2005	273647

Introduction

When Arundale Community Primary and Nursery School was inspected in February 2004, it was judged to require special measures because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education. Her Majesty's Inspectors of schools (HMI) subsequently visited the school on one occasion to monitor its progress, and reinspected the school in March 2005.

Description of the school

Arundale Community Primary and Nursery School is situated in Hattersley, a well-established local authority estate on the outskirts of Hyde. The school is smaller than average with 177 pupils on roll, including 23 who attend the nursery part-time. The number on roll has declined steadily in recent years. All the pupils are from white British backgrounds. Sixty per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is well above average. At 18 per cent, the proportion of the pupils identified as having special educational needs is slightly below the national average. Three of the pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need which is in line with the national average in relation to the size of the school.

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Overall effectiveness of the school

In accordance with section 14 of the School Inspections Act 1996, I am of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures, since it is now providing an acceptable standard of education for its pupils.

Arundale Community Primary and Nursery School has been beset by difficulties for a long time and had suffered significant turbulence within the senior management team before the appointment of the present headteacher in the spring term of 2004. Since then, the school has improved rapidly. The headteacher is providing assured and vigorous leadership and has established an ethos in which all staff are involved in, and committed to, school improvement. The deputy headteacher and the co-ordinators for English, mathematics and science make a significant contribution to monitoring provision and identifying future priorities. The role of the other co-ordinators is less well developed. There are permanent teachers in every class; the overall quality of teaching has improved and is now satisfactory, although more could be consistently good or better. Standards are well below national averages and below what they should be, but are rising. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good; they are confident, enthusiastic and have a desire to learn.

Improvement since the last inspection

The inspection of February 2004 required the school to address areas for improvement concerning standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT), the quality of teaching and learning of basic skills, leadership and management, and attendance and punctuality. There has been good progress in relation to leadership and management, and attendance and punctuality, and satisfactory progress elsewhere, though standards need to rise further.

Capacity to improve

The school is well placed to sustain its recent progress. Results at the end of Key Stage 2 declined in 2004, but improvements in the quality of teaching and the imaginative grouping of pupils have the potential to raise attainment. The headteacher has a strong focus on raising standards and improving the pupils' attitude to work, and she has been well supported by staff, governors and the local education authority (LEA). Teachers, teaching assistants and learning mentors recognise their shared responsibility for continued improvement. Robust monitoring systems are becoming established. The budget is well managed. Time is well used to help teachers with planning, preparation and assessment and to enhance the overall quality of leadership and management by enabling the deputy headteacher to teach across all year groups. The LEA has appropriate systems to continue to monitor progress to ensure that the school receives the support to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

The school's development plan recognises the areas where improvement is needed. However the key priorities are to:

- continue to raise standards;
- increase the proportion of good or better teaching;
- strengthen the co-ordination of the foundation subjects.

Achievement and standards

Standards of attainment are well below average compared to all schools, although over the last five years the pupils' results have been broadly in line with those for similar schools. The pupils make a satisfactory start in the Foundation Stage. The pupils' progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall and good in Year 5, but past weaknesses in the quality of teaching have contributed to widespread underachievement. This is reflected in the results of national tests taken at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2004, which were well below average in relation to national figures and poorer than the pupils' prior attainment indicated was possible.

In lessons, standards are generally below age-related expectations and well below in English in the latter part of Key Stage 2. The school is aware that standards need to rise and that the progress made by the pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 has been insufficient. Measures to boost attainment, including the use of regular assessments to track individual progress, are in their infancy but are beginning to make inroads into the pupils' underachievement.

Personal development

As a result of high expectations and effective, consistent routines, the pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. The pupils are enthusiastic, keen to learn, ambitious to improve and take pride in their achievements. They treat one another and adults politely and with consideration. The rate of attendance has risen significantly from 89.7 per cent in 2002 to 94.2 per cent for the autumn term of 2004, a figure that is just below the national average. This reflects the pupils' enjoyment of their learning, as well as the school's very effective strategies to promote good attendance.

The pupils accept responsibilities readily, for example by supervising corridors, organising arrangements for assemblies and helping the teachers organise their resources.

The overall provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The pupils play and work well together, and have a sure sense of right and wrong. Good opportunities are available to join in a range of activities, such as clubs for art and craft and

science, and a variety of sports teams. The pupils have relevant opportunities to reflect on other religions and cultures and the curriculum is enriched through the entitlement for all pupils to work with an artist in residence.

Quality of provision

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall; it was at least satisfactory in all the lessons and sometimes good. The staff have worked hard as a team to implement improvements as a result of training and to address the areas for improvement identified in lesson observations. A culture of sharing ideas and being receptive to criticism is becoming well established.

The best lessons set high expectations and were well planned, taught with enthusiasm and consistently engaged the pupils in their learning. Probing questions assessed the pupils' progress and developed their understanding. The pupils responded well to opportunities to articulate and explain their thoughts at length. Teaching assistants played an effective part in leading group activities and keeping the pupils attentive when the class was being taught as a whole. Where teaching was satisfactory, a common weakness was that the teacher did not sufficiently extend and challenge the pupils in order to accelerate progress.

A thorough system for assessing and tracking the pupils' progress has been established. This is relatively new, but information has been analysed to show where individual pupils need additional help or where subject teaching needs to be strengthened. Group targets are well established, regularly reinforced by teachers and revised every three weeks to maintain a focus on continuing improvement. Marking is satisfactory and systematically recognises what the pupils have achieved and need to do to make further progress.

The curriculum is broad and balanced, and it meets statutory requirements. Suitable emphasis is given to helping the pupils with their basic literacy skills, and lesson observations focus upon the application of these skills across subjects. In 2003-04 the full national Programmes of Study were not being taught for science and ICT in Key Stage 2. These shortcomings have been addressed and ICT plays an increasingly pronounced role in learning throughout the curriculum.

Pupils feel safe and well cared-for in the school. They are confident to turn to adults for help. Break times are well supervised and a good range of play equipment enables the pupils to enjoy games and physical exercise. Governors report that the local community has an increasingly high regard for the school. The learning mentors are playing a significant role in encouraging parents and carers to visit the school and participate in activities such as after-school clubs designed to support their involvement in homework.

Leadership and management

The headteacher is providing very good leadership. She has established a clear vision for the school's development and a culture in which all staff contribute to further improvement.

The deputy headteacher is providing good leadership in improving the use of assessment. Literacy, numeracy and science are co-ordinated confidently across the school although the leaders of other subjects have had more limited impact on curriculum development. The governors are regular visitors to the school and support a variety of activities, including sporting events, road safety education, and they have provided resources for the teaching of English. They have established effective systems to monitor the school's progress and are kept well informed. The school has an appropriate agenda for future improvement driven by thorough procedures for monitoring and evaluation.

The LEA has made a pivotal contribution to the school's recovery. Various consultants, in particular the headteacher of another school in the LEA, have given very good support in developing the capacity of the school's senior leadership. The school's adviser has co-ordinated this work effectively to ensure that Arundale becomes a self-sufficient and well-managed school.

Appendix – Information about the inspection

Arundale Community Primary and Nursery School was inspected in February 2004 by HMI under section 3 of the School Inspections Act 1996, which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was deemed a section 10 inspection under the same Act. The inspection was critical of many aspects of the work of the school and, in accordance with that Act. The school was made subject to special measures because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education.

The school was visited by HMI in November 2004 to assess the progress it was making to implement its action plan and address the key issues in the inspection report of February 2004.

In March 2005, two HMI returned to inspect the school for two days. The inspection was carried out under section 3 of the School Inspections Act 1996, and was also deemed a section 10 inspection under the same Act.

During the visit 13 lessons or parts of lessons, two registrations and one assembly were inspected. The pupils' conduct was observed around the school and on the playground at break and lunchtimes, and samples of their work were inspected. Discussions were held with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, other members of staff, the chair and vice-chair of the governing body and two representatives from the LEA. A wide range of the school's documentation was scrutinised. Account was taken of the evidence from the previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection assessed the quality of education provided and the progress the school has made, in particular in relation to the main findings and areas for improvement in the inspection report of February 2004 and the action plan prepared by the governing body to address those key issues.

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