



Aspinal Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 105390
LEA Manchester
Inspection number 277349
Inspection dates 17 May 2006 to 18 May 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs Brenda McIntosh CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Broadacre Road
School category	Community		Gorton
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Manchester, Lancashire M18 7NY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0161 2230053
Number on roll	163	Fax number	0161 2310658
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Ms D Mythen
Date of previous inspection	17 January 2000	Headteacher	Mr Neil Flint

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Introduction

Three Additional Inspectors carried out the inspection.

Description of the school

Aspinal Primary School is smaller than average. Pupils come from a variety of social and economic backgrounds. The number eligible for free school meals is above average. The majority of pupils are from a white British heritage. No pupils speak English as an additional language. About an average number of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The number of pupils who start or leave the school other than at the usual time is above average. A very small proportion of pupils are in the care of the local authority.

Over the past two years, the school has undergone some significant staffing changes, and sometimes as a result of quite tragic circumstances. Prior to this there was a period of disruption in the leadership and management of the school. The headteacher was appointed in September 2004 and the deputy headteacher in April 2005.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Aspinal School provides a satisfactory education. This judgement confirms the school's view of its effectiveness. It gives satisfactory value for money. Amongst its strengths lie pupils' good personal development and the strong attention given to their emotional well-being. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. It is good in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1, and as a result, pupils achieve well. In Key Stage 2, pupils' achievement is no better than satisfactory owing to inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning. In 2005, overall standards at the end of Year 6 were below average. Pupils are not always clear about what it is they are expected to learn or how they can improve their work. Furthermore, the system for checking how well pupils are doing and setting challenging targets is not rigorous enough to raise their achievement further.

Pupils behave well, have positive attitudes to learning and work hard. One pupil made it quite clear, 'If you don't come to school to learn and develop your skills you won't get a good job'. The curriculum is satisfactory with a good range of enrichment activities that extends pupils' learning experiences and promotes good social skills. The use of ICT is insufficient to enable pupils to use their developing skills across a wider range of subjects. Care and academic guidance are satisfactory, with good personal support given to the pupils. Leadership and management are satisfactory and improvement since the last inspection is adequate. There are undoubted strengths in the headteacher's leadership in creating a secure, stimulating learning environment in which pupils feel valued. Self-evaluation is accurate and the school has a good awareness of its strengths and what needs to be improved. However, the monitoring systems are not yet robust enough to improve the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 and staff strengths are not always used to best effect. With the increased stability in the leadership and a shared vision to raise standards, the school is demonstrating the necessary capacity to move forward.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make better use of assessment to set challenging targets for all pupils and check regularly to see how well pupils are progressing towards meeting them in order to raise standards and achievement, particularly in Key Stage 2.
- Ensure the monitoring of teaching results in a greater consistency in quality and improves pupils' learning and achievement.
- Create more opportunity for pupils to use their ICT skills across other subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory. Children enter the Foundation stage with skills that are below those expected for their age. They make good progress and the majority meet the standards expected at the end of the Reception Year. Very few children exceed them. In Years 1 and 2, pupils continue to make good progress because of the

consistently good teaching. In 2005, results were above average at the end of Year 2. However, achievement is satisfactory after that. In Years 3 to 6, pupils' progress has varied over the last few years and has often lost momentum owing to inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning brought about by changes in staffing and disruptions in the leadership. Since 2003, the progress of pupils has been satisfactory at best. In 2005, results at the end of Year 6 were broadly average in English but below average in mathematics and science. Currently, Year 6 pupils are on course to reach broadly average standards overall. However, the target setting process is insufficiently rigorous to set challenging enough targets to raise pupils' achievement further. Pupils with learning and/or disabilities now make at least satisfactory progress as a result of the recently improved provision for these pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Provision for pupils' personal development and well-being is good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their keenness to learn and to gain badges for good attendance. Overall, attendance is broadly average and showing improvement. Throughout the school and in the playground, pupils behave well. In class they are attentive to their teachers and most work hard.

Pupils are friendly and polite to each other and to adults. They recognise they are valued and treated with respect. One pupil said, 'Our teachers are always polite to us'. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They express their feelings well and are developing a good awareness that all are equal, whatever their background. Pupils eagerly take on a range of duties, such as being buddies which help pupils from feeling isolated at playtimes. School councillors know they are 'the pupils' voice'. They discharge their responsibilities effectively and know that their decisions can influence the school's future plans. For example, they have been actively involved in the appointment process for new staff, deciding on questions and interviewing candidates. Pupils are developing an understanding of Fair Trade with respect to global issues, through its links with schools in Zambia and Cape Town. The links have involved e-mail exchange which helped pupils discover aspects of life in South Africa.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers know their pupils well and the information they give them is generally reliable and accurate. Their management of pupils is good so there is rarely any disruption of lessons. Pupils talk warmly about their teachers and appreciate the way they are treated. Teaching in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 is consistently good and on occasions outstanding. Here, pupils are involved actively in exciting and imaginative activities that fully engage

them in their learning. They respond to the breathtaking pace of lessons by working really hard for their teachers. In these lessons, pupils make much better than expected progress because they know what they have to learn and are given clear targets to achieve. However, teaching is not consistent throughout the school and the aforementioned strengths are not always found in the lessons in Key Stage 2. There are times when pupils' curiosity and creativity is constrained because teachers talk too much and do not allow the pupils enough opportunity to take control of their own learning. Pupils make satisfactory progress in such lessons but they do not enjoy them as much. In addition, not all teachers match the learning activities to the needs of the pupils, resulting in some finding the work too hard or too easy.

The assessment of pupils' work and setting of pupils' individual targets is another area where variation and inconsistency are apparent. Pupils' work is usually marked but comments vary from 'needs more practice' to more detailed feedback indicating how the pupil could have reached higher standards. The tracking of pupils' progress is not yet robust enough. However, good use is made of detailed assessments of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to ensure that the specialist support provided for them is effective.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory with good enrichment activities. Positive developments have been undertaken recently which contribute well to pupils' social and emotional development. Work in the classroom is complemented by a good variety of lunchtime and after-school clubs, which are well attended. Links with other schools, including two in Cape Town, visits and visitors extend pupils' opportunities for learning. For example, storytellers and Zulu dancers contribute to pupils' cultural development. The school has correctly identified problem solving and investigation skills in mathematics and science as areas for development, especially in Key Stage 2. The use of ICT is insufficient to enable pupils to use their developing skills across a wider range of subjects.

Pupils are taught well about healthy food options and encouraged to consider lifestyle choices. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good. Children enjoy learning through practical activities which are invitingly set out to promote instant play and stimulate independent learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall. The school has introduced a range of successful initiatives such as 'calm spaces' to support pupils' personal and emotional well-being. Pupils value the 'calm room' and the activities within it, and the opportunity to talk about their feelings and understand their own emotions. Child protection procedures are in place but it is some time since all staff have received any training. Pupils say they feel safe and happy in school and are confident that adults will listen to them if they have any worries. Arrangements for health and safety are satisfactory.

The school works hard to ensure a safe learning environment but some formal documentation is out of date. Pupils are taught how to lead healthy lifestyles and to keep safe. Links with outside agencies are effective and ensure that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive the support they need. Some teachers provide helpful comments in their marking to guide pupils in their learning but this good practice is not consistent throughout the school. There are good transfer arrangements to assist pupils to move to the next stage in their education.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. There has been a period of disruption to the management of the school but, with the appointment of the new headteacher and deputy headteacher, things are now much more stable. The headteacher is committed to providing a safe, stimulating learning environment for the pupils. He has focused on improving their personal and emotional well-being and this has resulted in a school where pupils behave well, communicate freely and cooperate fully in a variety of aspects of school life. The headteacher has brought fresh eyes to evaluating the performance of the school. He has a good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The views of parents and pupils are actively sought, and have influenced priorities in improving the school. He has successfully secured effective links with a range of community partners to extend the school's provision. Monitoring systems are satisfactory but not yet robust enough to evaluate the quality of teaching so that good practice can be shared and teaching improved. The school improvement plan identifies the correct priorities for improvement and there is now a sharper focus on raising standards and pupils' achievement. Not all staff have been involved enough in evaluating performance.

Although very supportive of the school, governors have not, until recently, challenged the work of the school enough. They have focused on ensuring the learning environment is pleasant and secure but have not checked for themselves that pupils are making enough progress. Given the difficult circumstances the school has had to overcome and, although in need of tightening, the strategies now in place are starting to secure the necessary improvement.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for being so friendly. We enjoyed our visit very much and the opportunity to talk with you. We want to share with you what we thought about your school.

What we liked most about your school

- Those lessons which are exciting and make learning fun.
- Your good behaviour and how you are very polite to adults.
- The good range of clubs and other interesting activities.
- The 'Calm Room' where you can go and have some peace and quiet and talk about how you are feeling.
- Displays of your work which make the school a bright and cheery place in which to learn.
- The enthusiasm of the school council in helping to improve the school.

What we have asked your school to do now

- To make all lessons exciting and fun.
- Give you all individual targets to help you with your learning and check regularly to make sure you are progressing at a fast enough pace towards reaching them.
- Give you more opportunities to use your ICT skills in different subjects.

With very best wishes to you all for the future and I hope you continue to work hard and enjoy your coming to school.