



St Chrysostom's CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 105491
LEA Manchester
Inspection number 277362
Inspection dates 5 June 2006 to 6 June 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Ian Thompson CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Lincoln Grove
School category	Voluntary controlled		Chorlton-on-Medlock
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Manchester, Lancashire M13 0DX
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0161 2733621
Number on roll	249	Fax number	0161 2731955
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr D Wilkin
Date of previous inspection	4 October 1999	Headteacher	Ms M Michael

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This average size school serves an area with a high level of social and economic deprivation. Eligibility for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is much greater than average as is the proportion at an early stage of learning English. The proportions of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or with a statement of special educational need are broadly average. Many more pupils than usual enter or leave the school at other than the usual times. Over recent years the school has gone through a period of considerable turbulence including high staff turnover together with many changes in management and governance. The headteacher has been in post in an acting capacity since September 2005 and substantively since March 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory standard of education. Inspectors agree with the school's evaluation of all aspects of its work as satisfactory, with the exception of the Foundation Stage where quality and standards are good. The school has begun to turn around from a crisis point following a period of decline. Staff morale has improved. Although standards are well below average, pupils' achievement is improving and is satisfactory in relation to their starting points. The school has gained the support of the majority of parents. At a meeting with an inspector, a parent said, to general agreement, 'The school has come alive'. However, much needs to be done to consolidate the school's position. Teaching and learning are satisfactory but improvement is needed in the use of assessment to support both planning and pupils' progress. Marking is supportive but inconsistent in telling pupils how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Care guidance and support are satisfactory as are pupils' personal development and well-being. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher provides strong leadership that has brought about considerable improvement in a short time so that the school has a good capacity to improve further. Nevertheless, improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory because of the subsequent period of decline in the school's performance. A programme of monitoring classroom performance has led to some improvement of teaching and learning but the system requires further development to help raise standards. Governance is satisfactory. The governing body has been reorganised better to support the school's development. However, there is currently no long-term plan for the school's improvement. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Produce a plan for the long-term development of the school.
- Improve the use of assessment to support planning and to improve pupils' achievement.
- Improve the monitoring of classroom performance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Inspection evidence confirms the school's judgement that pupils' achievement as they move through the school is satisfactory. Pupils enter the school with well below average standards, particularly in communication, language and literacy. A substantial minority show difficulties of personal, social and emotional development. They make good progress in social learning in the Foundation Stage but nevertheless standards of literacy and numeracy remain well below average at the beginning of Year 1. Results in national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2005 were well below average overall and the school's targets were missed. Girls did better than boys. As a result of the headteacher's initiatives, such as weekend booster classes, standards in English show a rising trend and the majority of pupils make at least the expected progress; in mathematics there

has been some improvement so that most pupils make satisfactory progress but in science the school acknowledges that improvement is needed in pupils' application of their knowledge. The school's data analysis confirms that the majority of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are making satisfactory progress in relation to their starting points. The majority of pupils at an early stage of learning English make similarly satisfactory progress to others. However, boys of Black-African backgrounds do not do as well, in relation to national averages, as pupils from other minority ethnic groups. This is mainly because these boys are not consistently challenged to make the progress of which they are capable. A high level of staffing changes in recent years has affected the continuity of all pupils' learning and slowed progress. New leadership is tackling these barriers and, as a result, pupils' progress and achievement are improving, as observations during the inspection show.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Parents and pupils confirm that the school provides an environment in which pupils feel safe, happy and respected. Pupils have very positive views about their education. The considerable emphasis placed on moral and social aspects of their education leads to pupils' growing understanding of justice and self-respect. These aspects are taught well and now have a considerable impact on pupils' good attitudes and behaviour. Pupils' attendance has improved recently and is now approaching national averages. Pupils are developing responsibility for themselves, others and their surroundings. They respond well to the newly acquired opportunities to participate in the running of the school, for example by involvement in the school council. Pupils have a good awareness of the school community and the local community; they make contributions to both, by, for example, participating in the '100 days for Manchester' social behaviour programme. Pupils know and follow safe practices well, such as those that impact on their physical well-being in using tools and equipment. However, their involvement in the life of the school and the encouragement that they receive to take responsibility, are in the early stages of development. Insufficient consideration is given in some lessons to building the skills of independent learning, and self-knowledge which underpin key aspects of personal development linked to pupils' future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The best teaching is characterised by lessons which bristle with pace and are packed with challenge for the pupils. They are made fun, are exciting and teachers make sure that the work is well matched to pupils' different needs. Teachers use their own knowledge and enthusiasm to bring learning to life for their pupils, and teaching assistants are used well to contribute to pupils' learning. Where teaching is satisfactory, the shortcomings are that lessons lack

a sense of urgency; too little is asked of pupils or lessons are dominated by teacher talk and pupils' interest wanes.

Scrutiny of pupils' books indicates similar variations. In some classes, there is a lack of challenge and expectation. Although some marking of pupils' work is good, this is not universally the case. Too often, assessment, tracking and target setting have been weak, and marking does not always make clear what pupils need to do in order to improve their work. These factors, together with inaccuracies in teacher assessments, have meant that underachievement has not always been identified or been given remedial attention. The headteacher has recognised this and is robustly addressing these weaknesses. Together with senior staff, she has had some success, particularly in producing reliable data to chart the progress of the current Year 6. There has been progress in the use of assessment to support learning across the school, but improvements are at an early stage.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and meets statutory requirements. It matches the needs of all groups of pupils. Appropriate emphasis is placed on developing pupils' basic skills in English and mathematics. The practical curriculum used in the Foundation Stage is good, and the school is now building effectively on the best elements of this to ensure a smoother transition to the National Curriculum in Year 1. The school has begun to seek ways to make learning more purposeful and enjoyable, such as by making clearer links between subjects, although this too is at an early stage of improvement. The school makes good use of its outdoor provision to support all pupils' physical development, for learning through play and developing their awareness of their environment. Pupils learn to respect others through the 'Calm room' activities and circle time. The curriculum also helps pupils to understand issues related to healthy lifestyles by teaching the dangers of tobacco, alcohol and substance abuse. The curriculum is enriched by suitable educational visits to a wide range of amenities, including places of religious worship, and by a range of clubs, such as the breakfast club. International food days contribute well to pupils' knowledge and understanding of the wider world.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care guidance and support are satisfactory with some strong features. The school provides a welcoming and supportive atmosphere for its multi-cultural community. It deals well with the variety of language needs of new entrants to ensure that appropriate support is given to each pupil. Opportunities to celebrate cultural diversity are found throughout the school's curriculum. Christian assemblies pay regard to the range of pupils' faiths and cultural backgrounds to foster mutual respect and understanding. Staff are sensitive to pupils' individual needs. Vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported. Appropriate procedures for child protection, safe recruitment and site security are in place. The school aims to encourage

parents' involvement in their children's education through a range of initiatives, including newsletters and improved representation on the governing body. The school has begun to monitor pupils' progress and this is starting to inform the targets it sets for individuals and groups, although further development is required.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. All groups involved with the school agree that there has been considerable improvement in the short time since the appointment of the headteacher. She has set a clear direction and provided strong leadership to manage the school's improvement. The priorities of improving teaching and learning, achievement, attendance, behaviour and parental involvement have been correctly identified and a good start has been made to tackle them. Nevertheless, it is clear that much remains to be done to build on the foundation that has been established. This is particularly the case in respect of long term strategic planning. The current improvement plan was clearly intended as an interim measure to deal with immediate needs. There is also much to be done to enhance the system of middle management monitoring. Here development has been impeded both by the absence of key staff and the lack of a structure matched to the school's development needs. Governors are now well informed and aware of the challenges that the school faces. The governing body has been reorganised to increase the parents' voice in shaping the direction of the school, to hold it appropriately to account for its performance and to manage its finances effectively. Governors are managing the school's large financial deficit through a plan agreed with the local authority that aims to produce a balanced budget in three years.

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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?	3	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	No	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?	3	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	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	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	2	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

As you know, Mrs Auton, Mr Cohen and I visited your school to check on how well it is doing.

Thank you very much for the way you welcomed us into your school. We enjoyed talking to you about your work and your life in the school. We appreciated the courtesy and help you gave us. We agree with you that the school is a safe and happy place where everyone can enjoy learning.

The best things about the school are:

- it is improving and becoming a better place to learn
- everyone in the school cares for you so that you know that you can get help with any difficulties
- you behave well, get on well together and help each other
- there are lots of extra activities that you enjoy.

We have asked your teachers to improve some things to make your school a better place to learn. These are:

- to make plans so that the school continues to improve
- to help you make progress by making sure you know how well you are doing and how to improve your work
- to keep checking that lessons are as good as they should be.

Thank you for helping us with our work. We hope that you carry on enjoying being in the school and continue to help to make it an even better place to learn.