



St Margaret's CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 105493
LEA Manchester
Inspection number 277363
Inspection dates 5 July 2006 to 6 July 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Arthur Markham CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Withington Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		Whalley Range
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Manchester, Lancashire M16 8FQ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0161 2262271
Number on roll	362	Fax number	0161 2263418
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Rev R Boulter
Date of previous inspection	30 October 2000	Headteacher	Mrs E Richardson

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average size primary school. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups is very high and a large number are at the early stage of learning English. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is well above average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. On entry to the Nursery many children have low level skills. Pupil mobility is above average. There has been high staff turnover in the last two years. The school has Investor in People status.

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 judges its overall effectiveness to be satisfactory and the inspectors agree. The school provides satisfactory value for money. Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, although outdoor learning is affected by the lack of an outdoor area for Reception children. Children make steady progress in the Nursery and Reception classes, but by the time they finish the Reception year standards are well below those expected nationally. There has been a determined drive to improve teaching and learning since the recent appointment of a new headteacher. This is proving successful and teaching is now good. As a result, the rate of progress being made by pupils throughout the school is improving. However, standards in English, mathematics and science, although rising, are well below national averages throughout the school. Self evaluation procedures are good and the school is consequently well aware of the need to raise standards. Pupils are well cared for and, as a result, they feel safe and happy in school. Their personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Attendance levels are below average despite the school's determined approach to improve them. The curriculum is satisfactory. It is enriched by visits and after school clubs that contribute well to pupils' enjoyment of school. Parents value the school's work highly, one saying, 'The school is our community's biggest asset.'

The overall quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The headteacher is providing strong leadership, but subject leadership requires further improvement. Governors meet their responsibilities well. They effectively challenge and support the school and share the commitment to raising standards. The school has addressed the issues from the previous inspection satisfactorily and is well placed to improve in the future.

What the school should do to improve further

- improve the progress made by pupils in order to raise standards in English, mathematics and science throughout the school
- develop the leadership and management skills of subject coordinators
- improve the provision for outdoor learning for the Reception classes
- work with parents to create an understanding of the need for regular attendance to improve pupils' learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory. The high number of pupils at the early stage of learning English as an additional language and above average rates of mobility have an adverse impact on standards. An increase in the numbers of refugee children and significant changes in staffing have also had a detrimental effect in recent years. Although there have been recent improvements in the quality of teaching this has yet to have full impact. The school's analysis of children's attainment shows that most make reasonable progress from their low level of skill on entry to the Nursery. They make steady progress

in the Foundation Stage but, by the end of the Reception year, standards are well below those expected nationally. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards continue to be well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. In Years 3 to 6 most pupils make satisfactory progress, but standards are well below average, although they compare satisfactorily with standards in similar schools. The school's involvement in a local authority improvement programme is having a positive impact on standards. An initial examination of test results in 2006 shows that there has been a slight improvement in performance at both key stages.

Close attention is given to equality of opportunity and the school works hard to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met. Pupils who learn English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress overall because of the good support they receive. Pupils generally meet the targets they are set, although these are not sufficiently challenging.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Personal development and well-being is satisfactory. Pupils enjoy their learning and are appreciative of the staffs' helpfulness to them. Behaviour has improved as a result of the school's involvement in a behaviour improvement project and is now good. Bullying and racism are rare and pupils are confident that any incidents will be dealt with swiftly and sensitively.

Pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. The school council represents their classmates well and has been instrumental in bringing about changes in school life. For example buddy benches have been set up at playtime and funds raised to support future projects. Pupils take on responsibilities such as interpreters for one of the many languages spoken in the school. They are aware of how to stay safe and make healthy life style choices. Reasonable attention is given to the development of pupils' basic skills, which will aid them when they leave school. Parents are very pleased with the way that cultural understanding is developed and the community's diversity celebrated, one making the comment, 'A very friendly school that celebrates all cultures equally.' Attendance is below average, although the school works hard to impress on parents the importance of regular attendance to support learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The school judges the quality of teaching and learning as satisfactory, but the inspection found it to be good. As a result of the recent determined drive to improve teaching, lessons are lively and a good range of teaching strategies are used. Pupils' learning is consequently improving and standards are starting to rise. Most pupils work hard in lessons and are given opportunities to work in teams or with a partner, which

enables them to develop confidence and to share ideas. Marking is good and pupils are encouraged to reflect on their work in order to improve it. This helps them to see how they are progressing towards their learning targets. Pupils' progress is carefully monitored to identify any who are not performing to expectations in order to plan support to help them. Teachers are sensitive to the pupils' diverse backgrounds and use support staff well to ensure that the differing needs of pupils are catered for effectively. A team of bi-lingual instructors is deployed effectively across the classes to support the many pupils who do not have English as their first language. Those pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are helped through individual and small group teaching and also receive support in class to enable them to take a full part in all activities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and successfully provides for the needs of all the pupils. It celebrates their diversity by taking into account the rich variety of cultural heritage that the pupils bring to the school. The planning of literacy and numeracy is rigorous. Pupils are given opportunities for investigative learning and to practise writing across all subjects. These features are starting to have an impact on raising the quality of their work. Subject leaders monitor the curriculum's quality in English and mathematics, but this requires substantial further development in the other subjects. Information and communication technology is being used satisfactorily to enhance learning. A good range of extra curricular activities adds zest to the pupils' week. Many of these are sporting in character, while others reflect the school's musical achievements, including practices for the lively steel band. Visits and visitors to school add further enrichment.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school judges that it takes satisfactory care of its pupils, but inspectors found this aspect of the school's work to be good. Pupils say they feel safe in school because the few instances of bullying are dealt with swiftly and effectively. The learning mentors are a good support for pupils when they are upset or troubled. Staff work hard to provide pupils with clean and safe facilities in spite of the poor condition of much of the building. Child protection and health and safety procedures are in place and risk assessments are carried out. Parents are strongly encouraged to become involved in their children's education and feel that teachers are approachable, one parent stating, 'All the staff are lovely and are very caring to the children'.

Pupils are given good academic guidance and support. They are aware of their targets and effective marking of their work helps them to know what they need to do to improve. Effective transition arrangements prepare them well for secondary education.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school has recently gone through a difficult period as a result of staffing changes and this has affected progress. However, the staffing situation has been resolved and a new headteacher has been appointed. Since her appointment she has been well supported by the associate deputy who was placed in the school by the local authority to cover the period until a permanent deputy could also be appointed. The headteacher is leading the school well and has a clear vision for its future development. She works tirelessly to move the school forward. New management structures have been drawn up and a team approach is being developed, although the role of subject coordinators is under-developed. Self evaluation is effective and accurately identifies areas requiring development. Links with the local authority are good and the school's involvement in its intensive support programme is proving effective in the drive to raise standards. Parents are happy with the work of the school and the care it takes of their children. Their views are gathered, but they are not yet widely used to evaluate major aspects of the school's work.

The governing body shares the school's commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity for all pupils. Governors have a good understanding of the work of the school and fulfil their responsibilities well by giving it effective support and challenge.

Progress since the last inspection, while satisfactory overall, has been mixed, as a result of the high staff turnover. However, with new stability and the positive direction provided by the headteacher, the school is now well placed to improve.

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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	3	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?	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	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	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	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?	2	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	2	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, three inspectors recently visited your school to find out how well your teachers are helping you with your learning. Thank you for being so friendly and talking to the inspectors. We enjoyed being in your exciting school and listening to what you had to say. The things that we particularly liked were:

- the way you all work and play together so well
- how all the staff take good care of you and work hard to help you learn
- the way you all try hard and do your best to improve your work
- how well the school is run by the headteacher and staff.

We think your school is a very welcoming place and is getting better, but have asked your teachers to improve four things to make it even better. We want them to:

- help you to improve the standards you reach in English, mathematics and science
- enable teachers in charge of subjects to check how well you are learning so that they can help you improve
- develop an area for children to learn outside the Reception classes
- do everything they can to ensure that you all attend school regularly.

Thank you for helping us so much with the inspection of your school. We all hope that you will continue to work hard in school and help the teachers so that St Margaret's Church of England Primary becomes an even better school.