



St Dunstan's RC Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 105526
LEA Manchester
Inspection number 277369
Inspection dates 27 March 2006 to 28 March 2006
Reporting inspector Mr James Kidd CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Edale Avenue
School category	Voluntary aided		Moston
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Manchester, Lancashire M40 9HU
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0161 681 5665
Number on roll	211	Fax number	0161 681 5736
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Rev D Featherstone
Date of previous inspection	2 October 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Christine Morris

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a smaller-than-average, one-form entry Catholic primary school, situated about three miles from the city of Manchester. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above that found nationally. The proportion of children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. The majority of pupils are of white British heritage but there is a significant number of learners from minority ethnic groups. The percentage of children whose first language is not English is half the national average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

St Dunstan's provides a satisfactory quality of education. It is an improving school. Inspectors agree with the school's view of its performance. Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and children make good progress in their social development. Standards in Key Stage 1 are just below expectations but they are broadly average in Key Stage 2. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall across the school but their writing skills are underdeveloped. However, because of the introduction of effective strategies to improve attainment in literacy, standards are rising in both key stages. Children's personal development is good as is the quality of care, support and guidance the school provides for them. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and older pupils, including members of the school council, are grateful for the opportunities they have to express their views and are proud to take responsibility in many areas of school life. The curriculum is satisfactory but the use of information and communication technology (ICT) to improve teaching and learning is not widespread. There is a wide range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities on offer and take up by learners is extensive. Although there are good features, teaching is satisfactory overall and not all teachers have high enough expectations of what their pupils can do. Assessment is improving but pupils rarely evaluate their own work and that of their classmates.

Leadership and management are satisfactory and the headteacher and senior leaders provide clear educational direction, based on accurate evaluation of performance and a shared commitment to the raising of standards. The school has addressed the majority of the key issues from the last inspection and its capacity to improve is good. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to improve standards and achievement in literacy, particularly in writing.
- Continue to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning in order to ensure that the quality is improved and made more consistent across the school.
- Further develop ICT to stimulate learning.
- Encourage pupils to take more responsibility for their own learning by developing strategies for self and peer assessment.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The school judges standards to be broadly average and achievement to be satisfactory; inspectors agree with this view. Children enter the school with levels of attainment below those expected for their age, progress satisfactorily in the Foundation Stage and achieve well in their social development. In 2005, pupils' standards at the end of Year 2 were below that found nationally and they performed better in mathematics than in reading and writing; girls reached higher standards than boys. However, effective strategies to foster higher standards in literacy are beginning to bear fruit

and attainment in writing is improving. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in mathematics and science is above average but performance in English, particularly in writing, was a cause for concern in 2005. Pupils' achievement in literacy was significantly negative. However, the wide range of opportunities they now have to practise in independent writing and writing for a range of audiences is very effective and standards in literacy are rising markedly. Pupils in Year 6, for example, are fully aware of what is needed for a successful report and an interesting biography, and discuss the use of emotive language such as 'elated' and 'distracted' with confidence. In this key stage, pupils of all levels of ability make similar progress and there is no significant difference between the performance of girls and boys.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils feel safe in school. Members of the anti bullying committee take their responsibilities seriously when they monitor playground behaviour and help staff to foster positive pupil attitudes across the school. The school council meets regularly and acts as an effective pupil voice on a wide range of issues. Learners enjoy their school and say, 'We like our teachers because they give us encouragement.' They also speak highly of the weekly Golden Book awards.

Official attendance is below average but this is mainly due to a small minority of children with poor attendance who have now moved away from the area. The current trend is positive and reflects the school's successful strategies to encourage regular attendance. Pupils behave well in classrooms and around the school and the number of fixed term exclusions has been reduced significantly since the last inspection.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Moral and social development is promoted well by assemblies, for example, when visiting community wardens talk about the dangers of litter in the community. There is a wide range of extra curricular activities, which leads to improved access to sport and a developing understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles. The school's commitment to developing this understanding is made clear by the fact that it is working towards the Healthy Schools Bronze Award.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory, with examples of good practice. Teachers and teaching assistants treat their pupils with the utmost dignity and children respond positively and behave well as a result. In the best lessons, such as in a Year 6 literacy session on writing biographies, pupils are fully engaged, are quite fascinated by the activities and benefit from the use of talk partners, with whom they can share their ideas. Similarly, learners in Year 2 thrive on practical activities in music and are able

to identify rhythm and pulse with an ease which belies their years. However, the school recognises that in some lessons pace is slow and there is a lack of realistic challenge for pupils of higher ability, including insufficient expectation of what they can do. In these lessons, pupils do not take enough responsibility for their own learning and this has an adverse effect on achievement and standards. In addition, there are few opportunities for pupils to use computers routinely in lessons.

Assessment is improving and the school tracks the achievement of its pupils closely, intervening quickly and effectively when underperformance is identified. Marking is both regular and detailed and teachers offer learners accurate advice on how they may improve their work. However, there are few opportunities for learners to evaluate their own assignments and also those of their classmates.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Inspectors agree with the school that the curriculum is satisfactory overall but believe that there are also some good and developing features. The Catholic ethos underpins all areas of the curriculum and this is a key strength of the school. Increased emphasis has recently been given to the development of literacy and every child from Year 2 onwards is set clear targets for improvement in writing. The 'Sure Start' initiative provides regular and much appreciated support in the development of speaking and listening in the Foundation Stage. Excellence and enjoyment are promoted well and are beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' learning. Provision in ICT has improved since the last inspection but there is a lack of relevant resources for learning in the classroom. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of out of school activities. There are many opportunities for pupils to visit, study and work in the local environment, such as the recent pupil involvement in the Moston Dig or, as one pupil put it, 'I dig Moston!'

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care, support and guidance is good and children believe that their teachers take care of them. There is very effective support for vulnerable pupils and for those who speak English as an additional language or with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Child protection procedures are secure and appropriate checks are made on staff new to the school. Accidents involving pupils are quickly and effectively addressed by the school's staff. Regular fire drills take place and risk assessments are carried out in advance of school trips. Pupils are aware of and understand their short-term targets for improvement, particularly in writing, and, at the end of Year 6, they receive good advice on what they need to do to be successful in their new secondary school. The recently-improved pupil assessment and tracking systems are already highlighting pupil achievement over time. However, learners are not yet fully involved in the assessment and evaluation of their own progress and pupils of higher ability are not always challenged effectively enough.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory, with good features. The headteacher is a strong yet sensitive leader with a clear vision for the development of the school, in order that all pupils can achieve their best. She has a highly visible presence around the school and is ably supported by the deputy headteacher and other members of the leadership team. All staff share the commitment to raising standards and achievement but the role of middle management is at an early stage of development and has not yet had time to impact fully on attainment in all areas.

The school's self-evaluation accurately identifies areas for improvement. Targets are set and reviewed and learners' attainment is tracked carefully. Successes are celebrated, for example, standards in mathematics and science, but the school maintains its correct focus on raising attainment in literacy, particularly in writing. Much has been undertaken to monitor and improve the quality of teaching and learning but more needs to be done to address the inconsistencies which remain. All members of the school community, staff, children and parents, are valued and feel able to express their views and play their part in its development. The behaviour policy and anti-bullying strategy are just two examples of shared initiatives, the impact of which has been very successful. The school works well with parents, the Church and with a variety of external agencies.

The governing body is fully supportive of the school, undertakes its responsibilities effectively and is not afraid to hold senior leaders to account. The school has good capacity to improve further and provides satisfactory value for money.

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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?	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	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?	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	2	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 all so much for welcoming us to your school and for being so kind, polite and friendly. We enjoyed our visit and want to share with you what we thought about your school.

What we liked most about your school

- We are pleased that you enjoy school, that your behaviour is good and that you get on well with your classmates and with your teachers.
- We think the school council and the anti-bullying group do a lot to make everyone feel happy!
- We are pleased that your teachers and teaching assistants look after you so well and give you many useful jobs to help in running the school.
- We are sure that you enjoy the many extra-curricular and sports activities you have.
- We know that your headteacher and deputy headteacher know how to make your school even better!

What we have asked your school to do now

- We would like your teachers to keep looking for even better ways of teaching to help you improve in all your subjects, especially in literacy and writing.
- We think it would be good if you had more opportunities to use computers to help you in your lessons.
- We believe that your teachers should encourage you to work out how well you are doing in all your lessons and also to see if you can help your classmates do this too.

We appreciated talking to you and watching you learn. We wish you well for the future.