



Oswald Road Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 131030
LEA Manchester
Inspection number 282164
Inspection dates 1 March 2006 to 2 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	Oswald Road
School category	Community		Chorlton-cum-Hardy
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Manchester, Lancashire M21 9PL
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0161 881 4266
Number on roll	462	Fax number	0161 881 4319
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs M Callahan
Date of previous inspection	18 September 2000	Headteacher	Ms Sharon Campbell

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a large, two-form entry primary school, catering for pupils between the ages of three and eleven and is situated close to the City of Manchester. Children's attainment on entry to the school is average. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals and the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are broadly average. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups is high and there is nearly five times the national average of pupils whose first language is not English. The school holds the Healthy Schools Silver Award and also Artsmark Gold status.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Oswald Road Primary is an improving school, which provides a satisfactory quality of education, good personal development and good care, support and guidance for its learners. Inspectors agree with most of the school's judgements in the self-evaluation form.

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good and is a strength of the school. Children make good progress in their social development and benefit from a most effective start to their more formal education. Standards in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are broadly average and achievement is satisfactory but pupils' writing skills are underdeveloped. Because of the introduction of strategies to improve attainment, some pupils are doing better in Years 5 and 6 but weaknesses in writing are holding many pupils back. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and older pupils are very proud to take responsibility, particularly in helping and supporting younger children. The creative curriculum and the vibrant display do much to create a stimulating learning environment which celebrates cultural and religious diversity and which places great emphasis on music, dance and the arts. However, the use of information and communications technology (ICT) to improve teaching and learning is not widespread. Although there are outstanding features, teaching overall lacks the consistency and not all teachers have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. Teaching assistants offer effective support for those children experiencing difficulty. However, pupils with English as an additional language need more extensive support in order to make as much progress as other children.

Leadership and management are satisfactory and the headteacher and senior management team provide clear educational direction, which is now moving the school forward. They are uniting staff behind them in a relentless drive to improve standards. Middle managers are developing well but there is still work to do on ensuring they use all available data to help their teams set challenging targets. Improvement since the last inspection is good and the school has addressed most of the key issues from that report. The school provides satisfactory value for money and is well placed for further development.

What the school should do to improve further

Raise standards and achievement by:

- improving the consistency in the quality of teaching and learning
- ensuring that all children are challenged and supported realistically and that there are high expectations of what they can do and achieve
- developing the leadership and management role of middle managers in order to ensure that all staff set their pupils focused targets, based on accurate analysis and evaluation of standards and achievement
- increasing the use of ICT as a whole-class teaching and learning tool
- providing more extensive support for pupils whose first language is not English.

Further develop strategies to improve attendance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Inspectors agree with the school's view that standards are average and that achievement is satisfactory. From a starting point of average standards on entry to the school, learners make satisfactory progress overall to reach broadly average standards in English, mathematics and science when they leave in Year 6. They make the most rapid progress in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2, and they develop social skills well. Because of a lack of consistency in teaching quality, progress in Key Stage 2 has slowed in recent years and learners' writing skills are underdeveloped as a result. However, owing to the introduction of effective strategies to encourage pupils to take more ownership of their own learning, standards are rising in Years 5 and 6 and levels of achievement are improving. In Year 6, for example, there are many examples of above-average performance in writing and in Year 5, the mathematical skills of learners are improving at a rapid rate. These pupils are on course to meet the school's now more challenging targets in the core subjects. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls, but white British and mixed heritage pupils achieve at a higher level than other minority ethnic groups.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good, with many outstanding features within the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. An example of this was highlighted in a Reception class assembly where children, parents and teachers entered a magical world of fairytales to explore and develop the use of imagination and wonder. Cultural development is a particular strength. Outstanding, high-quality displays promote the rich diversity of cultures and religions, which are represented within the school. Children thoroughly enjoy being at school. They behave well and comment that they feel both safe and happy. Elected members of the school council welcome the opportunities they have to take decisions to bring about change. For example, their involvement in the work with other groups to improve play activities at lunchtimes, which promotes healthy lifestyles effectively. The 'buddy scheme' is particularly effective. Children are confident and articulate, and speak highly of their teachers who, they say, 'make learning interesting, exciting and fun'. Learners participate in local events and organise many fundraising projects for charities and their school. The vast array of after-school activities provides pupils with good opportunities to develop their interests and talents. Although improving, attendance is below average.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Inspectors do not agree with the school's view that teaching and learning are good and judge them to be satisfactory, with some good and outstanding features. Teachers

treat their pupils with respect and dignity and teaching assistants provide effective support for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. In the best lessons, there is electric pace, relentless challenge and an excitement about learning which leads to high levels of engagement with the activities. In an outstanding Year 5 science lesson, for example, pupils were delighted to be able to investigate like scientists and their enthusiasm was tangible. Similarly, an excellent session in a Reception class led to children becoming quite desperate to practise their writing skills. However, in some lessons, pace slows, expectations of what learners can achieve are not high enough and achievement and interest in the subject-matter suffer as a result. In addition, there are not enough opportunities in lessons for pupils to use computer technology.

Assessment is satisfactory but its quality is inconsistent. Many pupils are aware of what they need to do to improve, but on occasions targets are not sharp and focused enough on the raising of standards. Marking varies from outstanding practice, in which teachers both celebrate success and challenge their pupils further, to brief comment which is not related to progress towards National Curriculum levels.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and meets statutory requirements. Whilst the needs of most pupils are effectively met, the overall impact of activities is not always reflected in the standards pupils reach. The learning needs of pupils with English as an additional language are not developed fully because there needs to be more extensive support for them in the classroom. An outstanding feature of curricular provision is the emphasis on the expressive and creative arts: pupils take part in dance, drama and musical productions inside school and also in prestigious theatres in the city of Manchester.

The school makes very good use of visits and visitors. These contribute to the richness of activities, which appeal to pupils of all abilities and give them a sense of excitement and enjoyment in their work. The recent work on 'Dual Heritage', for example, gave pupils opportunities to explore cultural diversity in ways relevant to their own experience. Learners produced thought-provoking work of high quality as a result.

There is a good range of clubs and other activities, dance and conversational French, for example, and sessions are well attended. They enrich the basic curriculum and capture the interest and enthusiasm of pupils of all abilities.

The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is creative, imaginative and inclusive, promoting personal development well. The school is involved in pioneering work with the local authority through a project designed to develop child-initiated learning; learners are delighted to show visitors their writing and whet their appetites and those of their teachers by saying, 'you'll have to wait until tomorrow for the middle part of my story!'

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good levels of care, guidance and support. Risk assessment systems are rigorous and effective. Health and safety procedures are in place, ensuring that

children are safe at all times. Arrangements for child protection are robust and parents and children express high levels of trust in staff. Children have many opportunities to succeed through working both co-operatively and independently. By praise and recognition of their work, much of which is displayed throughout the school, children's self-confidence and self-esteem are developed successfully. Indeed, the outstanding display does much to create a vibrant learning atmosphere. Many children know their targets but are not always aware of what they need to do to improve further. High-quality and sensitive support is provided for vulnerable children and those with additional learning needs and/or disabilities, ensuring that they make satisfactory progress. More focused and extensive support for those children with English as an additional language is needed to make sure that these children make the best possible progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school judges leadership and management to be good. However, the inspection team believes them to be satisfactory because the impact of changes made to the roles of subject and other co-ordinators have not had time to impact on standards.

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school, and has been very successful in sharing this with other staff. The success with which a rich arts-based curriculum has been established contributes very well to the distinctive character of the school. The school's inclusive vision and the high expectations in respect of behaviour and relationships have been successfully promoted.

The school's self-evaluation identifies areas for improvement. Targets have been set, and pupils' attainment carefully tracked. However, the commitment to a unified approach, where all staff work to common aims, means that improvement has been slow and is not yet reflected in the school's test results in Key Stage 2.

Much has been done to monitor teaching, in order to raise the general standard of performance to that of the best. This work is continuing, but more needs to be done to address the inconsistencies which remain. The senior management team has a clear view of what to do and is working hard to bring about change, in order that all staff play their full part in evaluating performance in standards and achievement.

The Governors bring a variety of skills to their role and have a clear overview of the school. They are aware of its strengths and weaknesses and work hard to fulfil their duties. The school demonstrates good capacity for further improvement 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	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	4	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?	2	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	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 very much and want to tell you what we think about your school.

What we like most

- We are pleased that you behave well, work hard in lessons and look after each other. We like the wonderful way you all get on with each other and how you celebrate other religions and other cultures. Your assemblies are very interesting indeed!
- We think that your teachers and teaching assistants look after you well and talk to you a lot about how to live a healthy life.
- We believe that the school council does a lot to make everyone feel happy and that it helps to improve how you play. We like the lunchtime 'buddy' system, too.
- We are delighted that you enjoy the many music, art and drama activities and we think the display on the corridors and in your classrooms is marvellous.
- We believe that your headteacher knows 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 more different ways of teaching to help the older pupils make even more progress in writing and in mathematics.
- We think it would be good if you could use computers more often in lessons.
- We would like your teachers to help pupils whose first language is not English more.
- We want your teachers to try more ways of improving attendance. You have a big part to play in this too, because if you stay off school when you are not ill, you miss too much work!

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