

Clarendon Road Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105902
Local Authority	Salford
Inspection number	287358
Inspection dates	14–15 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Marguerite McCloy HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	294
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Stephen Hopkins
Headteacher	Mrs Jean Dunnet
Date of previous school inspection	2 July 2001
School address	Clarendon Road Eccles Manchester M30 9BJ
Telephone number	0161 7894469
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Clarendon Road is a slightly larger than average sized primary school situated in Eccles, a short distance from the city of Manchester. The proportion of pupils eligible to claim free school meals is just above the national average. The majority of pupils are of White British backgrounds and a lower than average number are learning English as an additional language. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is in line with the national average, although a smaller proportion has a statement of special educational need. The school is accredited with Investors in People and Healthy Schools Awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Clarendon Road Community Primary school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. It is a caring school in which positive relationships and strong pastoral care make an effective contribution to pupils' good personal development and well-being. The vast majority of parents and carers appreciate the quality of support given to their children, who are happy with their school.

Children are given a good start to their school life in the Foundation Stage with a good quality indoor and outdoor learning environment and a range of enjoyable and purposeful activities. Pupils make satisfactory progress across Key Stages 1 and 2, to reach standards which are near the national average. The 2006 Key Stage 2 national tests showed that standards and achievement in the key area of mathematics were inadequate, as the school had failed to halt a gradual decline in mathematics attainment over the last few years. Pupils are now making satisfactory progress in mathematics lessons. However, insufficient numbers of pupils at the end of both key stages are reaching the higher levels of which they are capable in each core subject.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and recent developments have led to an increase in the proportion of teaching which is now good, so this is an improving picture. Teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards in their lessons and teaching assistants provide good support for groups of pupils. Teachers' use of assessment and target-setting for pupils is improving, but the quality of marking is too variable and the presentation of pupils' work is not given sufficient emphasis.

Pupils have good attitudes and behave well and good support systems are in place for those who find this difficult from time to time. Attendance is now average following a period when it had been a matter of concern and the school does all it can to emphasise the importance of attendance and punctuality to pupils and their families.

The school's curriculum is satisfactory and staff are working to review this and make sure that it is planned effectively to make best use of links between subjects and ensure that progression is clear across the school. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of educational visits and by arrangements for visitors to come in and speak to pupils.

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall and the school provides satisfactory value for money. It is emerging from a period when necessary improvements and changes since the last inspection have been very slow: some of the issues raised at that time remain. However, progress has been made in a number of areas which provide evidence of satisfactory capacity to improve. The weak area within the whole-school leadership is the quality of its self-evaluation and monitoring to ensure that leaders at all levels are accountable for their contribution towards raising standards and achievement across the school for all pupils. Recent developments and a sense of optimism on the part of leaders and other staff show that there is a willingness and capability to move forward on the identified areas for development.

Although the school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory, its performance in two respects, standards and achievement in mathematics and the quality of whole-school monitoring and evaluation, are inadequate. Before its next section 5 inspection, Ofsted inspectors may visit the school to monitor the progress it has made in remedying these weaknesses. The school would receive two to five days notice of such a visit.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and achievement in mathematics across the school.
- Raise achievement of the more able pupils.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management in evaluating and improving the school's performance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children enter the Nursery with a broadly average range of skills. Good provision in the Foundation Stage ensures that they make good progress and enter Year 1 having reached most of the expected learning goals for that age group. The standards pupils reached in assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2006 were in line with the national average, indicating that they made satisfactory progress. This has been a consistent pattern over several years. Within this picture, however, variations exist. Attainment in writing is slightly better than in mathematics and reading and the number of pupils reaching the higher level in those subjects is below average.

Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 have been consistently around national average levels over the last five years. Although the 2006 national test results for 11 year olds showed that standards in English and science were average overall, mathematics was significantly below average. Based on the previous assessments of those pupils at the age of seven, their progress in English was satisfactory, but inadequate in mathematics. In all three core subjects, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher level of attainment was below average, significantly so in mathematics, and the school did not reach its targets.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and the relatively small number from different ethnic groups, make similar progress to their peers and sometimes make good progress because of the extra support and guidance they receive. Some higher attaining pupils are not reaching the standards of which they are capable, especially in mathematics. Based on inspection evidence, the school's mathematics targets for the current Year 6 are challenging, but achievable, based on the satisfactory progress currently being made in lessons. This is due to changes that have been made to the organisation of class teaching in mathematics, and additional group sessions to support those who are capable of achieving more.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils have positive attitudes towards their work and other activities at school and many expressed their enjoyment of school. Attendance is now broadly average, as a result of the school's efforts to improve this over the last few years. Appropriate systems are in place to promote good attendance and punctuality and monitor the poor attendance of a small minority of pupils.

Behaviour is good overall and pupils say that incidents of bullying are rare. A more consistent approach to dealing with behaviour is being implemented and this has reduced instances of poor behaviour. Pupils say they feel safe at school and older pupils take on responsibilities, such as being playground buddies and prefects.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have regular times of reflection during collective worship and are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and the

choices they make. Most pupils are well mannered, polite and sociable and are confident to talk with adults. The school helps pupils to develop an understanding of community, both within the school and beyond. Pupils' ideas are considered through the school council and during circle time discussions. Pupils are proud of the fact that games for playtimes and plant containers for the playground have been purchased at their request. Pupils are involved in raising funds for charities and put on performances to which members of the local community are invited.

Pupils show a good awareness of what is needed for a healthy lifestyle. Rigorous exercise is part of the daily routine for most. Nutritious food is offered for lunch and break times and drinking water is available throughout the day.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. In some lessons higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged, so they do not make the progress of which they are capable. However, the proportion of good teaching is improving and is evenly spread across the school. Relationships are good and most pupils display positive attitudes towards their learning. Teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards to assist in presenting subjects and showing visual explanations to enhance their lessons.

The school's organisation of pupils in mixed-age classes is well managed, and younger pupils are sometimes taught with their peers in smaller groupings. Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The use of assessment to improve learning is not fully developed across the school. The marking of pupils' work is often not evaluative or useful in pointing the way forward and ensuring that pupils know what they have to do next to improve their work. Although some pupils are aware of their targets, teachers do not refer to these frequently in lessons in order to reinforce them. The presentation of work in pupils' books is often untidy as teachers do not consistently emphasise the importance of this.

Good teaching features secure teacher knowledge, enthusiasm and high expectations of pupils' behaviour, work rate and independence. In these lessons there is no time slippage and teachers make sure that pupils are actively engaged in a range of appropriate activities which hold their interest, so that good progress is made by all pupils. Learning objectives are shared with the pupils and regularly referred to so that they are clear about what they are expected to know by the end of the lesson. The effective use of praise and encouragement, whilst also providing a good level of challenge, successfully promotes pupils' self-esteem and confidence. Good knowledge about individual pupils enables the teacher to direct questions and provide support to the best effect and to clarify any misunderstandings pupils may have.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum meets statutory requirements and makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' progress and personal development. Provision for sport is enhanced by specialist teaching and pupils appreciate the range of sporting opportunities beyond the school day.

In the Foundation Stage the learning environment has been greatly enhanced by a well-planned, safe and stimulating outdoor learning area. This complements the very good indoor environment in providing for all the required areas of learning. A good range of activities are well organised, purposeful and build on what children know and can do. This helps pupils to achieve well and gives them a good start to their school life.

The school is currently reviewing its curriculum to improve the continuity and progression of pupils' learning and this has improved provision in science, for instance. The school is aware that the quality of resources and learning in mathematics is an area of concern and has enlisted the support of the local authority in making improvements across the school. A start has been made on making use of links between subjects, for example in teaching writing skills such as note-taking in a history lesson. Trips, such as tracing the Roman walls at Chester and visits to places such as the Jewish museum and Ordsall Hall, bring history, religious education and English more alive for pupils. Facilities for information and communication technology (ICT) have been improved since the last inspection. Good use is made of the classroom interactive whiteboards and the computer suite to make a positive contribution to teaching and learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall with some good features. Staff are committed to the care of all groups of pupils and this is one of the reasons why personal development is good.

The lunchtime nurture group and relaxation sessions help pupils deal with their emotions and are having a positive impact on those who display inappropriate behaviour from time to time. The school promotes a healthy and safe lifestyle and has achieved the Healthy School Award. Risk assessments are completed and there are effective child protection arrangements in place.

Some staff give clear guidance on what pupils need to do to improve the standard of their work. However, the support and guidance provided is not consistent across all lessons and this is preventing some from reaching their full potential. There is effective support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities: their individual education plans are regularly evaluated to identify next steps in learning.

The arrangements for children entering Foundation Stage and when moving into Year 1 are good and help them to settle quickly. Similarly, pupils in Year 6 are helped to make the transfer to the next stage of their education as smoothly as possible. However, the school is aware that improvements can be made to the way it shares information to improve transition between Years 2 and 3 in order to improve progress in Year 3.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall but there are inadequacies in the way in which the school monitors and improves its performance. At the time of the last inspection, aspects of leadership and management were judged to be unsatisfactory. This was because the leadership roles of key staff were unclear and the quality of monitoring and evaluation, assessment and communication were weak.

The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. Although the key areas for improvement at that time have not yet been fully met, other aspects have moved on successfully under the leadership of the headteacher. For example, improvements have been made in financial management, Key Stage 2 standards in English, science and ICT, and in the quality of the accommodation and resources. In addition, key staffing appointments in recent years are leading to improved teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 classes.

However, slower progress has been made in developing leadership and management at all levels across the school to ensure continuity and consistency of approach. Information on pupils' standards and progress is maintained and is only now beginning to make a useful contribution to target-setting. Middle leaders have not been analysing this well enough to identify particular subject strengths and areas for improvement. It is not yet being utilised effectively to sharpen teaching and raise expectations of what all pupils should achieve, especially the more able.

Although leaders have an accurate picture of the school's general strengths and weaknesses, its self-evaluation systems lack rigour and a clear structure which feeds into school improvement planning. This has led to development plans which are insufficiently thorough or clearly focused on the shared responsibility for raising standards and deciding whether actions make a positive difference to the pupils. Timescales are not clear so that progress in key issues may not be reported back to staff and governors in a timely manner. The slow decline in mathematics achievement over the last few years has not been halted quickly enough.

Governors fulfil their statutory duties, but are not fully involved in strategic development planning and monitoring of progress. They are aware that improvements could be made to the way they hold the school to account for the quality of its provision.

The vast majority of parents and carers are supportive of the school, its headteacher and staff and are content that their children are happy there. The school is working to further improve its partnership with parents, as seen in a recent and successful open day which encouraged parents to join lessons and learn more about how mathematics is taught.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	4
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for helping us when inspectors visited your school recently. We enjoyed joining your lessons and were very interested to hear about all the things you do and what you think about your school.

We think that the school provides you with a satisfactory education and some of the good things we found were:

- you like your school very much: your behaviour is good and you get along well with each other and with adults
- the adults in school take good care of you so that you feel safe and happy and because of this your personal development is good, so that you are growing in confidence and know about how to stay safe and healthy
- teaching is satisfactory overall and in a lot of lessons teaching is now good: we can see that it is getting better so that your learning is improving
- improvements have been made in English, science and information and communication technology since the school was last inspected and the condition of the buildings is much better too.

We have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to make improvements to your achievement in mathematics and to the number of pupils who reach the higher levels that they are capable of in their work. We have also asked them to improve the way the school checks on its work and takes actions to make things better, so that it can become a really good school in the future!

An Ofsted inspector may visit the school before its next inspection, to check on the progress being made. You can help by making sure you come into school every day, on time and work as hard as you can in your lessons.