



Partington Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 106305
Local Authority Trafford
Inspection number 287479
Inspection dates 10–11 January 2007
Reporting inspector Joe Peacock

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Central Road
School category	Community		Partington, Urmston
Age range of pupils	3–11		Manchester, Lancashire
			M31 4FL
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0161 7752937
Number on roll (school)	363	Fax number	0161 7753582
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Brenda Remond
		Headteacher	Mrs L Pickwell
Date of previous school inspection	14 January 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This above average sized school is situated in a fairly isolated semi-urban area in the south-west of Greater Manchester which suffers from high levels of unemployment. Almost all pupils come from a White British background. During each year, more pupils join or leave the school than in most schools, including a few from the nearby site for travelling families, although the number of traveller children is significantly less than at the time of the previous inspection. From Reception to Year 3, pupils are taught as whole year groups by teams of teachers and teaching assistants, rather than in individual classes. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average and the number with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also above average. The school is proud of the many local and national awards it has received, such as Investors in People and Healthy Schools Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with many outstanding features, such as the quality and standards in the Foundation Stage and the equality of opportunity it provides for all its pupils. Inspectors agree with the school's own evaluation of its performance, although they found the curriculum to be outstanding rather than good as the school modestly judged. The school provides good value for money.

The outstanding leadership provided by the headteacher and stability of staffing have resulted in an experienced team of teachers and teaching assistants who are totally committed to providing the best possible education for each individual pupil. The team spirit in evidence is very impressive. Parents recognise and appreciate the expertise and the commitment of staff. These qualities make a significant contribution to pupils' good personal development with aspects of provision such as safe practices, healthy lifestyles and community involvement being outstanding. As a result, the school has a good reputation in the area and there are not enough places in the Nursery to satisfy demand. Pupils benefit from the good level of care and support that they receive and feel safe and secure in the knowledge that there is always a caring adult on hand whenever they need help. They greatly enjoy being at school and their behaviour in class and around school is exemplary. The above average level of absence is being improved slowly by a raft of measures, including the effective involvement of the local authority welfare officer.

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and, on occasions, teaching is outstanding. As a result of good teaching, pupils achieve well and make good progress. At the end of Year 6, standards are broadly average. Much emphasis has been given to improving basic skills, especially in reading and writing. In English, pupils make excellent progress from the well below average start on entry to the Nursery to achieve above average standards by Year 6. Their overall performance in mathematics and science is not as strong but recent initiatives are beginning to raise standards, particularly in science and in mathematics in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2, pupils are often not secure enough in their mathematical knowledge before being expected to move on in their learning and, as a result, standards suffer and they are not as high as they should be.

The outstanding curriculum that the school provides is largely responsible for pupils' enjoyment of school. Particularly strong features are the amount of music tuition available to help pupils learn to play an instrument, and excellent use of computers and the new 'smartboards' to support and enhance learning in all subjects. The recent addition of a new sports hall and use of sports coaches, along with a wide range of after school clubs, contribute greatly to pupils' personal development.

Leadership and management are good overall with some outstanding features. Staff work effectively in teams to support those with management responsibilities. As a result, the management of provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the Foundation Stage, as well as the management for each subject, is outstanding. Governors are led well by a knowledgeable and extremely conscientious

chair of governors. They are keen to further develop their role and be part of the school's drive to become outstanding. The strength and determination of its management indicate that the school has outstanding capacity to achieve its aim.

What the school should do to improve further

- In order to raise standards in mathematics at Key Stage 2, improve the day to day assessment of pupils' progress in this subject so that learning builds more successfully on their previous knowledge.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The attainment of most children when they enter the Nursery class is well below that expected for their age. Children's achievement in the Foundation Stage, especially in their personal, social and emotional development, is outstanding due to the very effective management of provision and enthusiastic, knowledgeable staff who make learning exciting and fun. Nevertheless, despite this high quality of teaching, not all children achieve all the standards expected nationally of them by the end of Reception.

All groups of children make good progress and achieve well in Years 1 to 6 but, by Year 6, whilst standards overall are broadly average, they vary considerably from subject to subject. In English, because of the strong emphasis on teaching reading skills throughout the school and recent initiatives to improve writing, standards are above average. In mathematics and science, standards are below average. The most recent 2006 national tests results show that standards in science are improving. This improvement is less evident in mathematics at Key Stage 2, although outstanding teaching in Year 2 is successfully raising standards in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1. All children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well because they benefit from high quality support both in and out of the classroom.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Relationships in the school community are outstanding and largely responsible for the good personal development of pupils and their well-being. Pupils say that they enjoy school very much and look forward to each day. A school council member commented that, 'everyone wears a smile on their face'. All are polite, friendly and very well behaved in class and around school. They respond well to opportunities such as their involvement in the Jinja Council, a group responsible for promoting links with a school in Uganda. Members of the school council are proud of their contributions to school development, including becoming a Green Flag Eco School.

Attendance is below the national average, mainly because of a very small number of pupils but recent initiatives are successfully reducing absence. Pupils have a very good understanding of healthy lifestyles and enjoy physical activity sessions in the school's new sports hall. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and

results in pupils' positive attitudes towards their learning. Pupils' participation in assemblies, community activities and a wide range of cultural events is excellent. Their future economic well-being is not judged as highly because of the lower standards in mathematics but it is good, overall.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

There is a positive atmosphere for learning in all classes, which enables children to respond well and try their best to meet the challenges presented to them. Some struggle in mathematics, however, as they fail to grasp new learning which means that they do not always have the required knowledge to move on to the next step. Teachers' energy and enthusiasm ensures that children clearly enjoy their learning. Strong features are the outstanding relationships between pupils and their teachers and the level of involvement of pupils in their learning. As a result, pupils show respect, are well motivated and their concentration is very good. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because they are very well provided for by teachers and teaching assistants with a good range of specialist teaching skills.

In the Foundation Stage, the quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. As a result children make excellent progress. Imaginative and challenging tasks are planned to make the best use of the excellent indoor space and outdoor areas. In the Nursery, for example, the large empty space in one area means children have the room to use large equipment and their creative structures do not have to be put away at the end of sessions.

Good procedures exist for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics. However, in mathematics, this information is not always used effectively enough to provide tasks which build successfully on pupils' prior learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school's curriculum is extremely well planned with a high priority being given to promoting basic skills, especially reading. Teachers have significantly improved the curriculum for mathematics and science in order to raise standards. The school was the first within the local authority to gain the 'Basic Skills Quality Mark'. Subjects are closely linked within topics to provide coherence and meaning in learning. The Foundation Stage curriculum is also outstanding, covering the required areas of learning in an exciting way, which ensures all pupils make excellent progress. All pupils speak enthusiastically about learning to speak French and Spanish and the opportunity to learn to play a musical instrument. The curriculum is further enriched by events such as World Book Day, visits to local museums and sports coaches who demonstrate a high level of expertise. There is a wide range of out of school activities such as the

music club attended by 120 pupils, art club and Funky Fun Club which support pupils' personal development brilliantly.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good and impact very positively on pupils' self-esteem and confidence. The school successfully meets its aim of creating and upholding a family atmosphere which provides a comfortable, safe, caring learning environment for its pupils. All are treated fairly and valued for their individuality. Parents are appreciative of the care provided for their children. Pupils feel secure and happy in school and are confident that an adult would help them if they have any difficulties.

Procedures for safeguarding pupils are in place. Staff are well trained in these and sensitive to pupils' needs. Health, safety and risk assessment procedures promote a safe environment. Very good links with external agencies support pupils' welfare and progress.

Good induction arrangements help children to settle well into the Nursery. Transition to secondary school is made as smooth as possible for Year 6 pupils.

Good individual support leads to good progress by pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The very few pupils from travelling families who still attend the school are well integrated and supported. The school recognises that the use of procedures for guiding pupils and checking their progress in mathematics is not yet robust enough to help them to build on their previous learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

'Team Partington' is very effective, with each member of staff being like an important spoke in a well oiled wheel. Every efficient team requires an outstanding leader and manager and the headteacher has fulfilled this role superbly, having given many years of loyal and devoted service to the school. The team approach is a key factor in the school's excellent reputation in the area. Parents know that the school values their children as individuals and will ensure that they get the support that they need to do well. The evaluation of strengths and weaknesses by teachers, working in teams to manage groups of subjects, is accurate and the views of governors, parents and pupils are taken into account when deciding future priorities for improvement. This is a school that is determined to be outstanding in every respect. Every member of staff feels responsible and all share the same strength of determination to tackle things that need to be made better. This ensures that the capacity for further improvement is outstanding. The new chair of governors is very knowledgeable and, together with other governors, is very supportive and visits school weekly. Governors play their part in holding the school to account and acting as a critical friend.

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Inspection judgements

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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

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	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for making all the inspectors feel so welcome when they visited your school. We all really enjoyed talking to you and looking at your work. These are the things that we particularly liked about your school.

- Your headteacher and all the staff are working so hard to help you to enjoy being at school and to give you exciting and interesting things to do. We were amazed at how many awards you have helped the school to win. There is hardly any room left for all the certificates.
- You all behave fantastically well in class and we could see that you always try to do your best work.
- You all have a brilliant start in the Nursery and this carries on into your Reception year with loads of interesting things for you to do. We enjoyed watching your puppet play and seeing you so busy outside with the big toys.
- Your reading and writing is so good.
- There are many things for you to enjoy after school. It is great that you have the chance to learn to play a musical instrument.
- All of you are so well cared for and supported by your teachers, classroom assistants and the lunchtime staff.

We did not find much that needs improvement but we are asking your teachers to concentrate on helping pupils in the junior classes to do better in mathematics.

Thank you again for helping us with this inspection. We can see why you enjoy coming to school so much. You are right to be proud of your school because it is a good one. I hope that you will carry on enjoying your school work and help the staff to make the school even better.