

Manor Park Primary School and Nursery

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111237
Local Authority	Cheshire
Inspection number	288899
Inspection dates	12–13 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Kevin Johnson

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	205
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr C Millson
Headteacher	Mrs Sarah Greensides
Date of previous school inspection	23 September 2002
School address	Manor Park North Knutsford Cheshire WA16 8DB
Telephone number	01565 632248
Fax number	01565 654746

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school serves a mixed catchment area in the market town of Knutsford. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher than average and an average number are known to be eligible for free school meals. Before and after-school care are provided on site. Manor Park has Healthy Schools' status, holds the ActiveMark and Basic Skills Quality Mark and has recently achieved the Inclusive Schools Award. The headteacher was appointed in January 2007 following an unsettled period of staffing in the school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy their learning and achieve well. They are well cared for, especially those who have additional needs, so all pupils feel safe and valued. They develop good personal skills because of the good range of opportunities there are to take on extra responsibilities. Guidance about what is acceptable is followed conscientiously and behaviour and relationships are good. Some pupils are trained as peer counsellors and are always available to restore a sense of justice on the few occasions when relationships falter. The school is working hard to build on the average attendance levels and has gained the support and confidence of parents during its drive to establish Manor Park as a good school.

Teaching and learning are good. From Nursery to Year 6, lessons are full of activity. The school council, representing all pupils, are unanimous in their view that, 'lessons are great because teachers always try to think of something different'. Teachers plan well, taking account of all abilities, so that all pupils can achieve well in lessons. A 'new look' has been given to the curriculum with a stronger focus on creativity. This is leading to a more practical approach and greater involvement and enjoyment for pupils. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good overall, but children in the Reception class do not have easy access to outdoor facilities and this limits their development of physical skills alongside the other areas of learning.

Children start in the Nursery with skills which are below those expected for their age. They get off to a good start, especially in their personal and social development and make good progress. Pupils build well on their earlier learning in Years 1 and 2, and achieve broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards attained in Year 6 are average overall, but school assessments indicate an improving picture because of effective target-setting and a sustained focus on achievement. Nevertheless, there is still scope for the school to increase the proportion of pupils who attain the higher levels in the national assessments at ages 7 and 11.

The impact of the headteacher's leadership during her relatively short time in post has been enormous. She has renewed morale throughout the school and brought stability by securing the well-being and respect of staff and pupils alike. The systems introduced have had an almost immediate impact. Use of assessment and, as a consequence, teaching and learning, behaviour management, a revised curriculum and the quality of care for pupils, have all improved and are contributing well to better achievement and higher standards.

The school's self-evaluation of its work, though accurate at the time of completion, does not fully reflect the rapid improvement which has taken place. Leaders have a very clear vision for the school and detailed knowledge of its strengths and areas for improvement. The school has amply demonstrated its good capacity to improve. It is a good school which provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the number of pupils reaching the higher levels in English, mathematics and science at both key stages.
- Improve provision for outdoor learning in Reception.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Throughout the school, pupils achieve well because assessment systems enable teachers to build effectively on learning from year to year. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress overall from below average skills, especially in social development and language, literacy and communication. Many achieve the expected levels by the end of Reception in most areas of learning. However, despite good progress, not all manage to reach their language and literacy targets. Those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very quickly identified and given the early boost that they need.

Good achievement continues as pupils' progress through the school. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 dipped sharply in 2006, but have since recovered due to more settled teaching. Standards are rising and are currently average, but fewer than should be expected are on track to achieve the higher Level 3. There is good progress in Years 3 to 6. Effective use of assessment has allowed teachers to identify the gaps in pupils' learning and set meaningful targets. This is leading to consistent progress and better achievement overall. Standards at the end of Year 6 have remained broadly average over time, but current assessments show a strengthening picture. Nevertheless, the number of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 is, again, below average in all subjects.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Many parents confirm the view that by the time pupils leave Manor Park, they are confident young people who adapt easily to life in their new schools. Good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development underpins the good relationships and the respect pupils show for one another. A recent anti-bullying programme has had a positive influence on pupils feeling of well-being. They enjoy the creativity of learning and express this in their art, music and dance. In a performance assembly, for example, pupils in Year 4 used masks and other stage props they had made to re-enact the traditional Hindu story of Rama and Sita, culminating in an Indian dance. Pupils are enthusiastic about lessons and show good attitudes to work. After school clubs are well attended. Healthy choices on the lunch menu are popular and pupils are well aware of the importance of regular exercise. Year 6 pupils take turns to act as 'phys kids' and lead the infants in 15 minutes of organised play activity during lunch breaks. The important life skills which pupils acquire, combined with their solid grounding in basic literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are good preparation for their future well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Good relationships and the firm expectation that pupils will achieve are having a positive impact on progress. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and they use their skills with interactive whiteboards especially well to help bring lessons to life. Practical activities are planned well and tasks and resources are thoughtfully tailored to the different needs and abilities of pupils. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are taught well. Early intervention and good quality support means that they achieve well alongside others. Teachers use assessments increasingly well to set appropriate learning

targets and their consistently good marking in all subjects informs pupils about their learning and progress. They are less successful at getting higher attaining pupils to achieve their very best. Teaching assistants contribute valuable skills and experience to the overall quality of provision. Their work with small groups and individuals is well focused and helps towards pupils' good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is lively and interesting and helps pupils achieve well. Personal, social and health education is good and supports pupils' personal development well. A good programme of residential and day visits enriches learning and the local area is used well for science, history and geography topics. Amongst a very wide range of additional activities, pupils' opportunities are enhanced by French and Italian lessons. There is a good focus on basic skills and literacy is practised well across many subjects, although the school is now working to achieve more creative independent learning. Children in the Foundation Stage enjoy the exciting activities, but those in Reception lack easy access to an outdoor area where they can fully develop their physical skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school takes good care of its pupils and provides particularly good support for those pupils who have additional needs. Adults in school have won pupils' trust and are always on hand to help them come to terms with any kind of social, emotional or academic difficulty. Parents are encouraged to support their children in school when necessary and the school is seeking ways to extend the supporting role which parents can play. The speed at which learning difficulties are identified and the quality of support provided for pupils is exceptional and plays a crucial part in their good progress. The guidance pupils are given about managing their behaviour and about bullying and racism works well so pupils feel safe to enjoy the freedom of the playground. Procedures for the safeguarding of pupils are in place. Academic guidance is good. Systematic assessment and tracking of progress has been successfully put in place. Pupils know their learning targets and are kept well informed about how they can be achieved.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher's contribution to the immense improvement which has taken place since her appointment has been outstanding. Her incisive analysis of the schools needs and in enabling all staff to tackle those needs with confidence and a real sense of purpose, are just some of the features of her dynamic leadership. There is an overwhelming feeling of unity among staff and governors because all are recognised as equal partners in the school's development. Senior leaders provide strong support for the headteacher by overseeing developments in their designated areas of responsibility and helping to monitor the quality of provision throughout the school. Subject leaders have begun to extend their roles so that they too can engage more fully in monitoring and developing their particular subjects. The improvement plan is a comprehensive document providing clear direction for the school's work. Governors are fully conversant with the plan and the school's needs. They support the school well and share the vision of the school at the heart of the community. Their role as critical friend is only partially

developed in that they are beginning to ask challenging questions, but there are no systems by which governors rigorously evaluate the impact of their decisions on pupils' achievements.

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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?	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	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
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	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	2
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?	2
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.

Annex A

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	2
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	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

As you know, Mr Carruthers and I visited your school recently to find out how well you are learning. Before I tell you what we found out, I must thank you all for the way you made us feel so welcome. We enjoyed talking to you about your school and we are very pleased that you enjoy it so much. We also think that you are lucky to have such lovely school lunches and such a fantastic selection of after-school clubs.

We found out that you have a good school and that you are making good progress. We think you behave well and that the grown-ups in school take good care of you. Your teachers work hard to make lessons fun and they give you lots of help so you can make your work better. Your headteacher has some super ideas about how to make your school even better than it is.

We thought of a couple things which might help. We have asked your teachers to help more of you to reach higher levels in your tests and to make sure children in Reception have a good outdoor area next to their classroom to help them to learn.

You can help to make your school even better by continuing to be helpful to your teachers and behaving as well as you do.