

Manorside Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101290
Local Authority	Barnet
Inspection number	307642
Inspection dates	27–28 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Rob Crompton

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	242
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Cecile Tschirhart
Headteacher	Mr Steve Hilborne
Date of previous school inspection	12 November 2001
School address	Squires Lane Finchley London N3 2AB
Telephone number	020 8346 4847
Fax number	020 8371 8207

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Manorside is an average sized primary school. Over 80% of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, the vast majority of whom have English as an additional language. About 100 pupils are at an early stage of acquiring English. A quarter of the pupils are from families seeking refuge in the United Kingdom. Around a third of the pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Most of the pupils who need extra support have speech and communication problems, are falling behind, or have physical disabilities. There is a very high level of mobility with, typically, up to 40% of pupils leaving or arriving in one year.

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. Pupils achieve well due to the imaginative and challenging teaching, which raises pupils' self-esteem and motivates them to work hard. From a low start, pupils reach average standards. This is no mean feat, given the challenges the school faces in meeting the diverse needs of pupils from a very wide variety of backgrounds. Excellent teaching overcomes many of these challenges and, as a result, pupils in every year group are making good progress in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT). This is because teachers pitch the work at exactly the right level; they explain things very clearly and provide many prompts for pupils' learning. Practical activities, visual aids and the use of interactive whiteboards help pupils' understanding, particularly those who are at an early stage of acquiring English. Over the last two years, progress has improved significantly. This is particularly evident in mathematics and science. Efforts to raise standards in English have, so far, had a greater impact on reading than writing. However, there is clear evidence that writing standards are rising by the end of Year 2. The school's considerable efforts have yet to have the same impact on the progress of the older pupils. The vast majority of these pupils have English as an additional language and find it difficult to write in the wide range of contexts expected by Year 6.

An excellent ethos underpins all aspects of school life. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive and greatly appreciate the way the school promotes equal opportunities for all to succeed. One commented, 'We are fortunate to have such an excellent school on our doorstep.'

Outstanding care, guidance and support enable pupils to thrive in a rich and stimulating learning environment. Because of the excellent induction procedures, the many pupils who join the school having newly arrived in the UK soon settle. They feel welcomed and valued. Those who have little English on arrival make great strides due to the excellent support they receive from staff and indeed their fellow pupils.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of their development are excellent. They show great respect and empathy for cultures other than their own, working and playing alongside one another harmoniously. Pupils thoroughly enjoy learning because the curriculum is good and the teaching inspires them. Through lessons and a wealth of enrichment activities, they develop an excellent understanding of how to keep safe and the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. They make a great contribution to the school. In addition to formal roles as school councillors and peer mediators, pupils provide spontaneous support for one another. The success of the school in developing their independence and self-confidence is evident in their mature attitudes. Many pupils evaluate their own progress, especially in their written work, and are very clear about how to improve because they receive precise guidance and first-rate feedback.

Leadership and management are outstanding. Comprehensive and accurate self-evaluation provides a very clear focus for improvement. The impact of the relentless drive to succeed is evident in the significant improvements in pupils' progress over recent years. The school's considerable record of accelerating progress and its determination to move further forward illustrate its excellent capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

As children enter the nursery, their social development and language skills are often very weak. Many know very few words in English. Staff provide a warm, stimulating and secure environment which helps children to settle in quickly. Due to the good provision in the Nursery and Reception classes, children progress well. Children choose from a wide range of activities. These promote their social and language development very successfully as they share resources, play and chat alongside one another. The outdoor area for Nursery children is spacious but not as well equipped as the area used by Reception children, and this hinders provision for their social and physical development. Staff keep meticulous records, and these show that children make good progress in all areas of learning. However, by the end of Reception, their language skills are below the levels generally expected.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend the pupils' skills so they are better able to write in a wide range of contexts by the end of Year 6.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils start school with low skills and abilities and make good progress to reach standards that are in line with the national average by the end of Year 6. Pupils who have English as an additional language achieve very well due to the excellent support they receive. Pupils make good progress across the board in Years 1 and 2 and particularly in writing, where national tests and assessments show that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels by the end of Year 2 is often above average. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well overall, whatever their starting points. In the 2007 national tests, Year 6 pupils reached average standards in English, mathematics and science. Within this positive picture, pupils make considerably more progress in reading than in writing.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils are very eager to come to school and behave exceedingly well. One parent commented, 'I am always so impressed with how well behaved and mannered the children are at Manorside.' Peer mentors take their role very seriously. One of the youngest children reported that, 'They help us to keep safe. It is a good idea.' School councillors are extremely proud of their roles and take an extremely active part in school improvement. 'We need more fibre, more protein and would like more herb fish,' they told the school after analysing school menus. Pupils have a strong empathy and awareness of the lives of others through, for example, fund raising activities and international links. Pupils develop a genuine commitment to people less fortunate than themselves. During an assembly, a pupil asked everyone to reflect on the conflicts around the world, saying, 'We would like to give strength to people so they can stand up for their culture and belief.' Their good teamwork and strong presentation skills prepare them well for the next stage of education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Effective strategies to improve the quality of teaching, introduced over the last two years, have already had a marked influence on standards. Their impact is evident in the accelerated progress the pupils make in all subjects. However, many of the changes are relatively recent and their impact on pupils' learning and progress, particularly in writing, in Years 3 to 6 is yet to come to full fruition. Teachers have a high level of expertise and much of the teaching is exemplary. Relationships are excellent and teachers create an atmosphere where pupils want to learn. Lessons are interesting, challenging and fun. The feedback pupils receive through marking is first class. Teachers encourage pupils to evaluate their own and one another's work. Such effective practice is proving increasingly successful throughout the school and is having a significant impact on pupils' progress. Reviewing his writing, one Year 5 pupil wrote, 'I used similes, paragraphs, lots of connectives and good vocabulary but didn't use metaphors or onomatopoeia.' Not all pupils are this confident in self-evaluation and teachers are endeavouring to help them acquire the necessary skills. Assisted very well by specialist agencies, teaching assistants provide highly effective support, for example, when helping pupils with learning or communication difficulties.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum stimulates pupils' interest, extends their experiences and meets their wide ranging needs. The school's successful promotion of art, sport, international awareness, health and fitness have received national recognition and have a very positive influence on their personal development. Work in mathematics and science provides very good opportunities for pupils to learn through practical experience. Particularly good headway has been made in providing stimulating contexts for promoting pupils' writing skills. For example, Year 6 pupils wrote thoughtful accounts of their re-enactment of a Hindu wedding. One pupil wrote, 'The bride's entrance was tearful. There were gasps. It was very hard to see with the smoke from the beautiful fire in your eyes.' Such approaches are leading to better progress but have not been established long enough to have a significant impact achievement in writing in Years 3 to 6. An outstanding range of enrichment activities supports learning and personal development extremely well. Working with the Royal Opera House, for example, pupils composed and performed their own operetta. Year 6 pupils recently worked with a scientist in exploring the 'fitness for purpose' of everyday objects such as sliding doors.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school knows its pupils very well and this is reflected in the close monitoring of their progress and strong pastoral care. Procedures for safeguarding children are secure. Very effective guidance has been instrumental in accelerating progress and raising standards over the last two years. The school is well placed to extend the guidance it provides for older pupils to help them to improve their writing skills further. The caring ethos within the school is shown by the welcome it extends to new arrivals. Other pupils act as 'buddies' and the school assesses these pupils' needs quickly. As a result, they settle well and make good progress socially and academically. The parent and toddler group also supports a smooth transition for children into

school. A parent remarked, 'Manorside is a very special school, with a lovely community feel.' Close liaison with other agencies and key roles played by the learning mentors and the inclusion manager, support pupils' learning and confidence extremely well.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher and the deputy headteacher have established a cohesive leadership team, united in its vision and effort to provide a stimulating learning environment for pupils. Their passion for developing pupils' potential is evident in their success in accelerating pupils' academic progress and the pupils' personal development, which is now outstanding. The use of challenging targets ensures the whole school community is sharply focused on the common goals for improvement. An unremitting commitment to equal opportunities underpins the school's determination for all groups to succeed. A wide range of monitoring evidence is used effectively to determine the next steps for improvement. This has led to excellent improvement since the last inspection. Standards have risen considerably, and many aspects of the school's provision have improved from good to outstanding. The school's thorough understanding of its strengths and weaknesses ensures that development is planned effectively to meet the diverse needs of pupils. Governors contribute well towards such priorities and have access to relevant information that enables them to constructively challenge and support the school.

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Annex A

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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?	1
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?	1

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?	1
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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
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	1
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

21 April 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Manorside Primary School, London, N3 2AB

Thank you for making us so welcome during our visit. We were really impressed by the way children from such a wide range of backgrounds get on so well together. We agree with one of your parents who said, 'There is a genuine community feel to Manorside. The older children are really nice to the younger kids. It is a happy place'.

We enjoyed talking to you about all your involvement in sport, music and art. A highlight of our visit was the assembly where the video of the Year 6 'Hindu wedding' was shown, and so many pupils received awards for their positive attitudes, hard work and progress. We were moved to observe your sensitive response to one pupil's request for everyone to help in the fight against racism across the world.

We certainly agree with you that Manorside is a good school. From the good start in Reception, pupils make good progress so, by the end of Year 6, standards are similar to those in other schools. When you consider how many children join the school at different times and how many are learning English in addition to their home language, it is clear that the school supports all children very well. We saw how the teachers inspire you to learn and we agree with you that lessons are fun. So much so that we were often reluctant to leave the classroom - we were learning quite a bit too! We were particularly pleased to see that most children know how to improve their work and many assess their own progress. In particular, this is helping you to improve your written work and it was good to see you use the 'VCOP' prompts and 'punctuation pyramids' to check your work. We have asked the teachers to use these and other methods to help pupils in Years 3 to 6 to extend their skills for writing in different contexts.

The school helps you grow into mature, caring and confident people, ready for the next stage in education and life beyond school. Everyone goes to great lengths to get to know you as individuals and ensure you feel happy and safe. You will appreciate that many of the things you enjoy and gain from school life are the result of excellent leadership. The senior staff and governors work closely together to help ensure the good things continue and to spot any areas for improvement.

Thank you again for such an enjoyable visit.

Yours sincerely,

Rob Crompton

Lead Inspector