

Holy Name Roman Catholic Primary School Manchester

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105516
Local Authority	Manchester
Inspection number	308879
Inspection dates	24–25 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Arthur Markham

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	166
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Marjorie Bell
Headteacher	Mrs Catherine Gordon
Date of previous school inspection	20 October 2003
School address	Denmark Road Moss Side Manchester Lancashire M15 6JS
Telephone number	0161 2266303
Fax number	0161 2321897

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This smaller than average sized school serves an area with a high degree of social deprivation. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is very high and many are in the early stages of learning to speak English. The number of pupils claiming free school meals is well above that in most schools. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average. Many pupils join and leave the school throughout the year.. The school has Healthy School status and has been awarded the International Schools Award and the Activemark.

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, which provides good value for money. Pupils enjoy learning within a very encouraging and caring environment. They regard their teachers highly and benefit from the high quality relationships that ensure they feel safe and secure. They steadily grow in confidence because staff give close attention to ensuring that their needs are met and their self-esteem developed. As a result, pupils have positive attitudes to learning and achieve well both academically and in their personal development.

Many pupils start school with very limited skills but consistently good teaching and a good curriculum ensure that they quickly develop an enthusiasm for learning and make good progress. Achievement is good and when pupils leave at the end of Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are close to the national average. This situation has been maintained since the last inspection because the school uses the very good tracking procedures to identify and tackle any underachievement. There is a clear awareness that too few pupils reach the higher levels in national tests and determined action is being taken to redress this situation. The challenge presented to the more able pupils has been raised and school data indicate that performance at the higher levels is improving. However, pupils' information and communication technology (ICT) skills are not well developed.

A strength of the school is the outstanding level of care it provides for pupils. The school's family approach successfully leads to pupils from a wide range of backgrounds and languages being fully included and valued. Parents say they find the teachers friendly and very helpful and are very appreciative of the care taken of their children. Excellent links with external agencies ensure that any vulnerable pupils are supported very well. The academic guidance given to pupils is very good. Pupils, consequently, have a good awareness of what they must do to improve. The well targeted support given to pupils with additional learning needs and those at the early stages of learning to speak English ensures that they make good progress.

Close attention is given to pupils' personal development. Pupils enjoy the lively teaching and rich curriculum provided. Their behaviour is consequently good and classrooms are industrious places. The opportunities the school provides through its international links develop pupils' awareness of other cultures well. Pupils' contribution to their own and to the wider community is good and they learn to be caring and respectful of others. They have a good understanding of the need to be healthy and put this into practice by participating in a wide range of physical activities.

Leadership and management are good and are a key reason for the school's success. There is a strong team approach with all staff and governors working together well to improve the effectiveness of the school. Governors are actively involved in the life of the school and carry out their responsibilities effectively. The school's monitoring and self-evaluation is accurate because senior staff monitor its performance closely, although subject coordinators are not sufficiently involved in this process. The school is consequently well placed to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Staff work very well together and take great care to ensure that children settle quickly when they enter the nursery. Children's smiling faces as they arrive in the morning are testament to the success of the staff in this endeavour. Parents

are made to feel very welcome and are given good guidance as to how they can support their child's learning at home. The quality of teaching is good and planning ensures that activities present children with a good balance of teacher directed and independent learning opportunities, although occasionally, more adult involvement in activities could enhance learning. Whilst close attention is given to developing children's basic skills and their personal, social and emotional development, the other areas of learning are also covered well. Routines are well established so that children quickly develop good learning habits and make a good start to their learning. They enjoy the wide range of activities and work enthusiastically at their tasks with high levels of enjoyment. On entry to the Nursery, many children have very low level skills, particularly in personal, social and emotional development, and speaking and listening. By the end of the Reception Year, standards are well below those expected nationally, but this represents good progress and achievement from their starting points.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' skills in ICT and provide opportunities to use them in other subjects.
- Develop the role of subject coordinators to enable them to take a more active role in improving standards.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

When they enter Year 1, pupils' skills are well below those expected. They make good progress to reach standards that are below average by the end of Year 2. The weakest area is in writing, mainly because few pupils reach the higher levels. This good progress continues through Years 3 to 6 so that by the end of Year 6, standards are close to national averages. The improvement made by pupils from their performance at Key Stage 1 is impressive and compares very favourably with other schools nationally. Whilst there has been a slight dip in results over the last two years, mainly because too few pupils reach the higher Level 5, school data show that the present pupils are making good progress and are expected to reach higher standards. The use of challenging targets and careful tracking of pupils so that any underachievement can be addressed are major factors in this success. Pupils with additional learning needs make similarly good progress to others in the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils greatly enjoy their school, behave well and show good attitudes to learning. Relationships are very good and this generates a warm and friendly atmosphere so that pupils feel safe and secure. They say they feel confident there is someone they could go to if they had any concerns. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Assemblies provide opportunities for quiet reflection and lessons develop their spiritual awareness well. Pupils show increasing maturity as they move through the school, taking on responsibilities enthusiastically and sensibly. For example, the members of the school council enjoy representing the views of their classmates and are very pleased that some of their ideas have been implemented. Pupils' good understanding of the benefits of a healthy diet and exercise are reflected in the school's achievement of the Activemark and Healthy School awards. Whilst attendance is below the national average, it has risen steadily in recent years as a result of the school's determined efforts to make parents aware of the need for regular attendance. Pupils' sound basic skills,

together with their good personal and social skills mean that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers know their pupils well and plan lessons carefully to meet their needs. Care is taken to stimulate pupils by presenting activities in an interesting way with lessons proceeding at a good pace. In most lessons, tasks are appropriately challenging and clear explanations ensure that pupils understand what they have to do. As a result, pupils are attentive, enthusiastic and achieve well. They are keen to answer questions and in many classrooms there is a real buzz of excitement. Good use is made of assessment. Teachers use questions effectively to assess pupils' understanding and regularly monitor pupils' work as they circulate in lessons. The pupils' work is marked carefully with good use made of comments to help pupils understand how to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Close attention is given to developing the basic skills in literacy and numeracy, and pupils' personal development is fostered well through provision for personal, social and health education, and citizenship. Teachers are beginning to make links between subjects in order to make learning more meaningful for pupils. However, pupils' computing skills are not well developed and they are not given enough opportunities to use ICT across the curriculum. International links with schools in Ireland and Spain provide excellent opportunities for pupils to gain a deeper global awareness and develop socially. Specialist teaching in Spanish adds to the wide range of learning opportunities presented to pupils. Healthy lifestyles are well promoted through physical education lessons and a wide range of sporting activities after school. After-school clubs, cultural experiences, visits and visitors enhance pupils' learning and add greatly to their enjoyment of school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The high quality of care, guidance and support is seen in the relationships between adults and pupils, and the attention given to ensuring that the needs of all pupils are met. This is indeed a school in which Every Child Matters and is illustrated by the sensitive support for pupils with learning and emotional difficulties who achieve well as a result. Vulnerable pupils are particularly well looked after and the school works in close partnership with a range of agencies to support them and their families. Child protection, health and safety, and risk assessment procedures are secure and are regularly reviewed. Pupils' academic progress is closely monitored and target-setting arrangements give them clear information on how to improve. Induction arrangements are very good and ensure that the large number of pupils who enter the school at different times of the year quickly settle and make good progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The strong leadership of the headteacher, very well supported by her deputy headteacher and senior leadership team, provides a clear direction for the school. The determination to provide high quality education for the pupils is shared by all staff who work hard to ensure that pupils enjoy their learning and do well. The close attention given to improving the quality of teaching and making the curriculum relevant and exciting successfully ensures that pupils make good progress throughout the school. This is supported through the excellent partnerships with external agencies to promote the well being of the pupils. The school has a good awareness of its strengths and areas needing development because monitoring and evaluation procedures are well organised, although some subject coordinators are not sufficiently involved in the process. This limits their capacity to impact on standards. Governance is good. A number of governors are frequent visitors to the school and, consequently, have an informed awareness of its work, which enables them to provide a good balance of challenge and support to school leaders.

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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	2

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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?	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?	2
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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
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

Inspection of Holy Name Roman Catholic Primary School, Manchester

M15 6JS

Thank you so much for the warm welcome you gave to me and my colleagues when we visited your school. We really enjoyed talking to you and getting your views of your school. You all said it was a good school and we agree.

We particularly liked the warm and friendly atmosphere and the way the staff take excellent care of you so that you feel safe and happy. They work hard to make learning interesting for you so that you do well. The wide range of activities that they plan for you impressed us, particularly the visits you make to other countries. It was very clear that these help you to really enjoy school. Many of you told us this, and how much you like your teachers. The way you work hard for your teachers is the main reason that you make good progress and achieve well. We were very impressed with your good behaviour. It was pleasing to hear how aware you are of the importance of a healthy diet and the need to take part in physical activities so that you know how to keep fit and healthy.

There are some things the school needs to do to make it even better. We have asked the headteacher and staff to develop your information and communication technology skills and give you more opportunities to use computers in all subjects. We have also asked the teachers in charge of subjects to keep checking how well you are doing in order to determine how they can help you do even better.

Thank you for helping us so much with the inspection of your school. We hope that you will continue to work hard in school and help the teachers so that Holy Name Roman Catholic Primary becomes an even better school.