

Manor Green Primary and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106220
Local Authority	Tameside
Inspection number	309059
Inspection date	17 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Derek Aitken

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	433
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr John Charters
Headteacher	Mrs Jackie Lomas
Date of previous school inspection	27 June 2005
School address	Mancunian Road Haughton Green Denton Manchester Lancashire M34 7NS
Telephone number	0161 3365864
Fax number	0161 3209792

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the impact of the school's work on linking letters and sounds on standards in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1; the quality of care, guidance and support and pupils' personal development and well-being; the progress made by pupils, especially in the writing of the more able pupils in Key Stage 2. The inspector gathered evidence from the school's self-evaluation form, nationally published assessment data and the school's own assessment records, policies and minutes, parents' questionnaires and observation of the school at work. Discussions were held with senior members of staff, the chair of governors and pupils. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in similar detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation form, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

Description of the school

This is a large school situated in the eastern suburbs of the city. Pupils come from a variety of social and economic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. The vast majority are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. The school holds several awards, including the Healthy Schools Award, the Activemark and the Eco-Schools Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school in which pupils achieve very well academically and in their personal and social development. Parents and carers are very satisfied with the contribution it makes to the all-round education of their children. In their words, 'staff and pupils are very proud of their school, and so they should be'.

On entry to Nursery, children's skills are well below those typically expected. Their listening, speaking and social skills are often low. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage, but their skills and knowledge are well below national expectations in some areas of literacy and numeracy when they begin Year 1. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 are consistently in line with the national averages in all subjects. There was a dip in standards in 2007, reflecting the high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in the year group. This dip has been reversed this year. Pupils in Year 2 are making very good progress towards meeting their challenging targets and standards are again in line with national averages. The high quality of the teaching of linking letters and sounds in this key stage combined with the reading and writing logs which engage pupils in their learning very effectively are significant factors in their progress. Standards at the end of Year 6 are above average. There was a dip in 2007 as pupils achieved less well at the higher Level 5 due to staffing difficulties for this year group. This dip has been reversed and pupils in Year 6 are well on track to achieving above average standards in English, including writing, mathematics and science. The school recognises that more work can be done to provide more structured opportunities for gifted and talented pupils and is now putting in place clear plans to address this imbalance. Boys and girls achieve equally well. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve at a similar level because they are supported very effectively in their work.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Pupils take great enjoyment in their education because of the excellent care, guidance and support they receive and the outstanding curriculum. The high quality of relationships between adults and pupils and between the pupils themselves is a strength. Pupils' learning takes place in a relaxed, good-humoured and disciplined atmosphere, where both pupils and staff can be themselves, take risks and try out new ideas to broaden understanding. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet current government requirements. The learning mentor provides invaluable support, for example, by helping to maintain good attendance and by monitoring very closely any concerns pupils may have. These are rigorously followed up and, consequently, pupils feel very safe in school. Other aspects of her work, which include the training of numerous play leaders and peer mentors in Year 6, have provided opportunities which the older pupils take advantage of very well to support the infants. Pupils, therefore, have every encouragement to behave very well and they respond accordingly. Members of the school council and the eco-committee have been effective in securing improvements to the school grounds.

Pupils benefit from a lively, thematically-based curriculum which ensures they are constantly involved in their learning. It is monitored closely and there are very good opportunities for pupils to reinforce their basic skills. Multicultural awareness is strong in all years and pupils' above average standards in art are reflected in their enterprising work on Chinese themes and papier-mâché, African masks. Individual education plans and modifications to the timetable, grouping by ability for English and mathematics in Year 6 and other booster programmes, support the needs of pupils very well. Pupils demonstrate a very good understanding both of healthy lifestyles, as reflected in their recent award, and how to stay safe. The school's very

close partnerships with other educational institutions and agencies underpin the high quality of education provided very well.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Teachers capitalise fully on pupils' responsiveness and very positive attitudes to learning. Methods and resources are carefully selected to ensure pupils participate fully in lessons. Paired discussions, which are well supported by teaching assistants, are very effective in developing pupils' oral skills and self-confidence. Teachers question pupils very precisely and develop their thinking skills well. These factors, combined with excellent relationships, ensure pupils remain alert and fully focused on their learning for long periods. A further strength is the high quality of academic guidance pupils receive. Tasks are explained clearly, success criteria are shared very well and activities are carefully planned to enable pupils to fulfil their personal targets.

A key factor in the success of the school lies in its exceptional leadership and management. The work of the school is closely checked. Consequently, senior and middle leaders have a very good knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development. The actions taken to address the latter are well chosen and carefully implemented. A good example of this is the 'linking letters and sounds programme' which is having a clear impact on standards in Key Stage 1. The school has worked very well to maintain good improvement since its previous inspection and to minimise the effect on standards of the recent staffing difficulties. This has now stabilised and the school is very well set for further improvement. Governors support the work of the school very well and hold the school closely to account. The school provides excellent value for money.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage provides a good education for the younger children. Children make good progress overall, often from low starting points. Progress is particularly notable in their personal and social skills and in their physical development. The vast majority are working towards the expected early learning goals when they join Year 1 and very few attain the higher levels. Children's attitudes to learning are positive and all are able to work effectively in groups, pairs or individually. Leaders recognise that pupils' literacy skills are a constant priority for their work and they are implementing a number of measures, including more focused work in matching sounds to letters. These measures are having a satisfactory impact in accelerating children's progress. However, teaching, which is otherwise good, does not always enable children to learn quickly by matching sounds closely to the meaning of words and does not consistently challenge children to develop their thinking skills. The curriculum provides a good balance of activities and children's achievements are carefully recorded to inform future planning. Staff look after the children's pastoral needs well and have established good links with parents to enable them to provide extra support for their children's learning. The Foundation Stage is led and managed well.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure children in the Foundation Stage develop their vocabulary and thinking skills at a faster rate.

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

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	2
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	1

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?	1
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	1
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**

I am writing to thank you for your help when I visited your school recently and to tell you about my inspection findings. You told me lots of good things about your school. By the end of my short visit I understood fully why you were so happy to be pupils at Manor Green.

Your school is outstanding. After the good start in the Foundation Stage your school helps you to do really well in all your subjects. You make very good progress and reach standards which are above average by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. Your personal development and well-being are excellent. You enjoy your lessons, the clubs you take part in, and the visits you go on, for example, to Chinatown. You get on very well with each other and your behaviour is first class. Many of you told me how well the staff, including the learning mentor, look after you, and make sure you feel completely safe in school. You are really alert in lessons, concentrate hard and answer well. The teachers play their part by teaching you very well and making your work both fun and challenging. They assess your learning carefully. You know your targets well and what to do to make progress and this makes you feel confident and keen to take part in lessons.

Staff work hard to make things better for you and their efforts (and yours!) have been rewarded in the large number of awards you have received in the last few years. When your school was last inspected, it received a very good report. I was very pleased to find out it was keeping up the same high standards.

I have asked the staff to do one thing to improve your education. This is to make sure that the children in the Foundation Stage develop their vocabulary and thinking skills at a faster rate to help them learn more quickly.