

Canon Johnson CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106243
Local Authority	Tameside
Inspection number	309068
Inspection dates	22–23 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Mark Madeley

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	222
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Headteacher	Mrs Susan Warburton
Date of previous school inspection	6 May 2003
School address	Elgin Street Ashton-under-Lyne Lancashire OL7 9DD
Telephone number	0161 3303169
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This average sized school serves an area of mainly rented terraced housing just to the north of the town centre. Most pupils are of White British heritage but a growing number are from other ethnic groups, although very few pupils start school without any knowledge of English. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average, as is the percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A new headteacher was appointed in January of this year and a new deputy headteacher the following April.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This school gives its pupils a satisfactory education. Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage, as do pupils in Key Stage 2, but these positive features are balanced against poor behaviour by a small number of pupils, which impacts on the learning of others and by the progress of pupils through Key Stage 1 which, while satisfactory, is not as strong as in other key stages. Although the majority of parents fully support the school, a minority have concerns about poor behaviour, which causes their children to dislike school or not to learn as quickly as they might. In a short time the new senior management team has thoroughly assessed the school and quickly put in place sound changes in response to pupils' needs. Some, like the revised approach to letter sounds, have met with immediate success while others, like the strategies to improve pupils' behaviour, need more time. Standards have improved in Key Stage 2 since the last inspection but have declined in Key Stage 1. Good systems are in place to gauge pupils' progress and the information is used well by staff. The school has satisfactory capacity to improve further. It gives satisfactory value for money.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children start Nursery with skills that are below expectations. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage and join Year 1 with standards which are broadly at the nationally expected levels. Progress slows during Key Stage 1, where teaching lacks the pace and drive of other key stages. The pace of learning picks up markedly through Key Stage 2 and pupils make good progress. Standards have improved steadily for the last four years and are currently average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. The quality of teaching is satisfactory rather than good because it is variable across the school. Generally, teachers use questioning well to find out what pupils know and tasks, especially for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are well planned to meet these pupils' needs.

The satisfactory curriculum gives the correct emphasis to the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and there are adequate planned opportunities for pupils to use these skills in other subjects. Enrichment activities like sports clubs and visits to places of historical interest are good but the programme for pupils' moral and social development has not overcome problems of occasional fighting in the playground and the intermittent use of unacceptable language to adults. Although most pupils behave well, this type of poor behaviour is particularly prevalent at lunchtime, when staff on duty do not have sufficient training to deal with it effectively. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. They have a good idea of how to stay fit and healthy and are keen to learn. The school offers its pupils adequate care, guidance and support. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported and most pupils know and strive to reach their targets.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children grow in confidence during their time in this bright, spacious and welcoming Foundation Stage and make good progress. They make sensible choices, such as when to have their snack, and become more independent. Procedures for helping children to settle into school are good. Older children also help Nursery children settle in by involving them in their games and by showing them the routines. Children speak freely to each other and staff. They mainly use words and short phrases to express their views. Most staff are skilled at inviting longer responses from the children, which develops their language skills. There are some minor inconsistencies in the way staff draw out more complex answers from children. Good teaching provides many

opportunities for children to develop early writing skills through both formal teaching and play activities, like sending letters to each other. Children confidently use computers when learning to count and to recognise numerals. This work is extended well during play when, for example, they build a tower and count how many blocks they have used. Most children reach the national expectations by the end of the Foundation Stage but few go beyond this. Approximately one third have weaknesses in their understanding and use of letter sounds. The school has identified this and put in place measures to improve children's learning in this aspect.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 so as to increase pupils' rate of progress and thus improve standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Improve the behaviour of the small minority of disruptive pupils and the programme for moral and social development to influence this.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Through Key Stage 1 pupils make satisfactory progress. Standards are below average and the 2007 test results at the end of Year 2 were particularly low. This was partly related to the abilities of the group of pupils and partly to teaching which, although satisfactory overall, sometimes lacked sufficient pace to move pupils forward quickly enough. Some pupils did not understand letter sounds fully and this has held them back in reading. The school recognised this and implemented changes to teaching which are having a positive effect. During Key Stage 2 pupils' progress accelerates and effective teaching helps them make good progress. 'They make us work really hard all the time', was a comment that captured the views of many pupils. Standards in English, mathematics and science have improved year on year. In 2007 they were above average and the school's highest ever. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress against their targets in classes. Parents praise the skilled and patient support pupils receive from all the staff involved in their learning and the inspection agrees with their view.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Most pupils behave well, have positive attitudes to learning and enjoy the extra activities the school offers. Attendance is satisfactory. The majority of pupils are rarely absent but a few find coming to school regularly and on time difficult. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, for example, on the roads. The vast majority also say that they feel safe in school because the staff look after them well. They are keen to help others, for example, acting as play leaders or selling the toast at break time. The school council is elected by pupils' votes, which gives them an idea of the democratic process. It has brought about improvements in the school, for instance, requesting nets for football and that toilets be upgraded. Through the 'free fruit' scheme and well directed science lessons pupils are taught about the importance of a healthy diet. Although pupils talk knowledgeably about eating healthily, their lunchboxes often contain a high proportion of sweet and fatty foods. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. They know how to respond in class and at lunchtime but a small minority do not

have sufficient self-control to behave consistently well. This can result in minor problems, like being slow to settle to tasks, but sometimes larger groups find it difficult to behave responsibly, for example when older pupils make their way boisterously into the lunch hall. A small number of pupils find this type of behaviour intimidating. Most pupils have the academic and social skills necessary to make a sound start to their next school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Effective use of resources engages pupils' interest and helps them to learn. Tasks are frequently well matched to the needs of individual pupils and thus they are able to move forward in their learning. Most teachers do this particularly well for the lowest ability groups. Clear explanations of 'what the teacher is looking for' help pupils understand what they have to do. In the main, teachers manage classes well so most lessons are focused on learning. However, there are occasions when the pace of learning slows because a minority of pupils lacks self-discipline. For example, when giving out and collecting in equipment they can become unnecessarily noisy and inattentive. In Key Stage 1 the pace of learning is not quick enough for pupils to make good progress. Also, explanations are clear but sometimes take too long or are repeated, thus losing pupils' attention. Across the school pupils' English work is marked very well. Mathematics and science books are marked less well because pupils are not told on a regular basis what they have done well or what they could improve. The needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are met well, partly due to the innovative use of 'pen portraits', which helps teachers see learning through the eyes of individual pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum adequately meets the needs of pupils. Recent reviews have highlighted areas for development, such as letter sounds and reading comprehension, and senior managers have acted swiftly to make suitable changes. The programme of social and moral education is not yet fully impacting on a minority of pupils' understanding of their roles and responsibilities towards each other and towards adults in school. The extensive range of clubs and activities adds to pupils' enjoyment of school and a large proportion of them seize the opportunity to participate in sports in order to stay fit. Visits are an important feature of topic work and have a significant impact on pupils' recall of history. The residential visit is very popular among pupils and they recognise that it helps them learn to work together as well as offering lots of exciting adventurous activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Staff identify the needs of the pupils in their care well and are fully committed to pupils' academic, physical and emotional welfare. As a result most pupils are happy in school, make at least satisfactory progress and grow more mature, ready for their next school. A minority of pupils find coming to school and/or arriving on time difficult, and the school is working satisfactorily with them to improve attendance, though it has yet to find a solution to the problem of families taking holidays during term time. Safeguarding procedures are in line with national expectations. Most parents say that the school is doing a good job for their child. The

pupils benefit from effective links with an on site before-and-after-school club. A well attended mother and toddler group is also bringing the community into the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The new headteacher and deputy headteacher form a strong team which has quickly analysed the strengths and areas for development of the school and has put in place measures with the aim of improving pupils' learning. For example, a greater emphasis on the teaching of letter sounds is improving pupils' reading and spelling skills in Key Stage 1. Staff are fully behind these measures because senior managers involve them in decision making. Senior managers know that some aspects of teaching could be better and are already taking steps to improve them. Pupils' progress is monitored rigorously. Challenging targets are set for each year group and frequently exceeded, as in 2007 in Key Stage 2. Following a review, a comprehensive policy on behaviour management was agreed. It has yet to be fully implemented, in particular because lunchtime and non-permanent staff have not had sufficient training. Governance is satisfactory. The governors have a sound view of where the school is now. A positive aspect of their work is their links to classes, which give them a greater understanding of the work of the school. They are watchful over spending and recognise that, when finances allow, a high priority needs to be given to improving the fabric of 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?	3
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?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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?	3
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	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for making the inspectors welcome in your school recently. We listened carefully to what you had to say and considered your views when reaching judgements about your school. Your school gives you a satisfactory education. We think that pupils in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2 make good progress but that progress is slower in Key Stage 1. The school does some other things well too, such as giving you a good range of clubs and visits, but we agree with you that the poor behaviour of a few children too frequently spoils it for the majority. Most of you are polite, work hard and are keen to learn. Almost all of you behave well in most lessons and have a good understanding of how to stay fit and healthy. Your new headteacher has good ideas to improve your school further and the staff and governing body all support her. You showed, during an interesting assembly on Hinduism, that you too respect her and what she is trying to do for you.

We have suggested that your school takes the following actions to improve learning for you:

- make sure that pupils in Key Stage 1 make the same good progress that is made by pupils elsewhere in the school
- improve the behaviour of those few poorly behaved children.

You can help your school improve. Firstly, we would like all of you to be on your best behaviour at all times. Furthermore, you should continue to work as hard as you can to reach your targets in English and mathematics. Together with your headteacher and all who work in your school, you can make a difference to the education of all pupils. I wish your school every success for the future.