

St Chrysostom's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105491
Local Authority	Manchester
Inspection number	324229
Inspection dates	15–16 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Michael Onyon

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	227
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Fr Ian Gomersall
Headteacher	Miss Melanie Michael
Date of previous school inspection	5 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Lincoln Grove Chorlton-on-Medlock Manchester Lancashire M13 0DX

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	15–16 June 2009
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

St Chrysostom's is an average-sized primary school, serving an area of well above average social and economic deprivation. There are many more pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and for whom English is an additional language than seen nationally. A very high proportion of pupils are entitled to a free school meal. An above average percentage of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, but the percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational need is broadly average. More pupils than usual join and leave the school at different times. The school has Early Years Foundation Stage provision consisting of Nursery and Reception classes.

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 and improving school where pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. The strong sense of community within the school and the good care, guidance and support result in a harmonious ethos. The strong sense of pride in the school is reflected in the teamwork and determination of staff at all levels to provide a learning environment that successfully embodies the school motto 'Brothers and sisters together, respecting each other, creating the future generation.' This can be seen in pupils playing happily together and enjoying their education.

The community served by the school faces considerable challenges and places a high value on the support they receive. Many parents comment on the care and concern shown by the school and the good progress made by their children. It is a happy and welcoming community, celebrating and valuing its diversity well, where pupils' relationships with each other and with staff are exemplary. Its partnerships with others, through networks and links, are good and enhance the provision for all pupils.

Children enter the school with skills well below those expected for their age. Good achievement occurs throughout the school. Standards have improved in Key Stage 1 and are now broadly average at the end of Year 2. Results of national tests at the end of Year 6 show standards are rising and are now securely average. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language are supported well by dedicated support staff who ensure that they make good progress towards their individual targets. The progress of a wide range of ethnic groups is tracked well and indicates that progress is good for all.

The personal development of pupils is outstanding, with excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are open, honest, friendly and reliable young people, taking on positions of responsibility available to them around school with enthusiasm and contributing outstandingly to the local community with their visits and charitable acts. They behave well, both in class and around the school. Above average attendance illustrates their good enjoyment of school. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and healthy and understand the importance of healthy eating and taking regular exercise. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education. All the required safeguarding procedures are in place.

Teaching and learning are good overall. Staff display good subject knowledge and use a variety of teaching styles to engage pupils. Assessment information and a thorough tracking system provide opportunities for teachers to inform pupils about their progress and for tasks provided to be matched to ability. However, this is not always used well enough to meet the needs of the more able pupils. As a result, the more able pupils are not consistently challenged in all classes to do as well as they could. Marking is generally good and often involves pupils in discussion about how they can improve their work. Where lessons are satisfactory, the pace is slower, pupil interaction and challenge is less effectively used and there are few opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own progress and take responsibility for their own learning. The good curriculum places an emphasis on ensuring relevant, first-hand experiences for pupils to bring learning to life, using the local area to good effect. The links between subjects are well planned and offer good opportunities for pupils to use literacy and numeracy skills. Music and art are strengths of the curriculum. Moreover, visitors and a good range of out-of-school activities enhance provision well.

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher's leadership has been pivotal in moving the school forward. Together with the deputy headteacher and a talented leadership team, she provides strong, clear leadership. Together they focus strongly on the drive for improvement. As a result, the school is well placed to improve further and provides good value for money.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Good provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage including effective leadership enables children to make a good start to their education and to become happy and receptive learners. From very low starting points on entry to the Nursery, they achieve well, in all areas of learning. By the end of the Reception Year, although attainment is below in the areas of personal, social and emotional development, and communication, language and literacy, in all other areas of learning, attainment is broadly average for the age group. Children have gained significantly in confidence and enthusiasm for learning. Daily sessions focusing on letters and sounds are helping to boost early language, reading and writing skills and this has started to impact positively on children's achievement in literacy. The quality of teaching is good and stimulates learning well. The curriculum provides activities, indoors and in the well-resourced outdoor areas, which are well matched to the children's needs and provide them with interest and fun. Children interact very well with each other and enjoy warm relationships with the very caring staff. Good arrangements ensure that children's welfare is paramount. Parents appreciate the good communications between home and school and the good care provided for their children. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader and an effective team work together well to promote the children's progress and well-being. Vulnerable children, those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those at the early stages of learning English, are supported well. Children's progress is observed carefully and assessment is systematic, so that support is given promptly to those who need it. Strong support from the school's family worker and good links with external agencies promote children's health, welfare and progress well.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that more able pupils are consistently challenged to do as well as they can.
- Challenge and involve pupils in all lessons to take responsibility for their own learning and the progress they make.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement for all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language, is good. Standards at the end of Year 2 have shown good improvement, rising year on year since 2005, and are now in line with the national average. Progress is accelerating, as the result of well-targeted and challenging support, with more pupils reaching the level expected for their age. Support for individual pupils, through the school's 'numbers count' programme has led to significant progress in mathematics. Progress throughout Key Stage 2 is good. The 2008, Year 6 national test results were broadly average in English, mathematics and science, although the school rightly continues its whole-school focus on writing. The school's good tracking data indicate that current standards are average and there is continuing good achievement. The school has rightly identified that more able

pupils could do even better. Regular pupil progress meetings identify pupils who may be underachieving and allow swift, effective interventions to be put in place.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils flourish in the secure and supportive environment, feel safe and greatly enjoy all that the school has to offer. Excellent relationships are fostered, pupils taking a lead from the ways the school includes and welcomes everyone of all abilities and ethnicities. Excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development results in extremely positive attitudes towards school and good behaviour both in and out of lessons. Relationships between pupils are excellent and they are very sensitive to each other's needs, beliefs and cultures. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the school community, for example, by enthusiastically taking responsibilities for tasks around school including serving as 'peer mediators', helping to resolve any disputes between pupils. The school council represents the interests of the children very well. Rigorous policies and procedures for attendance are in place. As a result, it has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles. The school offers fruit and healthy snacks to its pupils at break-times and provides a wide range of physical activities, including peer massage at the beginning of each afternoon session. Pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall with some outstanding and some satisfactory features. Throughout the school pupils' attitudes to work are good, partly due to the excellent relationships that exist between staff and learners. Lessons are well planned, although work is not always accurately matched to the needs of the most able pupils. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively in lessons and give good quality support. Some outstanding features observed included exciting delivery, challenging questioning, the opportunity for pupils to undertake shared and

self-evaluation, and a concentration on developing thinking skills. For example, the high quality work seen in the 'numbers count' activities, builds effectively on pupils' previous learning. When these ingredients are in lessons they lead to a fast pace of learning and high levels of enjoyment. Lively dialogue with pupils about their learning and the challenge to do better are less evident in satisfactory lessons. Moreover, in these lessons there are limited opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own progress and to take responsibility for their own learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good curriculum with a strong focus on English, mathematics, and science, with writing across the school a continuing priority. The work in each subject is now beginning to be planned to ensure that pupils are offered opportunities to develop and apply the key skills of literacy and numeracy, but this is in the early stages and is not yet fully established across the school. The curriculum is reinforced well by out-of-school activities and themed events, like the 'magpie project', enabling pupils to access and use museum and library resources.

This builds on pupils' experiences and broadens their knowledge of the world around them. The school also places great importance on providing a broad curriculum, enriched by visits like the annual residential 'team building' visit to Gyll Head for all Year 6 pupils. Music and art are strengths of the school, and information and communication technology (ICT) is promoted well in many subjects. The personal, social, health and citizenship education programme contributes very well in developing pupils' excellent personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides exceptionally good pastoral care for all its pupils. It supports the most vulnerable pupils extremely well, working with them and their families to help to tackle the barriers to learning they may be facing. Pupils are confident that adults are readily on hand to help with any problems that arise and this makes them feel secure. Those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or who are learning English as an additional language are supported very well. The school liaises very effectively with external agencies to promote pupils' progress, health and well-being. All statutory requirements are met for health and safety, including safeguarding and child protection. Academic guidance is satisfactory. While marking is good and pupils are often given good verbal feedback in lessons, opportunities are missed to encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own learning and to assess for themselves, the progress they are making. Effective measures continue to be taken to improve attendance, through the use of positive incentives and through working with families for whom regular attendance is a problem.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides excellent leadership with a clear, well-informed vision for the future. Together with the deputy headteacher and senior leaders, she leads a perceptive, influential leadership team, sustaining a learning environment where all pupils are expected to achieve well. Because of well-targeted support for pupils, standards have risen since the previous inspection. The hardworking and dedicated team of teachers and support staff share the same vision with each playing their role in improvement. The school's analysis of its contribution and the promotion of community cohesion are good, leading to racial harmony and a caring, supportive ethos. Pupils make a strong contribution to their school community and the wider community. For example, they have created a sheltered area where parents and carers can meet before and after school, performed in musical concerts in the city and got involved in charitable acts for the global community. The promotion of equal opportunities and the elimination of discrimination are good. The school effectively recognises the importance that the personal development and well-being of pupils has on their progress. Governors are effective and well informed and play a full part in monitoring and evaluating the school's progress. The school uses effective systems to judge how well it is performing, which lead to good self-evaluation and identification of the most important areas for future improvement. However, the focus has been upon raising the achievement of lower attaining pupils, with less challenge for the most able. Given the strengths in leadership and management, in teaching and learning, in the curriculum and in pupils' personal development and well-being, the school is well placed to continue to improve in the future.

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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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
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 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

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 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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

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

Thank you for making my colleague and I feel so welcome and for helping us to find out all about your school. We enjoyed being with you and seeing your bright smiles, enthusiasm for your work and pride in your school. We were pleased to see how well behaved you are and how kind and considerate you are to each other. I am writing to tell you about the findings of the inspection.

St Chrysostom's is a good school. It has good teaching, an exciting curriculum and takes excellent care of you. Your personal development and well-being are excellent. It does a very good job helping those of you who find learning difficult. You all seem to enjoy school and learn at a good rate and become very pleasant and mature individuals who put others before yourselves. You have positive attitudes towards your work and you are rightly very proud of your school. You know a lot about staying safe, being healthy and making a positive contribution to your school community.

Your headteacher and all the staff team do their very best for you. They are always seeking ways of doing this. They know the strengths of the school well and what they need to do to improve. To help you to do even better we have asked your school to make sure that those of you who find work easy are given tasks which always make you think and extend what you already know and can do. We have also asked the school to encourage you to take responsibility for your learning and to assess for yourselves how well you are doing to make sure that you do as well as you can.

It was a pleasure to visit your school. Keep working hard and coming to school regularly so that you continue to do well! On behalf of my colleague I would like to pass on my best wishes to all of you, and thank you once again for making our visit so enjoyable.