

St Wilfrid's CofE Aided Primary School

Northenden

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105549
Local Authority	Manchester
Inspection number	324241
Inspection dates	29–30 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Jim Crouch

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 aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	310
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	Rev Forster
Headteacher	Mrs V Ford
Date of previous school inspection	15 May 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Patterdale Road Northenden Manchester Lancashire M22 4NR

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	29–30 January 2009
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Telephone number
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average school with Early Years Foundation Stage provision in the form of a Nursery class and two Reception classes. It is situated about eight miles from Manchester city centre and serves a community that experiences some social disadvantage. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The number at an early stage of learning English has increased in recent years, but is still well below average. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average, but the proportion with a statement of special educational need is above average. The number of pupils who join or leave the school at other than the usual times is slightly higher than average. The school holds the Activemark and holds Healthy Schools and Eco-Schools status.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school with good features in the way it promotes pupils' personal development and their care and well-being. In recent years it experienced some lack of continuity in staffing which contributed to a drop in attainment at the end of Year 6 in 2006 and 2007. As a result of effective measures to deal with these issues, standards are rising. Children are now making good progress in the Foundation Stage and progress is improving at Key Stages 1 and 2. However, overall achievement remains satisfactory, with some weaknesses in English standards. Awareness of its recent improvement prompted the school to overestimate the effectiveness of some aspects of its work.

Parents value the school's high quality care and the good partnership they have with the school. They say that the school is welcoming, friendly and good at instilling self-confidence and the desire to do well. Teachers know their pupils well. As a result of warm and supportive relationships, the happy pupils thrive, feel very secure and are ready for learning. They talk enthusiastically about why they enjoy school so much. They contribute well to the life of the school through, for example, the work of the school council and the eco-school team. Pupils feel safe and show a good awareness of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, choosing to eat fruit at break and joining in the school's good range of sporting activities. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. School assemblies and class worship time provide good opportunities for pupils to join together to celebrate their achievements and reflect on their relationships with others.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and improving. In the strongest lessons teachers and teaching assistants work well together to ensure that all pupils are challenged and take an active part in the lesson. The satisfactory curriculum is enhanced by a good range of extra-curricular activities. Suitable steps have been taken to improve the provision for English and mathematics, particularly with regard to supporting pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. However, the provision for promoting pupils' personal, social health and citizenship education (PSHCE) is less assured, because it does not place sufficient emphasis on developing citizenship.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher and governors have a clear vision for the school. They are aware of the barriers to learning that many pupils face. The school works well with parents and a wide range of partner organisations to promote pupils' well-being. The recent restructuring of the senior leadership team has led to some improvement, particularly in teaching and learning and the tracking of pupils' progress. However, the school improvement plan is not sufficiently focused on identifying specific and measurable targets for development. As a result leaders, particularly middle leaders, are not properly monitoring and evaluating the work of the school and ensuring that school improvement targets are met. The school has made satisfactory progress in addressing issues raised in the last inspection and demonstrates a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children join the Nursery class with skills and abilities slightly below those typical for their age. In recent years progress has been broadly satisfactory. As a result, children have joined Year 1 working securely at the nationally expected levels. However, inspection evidence, including

lesson observations, indicates that as a result of improvements in provision, children are making good progress. They are attaining above expected levels in all areas of learning. Well managed induction arrangements ensure that children quickly settle. Parents are welcomed into the classrooms and frequently take part in activities at the start of the day. The unit is well resourced, bright and stimulating. The strong emphasis on promoting care and personal development helps children to develop positive attitudes and enjoy learning. The carefully planned, themed activities are well matched to the needs of individual learners. Children work well together, share equipment appropriately and move around the classroom with confidence, following established routines and expectations. They have free access to a secure outside learning area which requires improvements so they can use it throughout the year. The new tracking system, the good ongoing assessments made by all staff and good links with support agencies ensure that individual needs are quickly identified and addressed.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English at Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Improve school improvement planning so that all leaders and managers evaluate and monitor the work of the school effectively to raise standards.
- Improve the curriculum for PSHCE, particularly citizenship.

A small proportion of 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

Achievement is satisfactory and standards are broadly average. Pupils start Year 1 with skills and abilities that are close to those expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress throughout Key Stage 1 and reach standards which are broadly average. The standards reached by girls are a little higher than those of boys. Attainment at Key Stage 2 declined slightly in 2006 and 2007 and the progress of some pupils was less than satisfactory. However, the provisional results for the Key Stage 2 tests in 2008 and school data indicate that, because of steps taken by the school, standards are rising, particularly in mathematics and science. Attainment in English, despite showing some improvement, is not as high, due mainly to weaknesses in writing. All pupils are set challenging targets and are making better progress. In the case of those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, or at early stages of learning English, progress is now good, because of improved arrangements for support and intervention.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' above average attendance reflects their enjoyment of school. Relationships are good. Pupils behave well and feel safe and well cared for. They know they can turn to the staff, and in particular the headteacher, at times of need. They are reassured by the speed with which the school responds to the rare incidents of misbehaviour. They understand the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Pupils say that achieving the Healthy Schools Award has encouraged them to eat more healthily and enjoy physical exercise by, for example, joining in the recently introduced sport of lacrosse. They show they know how to stay safe in and outside school, by taking part in activities such as the cycling proficiency scheme. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Their good use of the school's prayer wall is

one example of how they contribute to the spiritual ethos of the school. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities and contributing to the life of the school through their work on the school council and as members of the eco-team and by acting as 'buddies'. They are increasingly involved in decision making and are proud of their efforts in charity fundraising. They are making satisfactory progress towards their future economic well-being through participating in enterprise activities such as 'Cake Friday', but would benefit from more opportunities to develop such work-related skills and abilities.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and improving. An increasing number of lessons are good or better, but this has not yet led to all groups of pupils making consistently good progress. Teachers are confident and have good relationships with pupils. Teachers make good use of praise and rewards. As a result, pupils are keen to contribute to lessons because they know their ideas will be valued. Marking is used well to celebrate good work and to inform pupils of what they have achieved and how to improve. In the better lessons teachers use a good range of strategies to engage and motivate all groups of pupils and make good use of technology such as interactive whiteboards to bring lessons to life. Teaching assistants usually contribute well. They provide effective support in class and are skilled in working with individuals to raise levels of literacy and numeracy. However, sometimes, particularly during teacher-led activities, they do not contribute as well as they might. Teachers track the progress of individual pupils. However, in some lessons, this is not used to ensure that all groups of pupils are challenged and that, in particular, the more able are given sufficient opportunities to develop independent learning skills. As a result, some pupils do not progress as well as they might.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is taught mainly through discrete subjects, with an appropriate amount of time for English and mathematics. The school is introducing a more thematic approach to teaching other subjects. This is starting to embed the skills gained in literacy and numeracy, establish closer links between subjects and make learning more meaningful. The school has rightly identified the need to improve the provision for teaching PSHCE, and in particular citizenship, to ensure that all pupils develop a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities in society. The curriculum is enriched through good provision for information and communication technology and the teaching of Spanish at Key Stage 2. Good links with a number of partner organisations enhance pupils' learning in sports and music. For example, all pupils have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument. The school makes good use of visits and visiting speakers to enhance and extend pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Parents recognise and value the good level of care and support provided by the school. Staff know the pupils very well and, as a result, staff are able to respond sensitively to the needs of individuals. The school now has an effective system for tracking pupils' progress. It begins early in the Early Years Foundation Stage and carries on through the school. As a result, vulnerable

pupils and those needing additional support are identified quickly. They receive good support, and steps are taken to ensure that all pupils have equal access to all areas of the curriculum, including extra-curricular activities. Child protection and safeguarding procedures are in place and meet government requirements. Pupils who join the school other than at the usual time say they settle in very quickly because of the good arrangements made by the school. Pupils and their parents are well informed of the progress pupils are making. Procedures for reviewing targets and helping pupils to improve are in place and these are beginning to contribute to the improving standards.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. A new management structure is beginning to have an impact on the progress of pupils of all abilities. Senior leaders are using self-evaluation to establish the strengths of the school and its areas for improvement, through actions such as regular lesson observation and work scrutiny. However, the targets and actions for improvement are not always expressed precisely enough or in such a way that their impact can be easily measured. A well managed programme of staff development means that staff are growing in confidence and increasing their ability to take on responsibilities. Middle leaders generally manage their areas effectively but are not yet playing a full role in evaluating and monitoring the work of the school and in contributing to whole-school improvement. This is an inclusive school. It shows its commitment to community cohesion through its efforts to involve parents in the life of the school and its links with its parish and the local community. However, its contribution on a wider scale is less well developed. Governance is satisfactory. Governors know the school well and work closely with school leaders to improve provision. They are increasing their capacity to challenge the work of the school through, for example, receiving training in interpreting performance data.

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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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

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?	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/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?	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
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	2
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 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?	2

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	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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 welcoming us to your school and being so polite and friendly. We enjoyed talking to you and hearing all of the things you like about your school.

Your school gives you a satisfactory education. I was particularly impressed by your good attendance and behaviour and your keenness to do well in lessons. You show good awareness of the needs of others through your charity work and the way in which pupils new to the school are welcomed by you all. I found that the staff take good care of you and keep you well informed of the progress you are making. They have worked hard to help you enjoy your education by developing a good range of visits and extra activities in sport and music. I found that while children in the Nursery and Reception classes now make good progress, most of you in Key Stages 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress. However, the standard of your work is improving, although it is not as good in English as it is in mathematics and science.

There are three important things we think could be better. I have asked your school to make sure that you reach higher standards in English and to improve the curriculum so that you have a better understanding of your future roles and responsibilities within society. I have also asked the school make sure that all the school's leaders and managers are able to contribute more to improving the work of the school and raising standards.

Of course, you also have an important part to play in helping your school to carry on improving. You can do this by continuing to be as positive about learning as you are now and keep trying to improve all aspects of your work.

Thanks again for making us feel so welcome.