

Manchester Road Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106208
Local Authority	Tameside
Inspection number	324349
Inspection dates	27–28 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Terry McDermott

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	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	367
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	Mrs J Taylor
Headteacher	Mr R Wynn
Date of previous school inspection	22 May 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Manchester Road Droylsden Manchester M43 6GD
Telephone number	0161 3703079
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This larger than average school, close to the centre of Droylsden, serves an area of social and economic disadvantage. The school has an Early Years Foundation Stage unit. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average while the proportion with a statement of special educational need is well below average. Fewer pupils are eligible for free school meals than is found in most primary schools nationally. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average. The proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language is below average and rising. The school holds the Healthy Schools Award, Eco-Schools Award and Activemark. An associate headteacher is currently working in the school on a short-term, part-time basis; this is a recent arrangement made by the local authority.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

The school has experienced disruption to both senior leadership and teaching in recent years. These disruptions have had an adverse effect on the quality of pupils' learning. The performance of most pupils, particularly those in Years 5 and 6, is still suffering from the cumulative effects of weak teaching which has restricted their learning. As a result, standards have fallen, and the overall progress pupils make is inadequate. In turn, this has led to inadequate achievement. Leaders have failed to act with sufficient rigour to prevent this deterioration. Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage has remained unaffected and is consistently good.

Pupils' personal development is satisfactory overall. Attendance is satisfactory, and the school has worked hard to sustain this. Pupils have good relationships with staff and with each other. Their well-developed social skills enable them to work well independently or in small groups.

The quality of teaching is inadequate. As a result the pace of pupils' learning and progress is too slow. This is evident from pupils' underperformance in recent years. Its legacy is seen in the exceptionally low standards older pupils achieve in the national tests in Year 6. Although a small number of good lessons were seen during the inspection, the quality of teaching across Key Stages 1 and 2 is not strong enough to raise standards and much of the work provided for pupils does not offer them sufficient challenge to achieve as they should. Furthermore, the quality of marking is too variable; it does not provide sufficient feedback to tell pupils how well they are doing or how they can improve their work. Pupils work best in the few lessons when they are set tasks which make them think for themselves, but this does not happen often enough.

All adults in the school care deeply about the pastoral welfare of the children in their care. They help pupils to feel happy and safe. Pupils very quickly adopt the values of tolerance and consideration for others, which are displayed consistently by their teachers and other adults. However, the system used to measure the academic progress pupils make has failed to identify widespread underperformance. Consequently, teachers cannot plan consistently to meet the needs of all groups of pupils. As a result, care, guidance and support are inadequate overall.

Senior leaders have not taken effective action to tackle weak teaching, declining standards and slowing achievement. Evaluations of the work of the school are not sufficiently robust nor are they grounded firmly enough in accurate evidence. This has given the school an imprecise and over-favourable view of its own effectiveness. As a result, the school does not have a clear picture of what actions need to be taken to secure improvements. It also means that school leaders have failed to identify and address underperformance. Governance is inadequate; governors have not challenged the performance of the school with sufficient rigour. These significant weaknesses indicate that the school has inadequate capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is a strength of the school. Children join the Nursery with language, numeracy, and personal and social skills below those typical for this

age group. However, because teaching is good most children make good progress and leave the Reception class having with skills that are broadly in line with national expectations. Children enjoy their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They have access to a wide range of self-chosen and adult-led activities. They behave well and work and play together cooperatively. Relationships are warm and all children, parents, key workers and other staff mutually appreciate and value the contribution they all make. The learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are met although the school recognises that it still needs to strengthen its assessments of children's learning across all six areas of learning. Self-evaluation is one of the strengths of the good leadership provided by the Early Years Foundation Stage manager. As a result of well-informed and sustained commitment to improving the quality of provision, the progress of each child is now tracked on a termly basis, ensuring that speedy action, sometimes in consultation with outside agencies, takes place when required. Parents are kept well informed about their children's education. They are welcomed into school and invited to take an active part in assessment procedures. Improved monitoring has also enabled teachers and teaching assistants to measure children's progress more closely and intervene quickly and effectively to increase levels of understanding. The newly developed outdoor area is secure and stimulating. It is not yet a fully integral part of the learning environment but staff are working positively to improve this situation.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and improve achievement in Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Improve the quality of teaching and ensure that it consistently provides pupils with the challenge needed for them to learn as they should.
- Improve the quality and consistency of marking so that it lets pupils know how well they are doing and what they can do to improve their work further.
- Ensure that information about pupils' progress is used effectively and consistently by all teachers to meet pupils' learning needs fully.
- Ensure that managers rigorously evaluate all aspects of the school's work in order to identify and speedily address weaknesses in performance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Pupils start Year 1 working broadly in line with age-related expectations. However, the progress they make from Year 1 to Year 6 is poor. Pupils do not reach high enough standards in English, mathematics and science. For example, teachers' records show that several pupils who were working securely at Level 2 (the expected standard for seven-year-olds) in a range of subjects at the start of Year 3, were still at that level at the start of Year 6. Unvalidated data provided by the school indicates that standards at the end of Year 6 in 2008 were exceptionally low, having fallen significantly from those reached at the end of Year 6 in 2007. This indicates particularly poor performance because the 2008 cohort had started Year 3 at a higher standard than the previous year group. Standards in mathematics were particularly low. During the inspection there was evidence of satisfactory progress in a few lessons. However, the significant underachievement caused by the effects of poor teaching over several recent years has not been dealt with robustly enough, and has not been eradicated. Pupils from all groups, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, have not made enough progress and their achievement is inadequate.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in their positive attitudes to learning and their good behaviour. They are careful about the way they move around school, and are considerate and polite with each other. They say they feel safe and that incidents involving bullying and racism are rare. Pupils are aware of their responsibilities in the wider community. They are involved in many activities to make a positive contribution, as shown by their active fundraising for a range of charities. They are enthusiastic about the wide range of trips that enrich their learning. They are well aware that they need a sensible diet and plenty of exercise to stay healthy. Many join in the sports activities provided by the school and they proudly mention that they attained the Healthy Schools Award. They enthusiastically take up leadership roles in school such as being play leaders, eco leaders and being members of the school council. Business enterprise days in Year 6 develop skills which help pupils to move into the next stage of their education. However, the very low standards that pupils attain in literacy and numeracy mean that they are inadequately prepared for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

Although improving, the quality of teaching and learning is inadequate because of the long-term impact weak teaching has had, and continues to have, on pupils' learning and progress. All lessons seen during the inspection were characterised by: good relationships between adults and pupils; pupils' good attitudes to learning; and the availability of a good range of resources to assist learning, including computers. A few lessons challenge pupils to think and work independently. Pupils readily take up the opportunities to share ideas, secure their understanding, and increase their confidence. In these lessons the pace of learning is good, and pupils make good progress. However, in too many lessons teachers spend too long explaining what pupils will eventually be expected to learn. Pupils sit patiently and passively listening, rather than being actively involved in their learning. The work set is mundane and does not challenge pupils. Time is not best used, learning slows and progress is limited. Classroom assistants give dedicated support to those who find learning more difficult. The school's marking policy is not applied consistently nor is it checked closely enough by those with responsibility for doing so. Consequently, the quality of marking is too variable and does not provide sufficient feedback to tell pupils how well they are doing or how they may improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum meets the needs of the majority of pupils and the range of enrichment activities is varied. Extra-curricular activities are a strength of the school. Many pupils participate enthusiastically in a number of sporting activities, for example hockey, football, netball or basketball. There are also a number of musical opportunities on offer, which include the very popular and vibrant choir, and guitar and keyboard lessons. Pupils say how much they enjoy going out on trips. For example, they have visited museums, a Tudor Hall and experienced the delights of *The Wizard of Oz* at a local Theatre. They have also enjoyed meeting visitors to the school, including visiting pantomime members, plus actors from a workshop on bullying. Improvements to the curriculum deemed necessary by the school have been planned for some

time but have yet to be implemented. One such example is the use of themed approaches to learning where the skills learned in one subject can be developed in another.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 4

Safeguarding procedures meet current government requirements. Staff know the pupils individually very well and are able to identify quickly when any pupil has an issue or is troubled. Pupils say they feel confident to approach an adult to help them deal with their problems or worries if they arise. An identified member of staff is available to help meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Vulnerable pupils are well supported, and the school uses its good links with other professional and outside agencies to overcome particular problems when necessary. The school has very recently developed a system to track the academic progress pupils make but it is not being used to full effect. Little information has yet been generated to help teachers to plan lessons that consistently meet the needs of all pupils. Some teachers are beginning to display pupils' targets on their classroom walls. However, when asked, many pupils could not explain what their targets were or what they needed to do to improve their work. It is for these reasons that care, guidance and support are inadequate overall.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

Leaders do not have an accurate view of what actions they need to take to make improvements. They have not established a clear understanding of what has led to the sustained weaknesses in performance, and the long-term underachievement of all groups of pupils. Performance management of teachers is not properly established and this has led to weakness being sustained, often for several years. The school has often fallen short, particularly in more recent years, of meeting its agreed statutory targets. The support of the associate headteacher has resulted in some very recent improvements, such as the introduction of the system to track pupils' progress. However, this support is too recent and too limited in terms of time allocated to have made a significant impact. The school makes satisfactory provision for improving community cohesion through its harmonious integration of all pupils from a range of backgrounds, the work it undertakes in its locality, and its charitable fundraising activities. Governance is inadequate because the governing body has not held the school to account with sufficient rigour for its ineffective performance. Though some middle managers have tried persistently to address issues identified for improvement at the last inspection, many others issues have arisen or become much worse. As a result of the substantial weaknesses, the school provides inadequate value for money and it is not currently demonstrating the capacity to make any necessary improvements.

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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?	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	4

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?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	4

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?	3
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	3
The behaviour of learners	2
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	4

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	4
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?	4

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	4
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	4
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	Yes
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

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

Inspection of Manchester Road Primary School, Droylsden, M43 6GD

Thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave us when we inspected your school recently. We were impressed with the way you get on so well with each other. We particularly liked your good behaviour, both around school and in class, and the good attitudes you have to learning. We judge that the provision for the youngest children is good and a real strength of your school.

We found that all the adults in your school look after you well, and that teaching in lessons is improving. However, we found that in too many lessons you are still not challenged enough and, even when you are, this change for the better has been very recent. For several reasons we are not confident that the school can help you to learn quickly enough. We have therefore judged that it needs 'special measures' to help it improve. This means that your school will get extra help and that inspectors will call back regularly to check how well it is doing.

We have asked those leading your school to improve several things. These are:

- raise the standards that those of you in Key Stages 1 and 2 reach in your work, thereby improving your achievement and progress
- improve the quality and consistency of teaching so that all lessons help you to do your very best and learn as well as you should
- improve the quality and consistency of marking so that it lets you know how well you are doing and what you can do to improve your work further
- make sure all teachers use information about your progress to help you learn more quickly and effectively
- make sure managers check much more closely on how well the school is doing so any weaknesses can be quickly identified and tackled.

Each one of you can help by continuing to be the helpful, friendly, hard working and well behaved pupils you already are.

Thank you for your help and good luck to all of you for the future.