

Parochial CofE Primary and Nursery School, Ashton-Under-Lyne

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106230
Local Authority	Tameside
Inspection number	336639
Inspection dates	29–30 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Melvyn Hemmings

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	226
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Marianne Clarke
Headteacher	Mrs Marjorie Gillespy
Date of previous school inspection	22 February 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors who visited 17 lessons or parts of lessons taught by eight teachers. The inspectors held discussions with governors, staff, groups of pupils and the School Improvement Partner. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's policies, records of meetings, assessment information and curriculum planning. In addition, 86 responses to questionnaires completed by parents and carers were received and analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the impact of the school's strategies introduced to raise standards, particularly in English, mathematics and science
- the identified inconsistencies of teaching and the use of assessment between classes
- how successfully the Early Years Foundation Stage develops children as independent learners, particularly in its recently improved outdoor provision
- the extent to which monitoring and evaluation procedures have been sharpened since the last inspection.

Information about the school

This average-sized school has gained a number of awards, including the International School Award and the Activemark, and has achieved Healthy Schools and Eco-Schools status. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is broadly average. Most pupils are White British. The onsite before- and after-school provision is managed privately and was not part of this inspection.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education. It is improving and has many strengths with some outstanding features. These include the extent to which pupils feel safe and the first-rate way they are adopting healthy lifestyles. A strong team ethos is evident. All those involved in the life of the school share the headteacher's clear vision for future development. Members of the senior leadership team provide firm educational direction and have overseen a variety of improvements since the last inspection. These include the introduction of rigorous procedures for checking pupils' progress, and higher levels of attendance. Middle management is not as strong, as some subject leaders are not yet fully engaged in evaluating the provision and outcomes in their subjects and taking action to bring about improvement. Teaching is monitored but action taken to iron out identified inconsistencies between classes is not rigorous enough. Nevertheless, the school's capacity for sustained improvement is satisfactory. Accurate self-evaluation means that leaders have a thorough understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The school's plans for improvement reflect what needs to be done to consolidate success and gain further improvement.

Pupils make satisfactory progress overall throughout the school and attain broadly average standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. This represents satisfactory achievement and enjoyment from their levels on entry to school. Standards in reading, mathematics and science have been raised through a variety of well-chosen methods. Nonetheless, leaders rightly acknowledge there is more to do. This includes improving pupils' written presentational skills and their ability to use different styles of writing to express their ideas across the curriculum. Pupils' mathematical skills are secure but their ability to apply these skills to solve number problems in a range of contexts is less well developed. Leaders are committed to refining teachers' skills in identifying the specific next steps needed to improve individual pupils' learning.

The school is a friendly and welcoming place in which to learn. Pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to learning. Teaching has many strengths but does not always provide enough challenge for all pupils and this limits the progress made in some classes. Safeguarding procedures are outstanding and parents and carers are confident that the school keeps their children safe.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards, particularly in writing and mathematics, by:
 - improving pupils' written presentation skills and developing their ability to use a

variety of styles of writing to express their ideas across the curriculum

- improving pupils' ability in applying their mathematical calculation skills to solve real-life number problems.
- Accelerate pupils' progress by :
 - ensuring that all teachers consistently set work that matches the needs of individual pupils
 - developing teachers' expertise in identifying the specific next steps needed to advance pupils' learning.
- Strengthen leadership and management by :
 - ensuring that teachers act effectively upon areas for development identified by leaders
 - fully involving all subject leaders in evaluating provision and outcomes in their subjects and taking action to bring about improvement.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils are enthusiastic, eager to contribute to group and class discussions and appreciative of the views and ideas of others. They particularly enjoy working together on practical activities. This was evident in a Year 2 mathematics lesson in which pupils were estimating then accurately weighing different amounts of rice. Pupils' reading skills are above average because of initiatives introduced by the school since the last inspection. Pupils' written presentation skills are not as well developed. They write interesting stories and accounts in English, but are less skilled in using a variety of styles that include poetry, instructional and narrative writing to support their work in other subjects. Pupils have secure mathematical calculation skills but are less proficient at using these to solve number problems in different situations. They have a sound understanding of scientific ideas and how to carry out a fair test, which is good improvement since the last inspection. Pupils use information and communication technology competently in a variety of contexts. There is no significant difference between the achievements or the learning of different groups. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same progress as other pupils because of the extra support they receive.

Pupils enjoy coming to school, which is reflected in their above average attendance, and are polite and considerate. They enjoy taking on responsibilities, such as being a member of the school's eco council and, in so doing, contribute to the life of the school. Pupils contribute well to the wider community by raising funds for local charities, performing songs at the local hospice and taking part in the Tameside Music Festival. They have a well-developed awareness of the traditions and beliefs of other cultures, which is enhanced by work in geography and links with a school in Trinidad. Pupils have

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

an outstanding understanding of the important factors that affect the different aspects of their health and are adopting healthy lifestyles very effectively. They also have an excellent understanding about what constitutes unsafe situations and say they feel safe in school at all times.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers have secure subject knowledge and explain new ideas clearly and confidently. Questioning is used successfully to find out what pupils know and can do, and to develop their skills of speaking and listening. Teachers manage classrooms well so they are calm and friendly places in which to learn. The inconsistency in teaching stems from some teachers not always using assessment information effectively to challenge pupils of different ability. Some teachers also do not always act effectively on advice from senior leaders on how teaching might be improved. Relationships are good and give pupils the confidence to give answers, even when unsure if they are correct. They know their contributions will be valued. Teaching assistants are usually deployed well to support all pupils, in particular those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

The curriculum provides well-organised and imaginative opportunities for learning and experiences that contribute well to pupils' well-being and development. A wide range of extra-curricular activities, including sports and music clubs, enrich the curriculum. Visits to places of educational interest, including Blackpool Zoo and local farms, and opportunities to work with a variety of visitors, extend pupils' skills and widen their horizons. The school's commitment to providing a variety of good-quality sporting experiences is reflected in it gaining the Activemark. Established links with other organisations meet the needs of pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable. The provision for developing pupils' awareness of environmental issues has been recognised by the achievement of Eco-Schools status.

The care and well-being of pupils is at the heart of the school's provision. The school provides a safe and welcoming learning environment. Staff know the steps to take if they have any concerns about the well-being of a pupil. The support for pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable is targeted well and effectively develops their learning. Arrangements for transition are good throughout the school and onto secondary school, and contribute well to pupils' development. Action taken by leaders over the last year has improved pupils' attendance and this is now above average. Established links with outside agencies, such as the school's educational psychologist, ensure that extra support for individual pupils is readily available.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders establish ambition and drive improvement by focusing the school on priorities. Some subject leaders are not fully engaged in evaluating provision and outcomes and then taking action to bring about improvement in their subjects. Governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school and hold leaders to account for its performance. Monitoring and evaluation procedures have been sharpened since the last inspection but the action taken to eradicate inconsistencies in the quality of teaching between classes has not yet proved to be successful. The promotion of equality of opportunity is sound, having been improved by the introduction of procedures to track the performance of different groups of pupils. This is enabling leaders to target any areas of potential underachievement by putting intervention programmes into place. Governors and all staff have a comprehensive awareness of safeguarding issues. Consequently, a realistic approach to safety and safeguarding

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permeates all aspects of school life. The school's collaborative working with other key agencies in terms of safeguarding is exemplary. The school works well in partnership with others, including a variety of providers of sport coaching. As a result, pupils' learning and development are enhanced, for example in sport, in ways that the school could not provide on its own. Leaders promote community cohesion well in school and this leads to it being a harmonious community, with pupils from different backgrounds getting on well together. The school's work in promoting cohesion at an international level has been recognised by it gaining the International School Award. The school has a good relationship with parents and carers, who receive frequent information about their children's progress.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make satisfactory progress from levels of skills on entry that vary but overall are broadly expected for their age. In Nursery and Reception, adults work well as a team and provide activities that are interesting, practical and often based on children's own experiences. Relationships between adults and children are good, which has a positive impact on children's progress. Children are encouraged to make choices for themselves and this contributes effectively to their development as independent learners. Nonetheless, there are times when adults miss the opportunity to intervene and provide support in children's independent activities to take their learning forward. Children learn and play happily together in pairs and small groups, willingly sharing resources and also taking turns fairly. They enjoy learning, as was evident in a dance

lesson in which they were exploring animals' movements to the music of The Lion King. Children have access to the recently developed outdoor area throughout the day and thoroughly enjoy the activities provided. The curriculum is enhanced through opportunities for children to go on seasonal walks around the local environment and take part in visits, such as to Chester Zoo. The procedures for checking children's progress are thorough, but the information is not always used effectively to ensure that children are given sufficiently challenging work. The leader ensures that safeguarding procedures are robust and all the required checks have been carried out. Children are cared for well and parents and carers are kept fully informed of their children's progress.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Questionnaires were completed by just over 31% of parents and carers. The very large majority of these were positive about the school's work and the efforts of all staff. Two typical comments were, 'My child really enjoys school and has always got on very well with her teachers,' and, 'Children thrive at Parochial and love being part of such a caring environment.' A very small minority of parents and carers did not agree that the school takes account of their suggestions and concerns. Inspection evidence does not support this view. A few did not agree that the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour. There was no such behaviour observed during the inspection and pupils say it is dealt with promptly if it occurs.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Parochial C of E Primary and Nursery School, Ashton-under-Lyne to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 86 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 226 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	65	73	22	25	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	69	78	20	22	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	48	54	39	44	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	48	54	38	43	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	51	57	38	43	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	54	61	32	36	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	55	62	33	37	1	1	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	45	51	35	39	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	44	49	42	47	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	43	48	40	45	4	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	47	53	32	36	6	7	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	52	58	35	39	2	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	56	63	32	36	1	1	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



01 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Parochial C of E Primary and Nursery School, Ashton-under-Lyne, OL6 6NN

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave the team when we inspected your school. We enjoyed meeting you and seeing the many interesting things you do.

The inspectors judge that:

- you attain average standards by the end of Year 6
- adults look after you well and make sure you are very safe, in and around school
- your understanding of how to stay safe and live a healthy lifestyle is outstanding
- you enjoy coming to school and learn a lot (and you said this yourselves in your questionnaires)
- you behave well and are polite and considerate to others
- the headteacher, staff and governors are working hard to help you do better.

This is what I have asked your school to do now.

- Improve your written presentational skills, develop your ability to use different writing styles to express your ideas and improve your mathematical problem-solving skills.
- Accelerate your progress by making sure all teachers always give you work that makes you think hard.
- Develop the skills of teachers who lead subjects in helping the school to improve and work harder to improve the consistency of teaching between classes.

You are all a credit to your school and can help it improve further by continuing to try your best.

Yours sincerely

Melvyn Hemmings

Lead Inspector

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