

St Chad's RC Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105525
Local Authority	Manchester
Inspection number	355792
Inspection dates	21–22 September 2010
Reporting inspector	Bernard Jones

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 of pupils on the school roll	235
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Kevin Mahoney
Headteacher	Mr John Travis
Date of previous school inspection	8 May 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 15 lessons, where eight different teachers were seen. In addition, samples of pupils' work were scrutinised. The inspectors held meetings with governors, staff, groups of parents and carers and pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at the data on pupils' performance, development plans, safeguarding documents and records of the school's own monitoring of its performance. The responses to 95 parents' and carers' questionnaires were considered, alongside responses from staff and pupils.

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

- The achievement of pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 to determine whether teaching is having sufficient impact to raise standards from the very low levels on entry.
- The effectiveness of actions taken to improve teaching and learning and standards in mathematics throughout the school.
- The effectiveness of leadership and management in improving the impact of subject leaders.
- How well teachers plan their use of information and communication technology to improve learning and pupils' standards in the subject.
- How well teachers reinforce pupils' numeracy and literacy skills in subjects across the curriculum.

Information about the school

This is an average sized school. About three quarters of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, half are at an early stage in learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. The number of pupils known to be eligible to free school meals is well above average. The school provides for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in its Nursery and its Reception class. A new Foundation Stage unit has been added and was opened in September 2009. Since the last inspection there have been significant changes to the school's staff. The school has the Healthy School award and Eco-School status.

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

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school that gives good value for money. Pupils enter Year 1 with attainment that is below average and is broadly average by the time they leave Year 6, reflecting their good progress. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage benefit from recently improved provision and achieve well. The school enjoys the support of its parents and carers, and works effectively to build and maintain very positive relationships with them. There is a clear focus on pupils as individuals, ensuring they are supported well and encouraged to do their best. This has created an inclusive school where pupils are committed to making a positive contribution to the local and wider communities.

Teachers know their pupils very well and use assessment effectively to inform their teaching and ensure that pupils make good progress. Teachers mostly use the good knowledge they have about their pupils to plan formally and precisely what they expect pupils of different abilities to achieve in lessons. In a small minority of lessons where teaching is no better than satisfactory, pupils make slower progress because teachers are not sufficiently clear about what they expect pupils of different abilities to achieve. Any who are in danger of underachieving are identified quickly and then given additional support, often on a one-to-one basis. There is some good use of information and communication technology (ICT) as a teaching aid to enhance pupils' learning. In the best lessons, teachers promote pupils' use of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in subjects across the curriculum. However, this is an area of weakness in some classes.

Pupils know well how to live healthily and have a good understanding of how to live safely. The good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has a clear impact on pupils' positive behaviour and is seen in the way they make a good contribution to the school and local community. Good care, guidance and support are reflected in pupils' good behaviour and their positive relationships with each other and their teachers. Pupils' attendance is improving and is now broadly average. Pupils at an early stage in learning English receive further, well-targeted support that helps them make good progress and participate fully in school life. Those pupils considered to be vulnerable are particularly well catered for. The school is not complacent. Senior and middle leaders monitor closely the impact of innovations taking place in classrooms and recognise that standards are still not high enough in English and mathematics and that reading, in particular, and problem solving in mathematics need improving further. The school is well placed to raise standards and has demonstrated that it has a good capacity to improve further and to sustain improvements. Past weaknesses in teaching have been successfully tackled and levels of achievement by pupils have improved. The excellent lead given by the headteacher ensures a clear vision that underpins the

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effective systems that are in place to ensure continued improvement. The school's self-evaluation is accurate. School leaders and governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses, and planning to secure further improvement carries the full support of staff, pupils, parents and carers.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in mathematics throughout the school and reading in Key Stage 1 by:
 - developing pupils' skills in problem solving in mathematics and emphasizing the use of mathematics in everyday life and practical situations
 - raising boys' attainment in Key Stage 1 in reading ensuring they have reading materials that match their interests more closely
 - ensuring a consistent approach to teachers' planning that clearly indicates what they expect pupils of different abilities to achieve in their lessons.
- Improve the curriculum by:
 - developing literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology skills in other subjects across the curriculum.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils' good behaviour and attitudes have a positive impact on the quality of learning in classrooms. They listen carefully and quietly to their teachers and, when given the opportunities to share their learning with partners or in groups, they seize the chances with enthusiasm and cooperate well to solve problems and compare their answers. Pupils reflect on what they have achieved in most lessons and are good at judging how well they have done. As a result, pupils achieve well, enjoy their learning and are satisfactorily equipped and ready for the next stage of their education, particularly in terms of their attitudes to school and learning. Children enter the Nursery with skills and knowledge that are low compared to those typically expected for their age. They make good progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage and build on this to make good progress through the rest of the school. They leave Year 6 with attainment that is broadly average. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, other vulnerable pupils and those learning English as an additional language enjoy their work, make good progress and achieve well because of the high-quality support they receive in lessons from teachers and teaching assistants.

Pupils are open and welcoming to visitors. They eat healthily and are aware of the need to play sports and keep fit. Many take part in sport during break times, before and after school. The school council plays a good role in putting forward ideas and relish their role as 'The change group'. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong, which helps to ensure the harmonious relationships that characterise the school.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is mostly good, but a little remains satisfactory. Learning is underpinned by teachers' and teaching assistants' very caring relationships with pupils and the targeted support given to pupils who may have extra educational, language or social needs. Typically, classrooms are well ordered, pupils behave well and relationships are positive. This means that pupils are very productive when set to work independently. Where teaching is good, teachers are very clear about what they expect different ability groups of pupils to learn and match the content of the lesson accordingly. There are some good examples where ICT is used well to engage pupils and to help convey difficult concepts, but this is not the case throughout the school. The way in which teachers help pupils to gauge their success in most lessons is a strength. Pupils' targets for improvement are used effectively and are appropriately challenging, because they are based on accurate assessment of the progress pupils make. Teachers' marking of work is precise and ensures pupils know how well they are doing and are clear about the next steps they need to take to improve further. As a result, pupils are keen to succeed and improve.

The curriculum is broad and meets pupils' personal needs as well as raising their academic achievement. However, curricular planning is not precise enough to ensure that pupils consistently develop their basic literacy and numeracy skills in all subjects. The positive partnerships developed with other schools and agencies enhance the

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

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curriculum. They help to provide a wide range of additional activities in sports, the arts, drama and dance. These are popular with pupils and enrich the life of the school and make a good contribution to pupils' personal development. Pupils' well-being is paramount for all staff and pupils feel safe in school. There is a strong and effective partnership established with parents and carers early in the pupils' life in the school so that any concerns are dealt with quickly. The effective links between the school and outside specialists, coupled with the school's own good quality care, guidance and support ensure pupils' well-being and general good development. As a result, pupils learning English as an additional language, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and other vulnerable pupils feel secure and, along with their peers, make good progress. The school takes a rigorous approach to encouraging good attendance and has improved previously low attendance significantly, particularly by reducing the proportion of persistent absenteeism.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's clear vision is used very effectively to set the pace and direction for the school's development based on his clear vision and determined drive for improvement. There is confidence in the direction in which the school is heading, and new ideas and ways of working are encouraged. Staff throughout the school share in the ambition to succeed. Morale is high. Senior staff and teachers with main subject management responsibilities lend their full support and contribute to the effective monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning. This contributes significantly to raising pupils' achievement in their subjects. English and mathematics are led well, but coordinators are less effective in other subjects. The school knows well its strengths and where it needs to improve further because self-evaluation is based firmly on measuring the impact of changes on pupils' progress and the quality of education provided. Targets are challenging and encourage pupils to aspire to higher achievement. The result is a successful school where pupils' achievement is good.

The governing body makes a satisfactory contribution and provides strong support to help keep improvements on track. It helps to ensure the safeguarding of its pupils are sound and meet government requirements. Productive partnerships with other schools ensure a flow of expertise into and from the school. There are good procedures to ensure equal opportunities for pupils in all aspects of their school life and the school is

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assiduous in tackling any form of discrimination. Financial control, planning and accountability are good and have resulted in significant improvements to the school environment and improved Early Years Foundation Stage provision and computer resources. The provision for community cohesion is satisfactory. Pupils from different backgrounds interact positively to ensure a harmonious and caring atmosphere in and around the school. However, the school is at an early stage in monitoring and evaluating the impact of the strategies put in place to promote community cohesion.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
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	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle very quickly into the Nursery because of the good induction procedures and the good quality care and welfare provided in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Parents are encouraged from the very start to be full partners in the education of their children. Children make good progress in all areas of learning from a very low starting point. Children's low skill levels, particularly in language skills and personal and social development are tackled with success so that by the time pupils enter Year 1, their skill levels are much closer to those expected, and in some cases, exceed them. The coordinator provides good leadership and management. The well-structured curriculum builds learning systematically. Teachers' planning ensures exciting learning experiences through which children learn many new skills and pieces of knowledge in the same activity. For example, children planted tulip bulbs and reinforced sorting and counting skills while enjoying the feel of 'mucky' soil. 'We even grow rhubarb and eat it', was a proud comment. Children respond well to the good opportunities they are given to choose their own activities and they work well with their teachers and other adults.

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Good use is made of a comprehensive assessment procedure where observations carried out are used to build a full picture of each child's achievement and progress. The classroom environment is good and provides exciting stimuli for children. The outside environment and play areas are excellent. The high proportion of children who are at an early stage in learning the English language receive good support and make good progress. Vulnerable children, too, benefit from the good care, guidance and support and achieve well.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Over one third of parents and carers returned the questionnaire. The very large majority are supportive of the school, as are those who met the inspectors. Parents and carers approve the approaches taken to ensure pupils develop good relationships with each other and with adults. They also value the safety and security provided. Almost all parents and carers say they are aware of their children's progress and are satisfied with their children's achievement. They praise the school for the ways in which children enjoy school and learn how to behave and respect other people. The comment, 'This is a great school', sums up many of the sentiments expressed to inspectors. Parents and carers are satisfied that their children are kept safe. A very few felt that the school does not take account of their suggestions and concerns. The inspectors found that pupils are well cared for and judge that there are good procedures to teach pupils about inappropriate behaviour and good systems for dealing with any bullying that may take place. The school works hard to include parents and carers in all its activities.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Chad's RC Primary School 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 95 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 235 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	64	67	29	31	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	67	71	27	28	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	61	64	32	34	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	46	48	46	48	1	1	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	57	60	38	40	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	45	47	47	49	2	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	43	45	50	53	2	2	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)	43	45	46	48	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	38	40	50	53	3	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	48	51	40	42	1	1	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	35	37	48	51	4	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	48	51	41	43	0	0	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	58	61	35	37	0	0	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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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.



23 September 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Chad's RC Primary School, Manchester, M8 0SP

I would like to thank you for being so welcoming and friendly when my colleagues and I inspected your school recently. Please thank your parents and carers for all their letters and for taking the time to talk to us. We enjoyed watching and listening to you in your lessons, reading your work and talking to you.

We like the way you take responsibility, and how well you are taught to take a pride in your surroundings and make things better, for example in the garden you have produced. We particularly enjoyed the way you participate so enthusiastically in club activities such as street dance and African drumming. We appreciate how your school helps you in learning to live healthily and safely so that you develop into mature young people, ready to progress to the next stage of your education.

We found that your school gives you a good standard of education, because the teaching you receive is good. This means you achieve well and the standards you reach by the end of Year 6 are broadly average. You obviously enjoy coming to school and this shows in your good behaviour in classrooms and around the school. You told me that you like your teachers and the way they take good care of you. To make things even better, I have asked your headteacher and teachers to help all of you to raise your standards further and make even better progress. You can help by continuing to work hard and practising your literacy and numeracy skills in all your other subjects.

I hope you continue to enjoy school and I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Bernard Jones

Lead inspector

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