

Micklehurst All Saints CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106235
Local Authority	Tameside
Inspection number	355912
Inspection dates	14–15 September 2010
Reporting inspector	Lynne Read

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	144
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Paul Moreland
Headteacher	Mrs Lesley Kincey
Date of previous school inspection	10 January 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited seven lessons and observed seven teachers. They held meetings with governors, managers, staff and groups of pupils. In observing the school's work, they looked at pupils' workbooks, assessment records, school policies and school development plans. In total, 28 questionnaires received from parents and carers were analysed and considered, alongside 73 questionnaires completed by the pupils and 10 completed by staff.

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

- Whether pupils are doing as well as they can, especially in Key Stage 1 and in writing.
- Whether the quality of teaching, especially for writing and in Key Stage 1 is good.
- Whether the Early Years Foundation Stage prepares children well enough for their Key Stage 1 work.

Information about the school

This voluntary controlled Church of England school is smaller than the average sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is more than twice the average. Around 10% of pupils come from minority ethnic groups and many of these speak English as an additional language. An above average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The incidence of pupils entering or leaving part way through their education is higher than usual.

The school is accredited for its work in physical education through the Activemark award. Breakfast and after-school clubs, managed by the governing body, are provided on the premises and are reported on within the text.

There have been a number of staff changes recently and a temporary staffing structure was in place at the time of the inspection in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

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. The headteacher leads the successful drive for improvement; she generates good teamwork and a shared vision of excellence. Senior managers regularly complete thorough reviews of provision and performance, and the school sets itself challenging targets. This system of self-evaluation is successful in providing an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and has led to many improvements. For example, progress and attainment in both key stages have improved and information and communication technology (ICT) is now well used across the curriculum. The capacity for sustained improvement is good.

Attainment is broadly average by the end of Year 6. This represents good progress from pupils' starting points. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress overall but their early reading and writing skills are below the level expected for their age group. This is largely because children are not sufficiently encouraged to practise and consolidate what they are taught during their free choice time. During Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils make good progress. Reading and mathematics are strengths with a good number of pupils working at the higher level. However, in writing the rate of progress is slower.

Teaching is good overall. Some is outstanding but the school recognises that a small amount of satisfactory practice needs to be improved, especially in encouraging pupils' writing. Lessons include too few opportunities for writing across the curriculum. Occasionally in Key Stage 1, the assessment of pupils' progress is not used well enough in planning tasks so that work is sometimes too difficult for some or too easy for others. The good curriculum includes a strong emphasis on personal development and pupils enjoy some interesting themed events, such as European Languages Day. Good partnerships with sports providers, together with music and art specialists, help to develop talents and interests further.

The school is a harmonious community where pupils from different backgrounds get on very well together. Behaviour is good in lessons and in leisure time. Pupils assert that they feel safe and know that bullying or harassment is not tolerated. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong and well supported by good links with the church. The implementation of a more rigorous attendance policy has reduced persistent absence significantly. The rate of attendance is improving but a minority of families do not cooperate fully with the school in keeping absences to a minimum, and some are continuing to take holidays in term-time. The school provides a good standard of care for pupils and staff seek out expert help or resources where needed, especially for those who are vulnerable.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve progress and attainment in writing, by:
 - making better use of assessment information to ensure that tasks are consistently set with the right level of challenge or support in Key Stage 1
 - providing further opportunities for pupils of all ages to write in lessons across the curriculum.
- Ensure that every opportunity is taken to promote reading and writing skills, especially in free-choice sessions, for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Improve attendance by working with a minority of families and discouraging the practice of taking pupils out of school in term-time.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Achievement is good for all pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or who are learning English as an additional language. The high proportion of pupils who join part way through a key stage are well supported and do equally well. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their learning and enjoy their lessons. For example, in one lesson some Year 3 and 4 pupils worked on problem-solving, sharing ideas and suggesting and trialling different strategies. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils worked collaboratively, investigating evidence from different sources and producing some interesting newspaper reports.

When children leave the Reception class they have achieved many of the expected learning goals but their reading and writing skills are below average. Progress in Key Stage 1 is good overall; it is often rapid in Year 2 so by the end of the year most pupils are working at average levels for their age. An increased emphasis on learning sounds and letters has boosted progress in reading and improved spelling. Around a third of pupils are working at the higher level in reading but few do so in writing. All groups of pupils make good progress through Key Stage 2 where the pace of learning has accelerated. Just over half of the current Year 6 pupils have received all of their Key Stage 2 education at the school. Their attainment is average and sometimes above average. However, attainment in writing still lags behind that in reading. There is very little difference between the attainment of boys and girls or those of different ethnic heritages.

Pupils have a good understanding of healthy living and enjoy plenty of exercise. They are keen to succeed and an average range of skills equip them satisfactorily for the move to their next schools. Good opportunities exist for pupils to experience responsibility. For example, pupils from Years 5 and 6 run their own snack and stationery shops, serving the needs of fellow pupils. Monitors contribute much to the day-to-day running of the school, while the school and eco councillors help in the process of decision-making and developing a sustainable environment.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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?

Lessons have very clear objectives so pupils know exactly what is expected of them. Planning takes good account of pupils' interests to keep them well motivated and lessons include good opportunities for practical and collaborative work. Teachers have a detailed view of pupils' progress and generally plan tasks to build on pupils' prior learning. Generally, teachers keep a check on progress during lessons and adapt the work, where necessary. There are occasions in Key Stage 1, however, when the work in writing is not pitched at the right level. Targets for learning and useful comments in marking help pupils improve. Teaching assistants are knowledgeable and their support makes a good contribution to pupils' learning.

The curriculum includes French and Spanish lessons and good opportunities for creative work. Skills in reading, numeracy and ICT are extended well through other subject studies but there are too few opportunities for writing across the curriculum. A range of intervention programmes and individual tuition provide good support for personal, academic and language development. Extra provision for the more-able is not as well developed. Pupils take good advantage of an interesting programme of extra-curricular clubs, competitive sport and visits to places of interest.

Pastoral management at the school is instrumental in supporting individuals and their families, especially those who are vulnerable. This is a significant factor in enabling pupils to overcome barriers to learning. For example, more parents and carers are now

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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coming into school to volunteer their services and learning how to actively support their children's education. Supervision is good, the building and grounds are secure and there is a safe hand-over of younger pupils to parents and carers. Some pupils enjoy the breakfast and after-school clubs that provide healthy food and an interesting selection of games and activities for them.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides good, focused leadership and clear direction. With good support from senior managers, she has set about driving the school forward. As a result, progress has improved. The school is well run; procedures and policies are consistently followed. Good systems are in place for critically evaluating the work of the school and to plan improvements. The thorough tracking of pupils' progress means that senior managers have a clear and accurate view of achievements for all the different groups of pupils. They use the information to target support and provide a boost to learning.

The school promotes community cohesion well. It does an excellent job at the school level and this underpins the harmonious relationships among the different ethnic and religious groups. Good links exist with the local community and groups beyond the immediate area. The school is increasingly reaching out to families so they are engaged in their children's education. Links with parents and carers have improved, but a small minority are not fully supportive of the school's drive to improve attendance.

Safeguarding is good. Staff have regular updates in child protection training and are well equipped to deal with concerns. The school pays good attention to ensuring that no groups of pupils are disadvantaged and so all have an equal opportunity to succeed. For example, the needs of those who join the school at other than the usual times are assessed quickly and they have good pastoral support. As a result, they integrate smoothly. The governing body brings a wide range of skills to enhance management and have a secure overview of attainment and progress. It is currently developing a more active role in evaluating the work of the school and its effectiveness.

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

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	
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

As they enter the nursery, children's skills vary between individuals and from year to year; overall, they are below those expected for their age. Although children's progress is satisfactory, they do not achieve all the learning goals set for them. Their reading and writing skills are below expectations. Nevertheless, personal development is a strength, behaviour is good and a focused programme is helping to promote good progress in speaking and listening.

Progress is assessed constantly and tasks are designed to move learning on. A mixture of teacher-directed tasks and free-choice activities, both inside and out, ensure that children have sound opportunities to explore, investigate and become independent learners. However, the reading and writing areas are uninspiring and under-used. They do little to invite children to explore books, listen to stories or experiment with mark-making. Opportunities for them to consolidate their learning during free-choice activities are, therefore, missed. Staff work hard to maintain good standards of welfare and hygiene in spite of the lack of integrated toilets or kitchen facilities. Adults know the children well and parents and carers are encouraged to be partners in the learning process.

Leadership and management are satisfactory but, with the current temporary staffing structure, roles and responsibilities are not always clear and there is some duplication of work, especially in the planning process. While this does not affect children's learning, it does create some inefficiencies in the use of resources and deployment of staff.

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

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

Parents and carers have positive views of the school. A very large majority of those who replied to the questionnaire agree that their children enjoy school. All agree that their children are safe, feel that teaching is good and that the school is well run. Quotes include 'the family atmosphere is very important and second to none' and 'the staff are approachable and the school is managed excellently'. There are commendations for the care of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and the school's 'family atmosphere'. A minority raised concerns about the quality of communication and information they receive about their child's progress. Managers are aware of these views through responses to their own, recent questionnaire and have an action plan in place to improve matters.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Micklehurst All Saints CofE 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 28 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 144 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	19	68	8	29	1	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	22	79	6	21	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	11	39	14	50	2	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	54	12	43	1	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	18	64	10	36	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	13	46	14	50	1	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	54	13	46	0	0	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)	10	36	15	54	2	7	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	15	54	12	43	1	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	46	14	50	1	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	8	29	19	68	1	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	12	43	16	57	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	18	64	9	32	1	4	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.



16 September 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Micklehurst All Saints CofE Primary School, Mossley, OL5 9DR

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave the inspectors when we visited your school. We thoroughly enjoyed our time with you and appreciated all the help you gave us.

Micklehurst All Saints is a good school. You all get on very well together and take good care of each other. You are a credit to your families and your teachers. Thank you to the pupils who filled in their questionnaire and those who chatted with us. You think that the school council do a good job in representing your views and are pleased with the improvements to the playground. It is good to see how many of you are involved in the gardening club and enjoying your home-grown vegetables.

You are keen to learn, work hard and are making good progress. The children in the Nursery and Reception classes enjoy their work and play but could do better with their reading and writing. In Years 1 to 6, your reading and mathematics have improved. However, we think you could do better in your writing. Most of you come to school regularly and are proud of your 'good attendance' certificates. Just a few, however, still have too many absences. In order to help the school improve further, we have asked your teachers to:

- help children in the Nursery and Reception classes to develop a better foundation for their school work in reading and writing
- improve writing in both key stages
- ensure all of you have good attendance.

You can help by continuing to try hard, practising your writing at home and avoiding any unnecessary absences. Thank you once again for the interesting conversations we had and for letting us share your work and play.

Please accept my best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Lynne Read

Lead inspector

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