

St Matthew's CE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106337
Local Authority	Trafford
Inspection number	355934
Inspection dates	19–20 July 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	175
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Bernice Garlick
Headteacher	Mr Stuart Madden
Date of previous school inspection	21 November 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors who visited 15 lessons or parts of lessons. The inspectors observed eight teachers and held discussions with governors, staff, groups of pupils and the School Improvement Partner. They observed the school's work and looked at policies, records of meetings, assessment information and curriculum planning. In addition, 21 responses to parents' and carers' questionnaires 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 action taken to raise attainment in English and mathematics
- how successfully leaders have worked to iron out inconsistencies in teaching and learning between classes
- the extent to which teachers have improved the quality of their planning to match work to pupils' different abilities.

Information about the school

This school is below average size. It has gained a number of awards, including the Activemark, and has achieved Healthy School Status. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is also well above average. The number of pupils from minority ethnic groups is broadly average. A high number of pupils join or leave school other than at the usual times.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education. It has many strengths and is improving. Central to the trend of improvement over the last 18 months has been the determined leadership of the headteacher. He has overseen a range of initiatives that have raised attendance, improved behaviour and brought about better engagement with parents and carers. The senior leadership team provides a firm educational direction and a strong team ethos is evident throughout the school. Action taken to iron out inconsistencies in teaching and learning between classes has been partially successful but some inconsistencies remain. This is particularly the case in the level of challenge provided for pupils, especially for those who are more able. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning is not rigorous enough to ensure such inconsistency is eradicated. Governors are supportive of the school but not all are fully engaged in promoting the school's improvement. Nevertheless, the school's capacity for sustained improvement is satisfactory. Accurate self-evaluation means that leaders have a clear 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.

Children make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and achieve well. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 make satisfactory progress overall and, by the time they leave school, attain broadly average standards in English, mathematics and science. This represents satisfactory achievement. Strategies introduced to raise attainment in English and mathematics have improved pupils' reading skills and their ability to use different calculation methods accurately. Leaders rightly acknowledge there is more to do to raise standards further. This includes improving pupils' skills in expressing their ideas through writing in an ordered way, providing more opportunities to write at length across the curriculum and improving pupils' ability to solve real-life number problems.

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 teachers do not always use marking and discussion effectively to guide pupils to improve their work. A wide range of good-quality enrichment activities add variety and further interest to the curriculum. All staff are firmly committed to pupils' safety and well-being, which is much appreciated by parents and carers.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards, particularly in writing and mathematics, by:
 - improving pupils' skills in expressing their ideas by writing in an ordered

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sequence and providing more opportunities to write at length across the curriculum

- extending pupils' problem-solving skills in mathematics.
- Improve teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring teachers are more consistent in setting work that matches the needs of pupils, particularly for those who are more able
 - making sure teachers use marking and discussion effectively to show pupils how they might improve.
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - sharpening the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning
 - ensuring all governors are fully engaged in promoting the school's 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 when pupils in Year 2 were painting their designs of coats of arms onto fabric. Pupils enjoy writing but lack accuracy in expressing their ideas in an ordered manner. They have secure mathematical calculation skills but are less proficient at using these to solve number problems in different situations. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of scientific ideas and how to carry out a fair test. They use information and communication technology (ICT) 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 behave well and are polite and considerate. They contribute well to school life by taking on responsibilities, such as being a play leader, prefect or member of the school council. They also make a useful contribution to the wider community, including performing in a concert at a residential home and tidying up the local environment. Pupils know they need to eat a balanced diet and take regular exercise in order to stay healthy. They have a good understanding of what might be an unsafe situation and say they feel safe and secure in school. The way pupils are making satisfactory progress in gaining basic skills means that they are soundly prepared for the next stage of education and for their future lives.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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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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	3
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?

Teachers manage classrooms well so that little time is lost. They have secure subject knowledge and are able to explain new ideas clearly. Questioning is used successfully to find out what pupils know and can do, and to develop their speaking and listening skills. Adults promote good relationships, which leads to classrooms being friendly and calm places in which to learn. Planning usually ensures pupils of different ability are given challenging work, but not always, and this slows progress at times. Feedback to pupils is not always effective in suggesting how they could develop their learning further. Teachers make sound use of a variety of resources, including ICT, to support learning. Teaching assistants are deployed well to support all pupils, in particular those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The curriculum is extended by a variety of out-of-school activities, including sports and music clubs. A wide range of educational visits, including to Stretford Town Hall to meet the Mayor, and opportunities to work with visitors enhance pupils' skills and widen their experiences. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to refine and extend their writing skills by writing at length across the curriculum. The curriculum successfully promotes pupils' adoption of a healthy lifestyle, as reflected in it gaining the Activemark and Healthy School Status. Leaders are exploring ways of making stronger links between subjects so pupils can better use skills developed in one subject to support learning in others. The opportunity for pupils in Year 5 to take part in a residential stay at an activity centre in Todmorden promotes their personal and social development well.

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

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whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable is an established part of the school's provision and plays a useful role in promoting their learning and development. The quality of academic guidance and support varies between classes, which slows the progress and development of some pupils at times. Transition arrangements are good throughout the school, which is important, taking into account the high mobility rate of pupils. Established links with a wide range of outside agencies, including the school's educational psychologist, ensure 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	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders establish ambition and drive improvement by ensuring the school focuses on the priority areas for development. The promotion of equal opportunity and tackling of discrimination is sound, with the school regularly checking the performance of different groups. This has enabled leaders to identify rightly the need to improve the level of challenge for more-able pupils. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning lacks sharpness. Lesson observations identify areas for development but subsequent observations do not always rigorously check if these areas have been improved. The arrangements and policies for safeguarding meet requirements and are systematically reviewed. The school fosters a realistic understanding of risk and helps pupils to keep themselves safe. Governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school but are not fully involved in planning to bring about improvement. Leaders actively promote community cohesion within the school and pupils from different backgrounds get on well with each other. Leaders engage well with a range of community groups beyond the school and its immediate community. The school works with a variety of agencies to support pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable. Relationships with parents and carers are good, with the school helping them to support their children's learning in different ways and in providing them with regular information about their 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

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	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
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

Consistently good teaching in the Nursery and Reception ensure children make good progress from their skill levels on entering school, which are generally below those typical for their age. Adults have a good understanding of the needs of children of this age and work well as a team to ensure they are met. They provide activities that are interesting and practical, and are often based on children's own experiences. As a result, children are interested and engaged in all that they do. This was evident when children were using a variety of materials to make sunglasses for Teddy Treacle. Children are encouraged to make decisions for themselves and this contributes positively to their development as independent learners. They behave well and work and play happily together. An interesting range of enrichment activities enhances the curriculum, such as seasonal walks around the environment and a visit to a local farm. Assessment procedures are thorough and provide an accurate record of children's progress and achievement. Good leadership has accurately identified areas for improvement. These include furthering boys' writing skills and providing a digging and planting section in the outdoor area to extend children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Children are cared for well in this calm and happy setting. Parents and carers say that staff are approachable and keep them informed of their children's progress, for example through their learning journals, and how they can support learning at home.

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

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Views of parents and carers

Just over 12% of parents and carers completed questionnaires, which is below average. The very large majority of these were positive about the school's work and the efforts of all staff. Two comments were typical of many, 'The school has dedicated teachers who care greatly for the children,' and, 'The provision of a parent liaison officer and courses such as English and mathematics help me to support my child's learning.' A small minority of parents and carers did not agree that their children were making enough progress. Inspectors judge that progress is satisfactory overall but occasionally slows when pupils are not challenged sufficiently. A very small minority of parents and carers did not agree that the school was led and managed effectively nor took account of their suggestions and concerns. Inspection evidence does not support these views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Matthew's 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 21 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 175 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	11	52	10	48	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	13	62	8	38	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	5	24	14	67	0	0	2	10
My child is making enough progress at this school	6	29	11	52	2	10	2	10
The teaching is good at this school	8	38	11	52	0	0	2	10
The school helps me to support my child's learning	9	43	10	48	0	0	2	10
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	11	52	9	43	0	0	1	5
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)	9	43	10	48	1	5	1	5
The school meets my child's particular needs	8	38	11	52	0	0	2	10
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	5	24	14	67	0	0	2	10
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	5	24	13	62	1	5	2	10
The school is led and managed effectively	3	14	15	71	1	5	2	10
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	8	38	11	52	0	0	2	10

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.



21 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Matthew's CE Primary School, Manchester, M32 9AN

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 go to a school that is satisfactory and improving
- children have a good start to their education in Nursery and Reception
- adults look after you well and make sure you are safe in and around school
- your understanding of how to stay safe and live a healthy lifestyle is good
- you enjoy coming to school and adults are interested in your views (and you said this in your questionnaires)
- you are polite and considerate and behave well
- the headteacher, staff and governors are working hard to help you do better.

What we have asked your school to do now is to:

- raise standards by improving your skills in expressing your ideas in a more ordered way through writing, giving you more opportunities to write at length in subjects, in addition to English, and improving your mathematical problem-solving skills
- make sure teachers always give you work that makes you think hard and lets you know how you can improve
- check the quality of teaching and learning more carefully and develop governors' skills in helping the school to improve.

All of you are a credit to your school and can help it improve further by continuing to try your best in your activities.

Yours sincerely

Melvyn Hemmings

Lead inspector

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