



Sandilands Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 105469
LEA Manchester
Inspection number 277360
Inspection dates 5 June 2006 to 6 June 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs Brenda McIntosh CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Wendover Road
School category	Community		Wythenshawe
Age range of pupils	7 to 11		Manchester, Lancashire M23 9JX
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	161 973 6887
Number on roll	405	Fax number	0161 973 6925
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr M Lyons
Date of previous inspection	14 November 2000	Headteacher	Mr John Riley

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors

Description of the school

This is a larger than average primary school. It was formed in September 2005 from an amalgamation of an infant and junior school. The headteacher, an external appointment, took up post at the same time. Most pupils are of white, British heritage with very few learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average. On entry to school, pupils' attainment is below that expected for children of this age nationally. Over recent years, the number of pupils with communication difficulties has risen. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. The school is resourced for a group of eight pupils with severe and/or complex learning difficulties. A very small number of pupils are looked after or particularly vulnerable.

The school is part of an Excellence in Cities (EiC) Action Zone.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Sandilands Primary has emerged from the successful amalgamation of two quite different schools and is a forward-looking school that provides a satisfactory education with some good features. It is building well on the strengths of each of the previous schools and has established good harmonious relationships at all levels. It gives satisfactory value for money. The school believes it is good but it has overestimated the impact of some aspects of its provision in terms of how well pupils learn and what can be realistically achieved in such a short time. Nevertheless, the school is on the right track and has a strong potential to improve. The headteacher, ably assisted by the two deputy headteachers, drives the development of the school. He has a great determination to ensure children achieve as well as they can, and to provide extended services that meet the needs of the wider community. Pupils' achievement is only satisfactory overall owing to variation in the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. Teaching is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are highly motivated by the fun and practical activities, enjoy learning and as a result make good progress. Pupils in Key Stage 2 learn at a satisfactory pace through more formal and often less stimulating activities. The school is taking action to tackle this issue. The curriculum is satisfactory and is being developed to give greater emphasis on creativity across the school and to tailor the provision more precisely to the needs of all pupils. The provision in the Foundation Stage is good with outstanding use of indoor and outdoor areas to provide exciting learning experiences. Here, children achieve well and develop a good level of independence in their learning. Pupils' personal development is good. The school is working hard to improve the below average level of attendance. There are strengths in the care and support provided for pupils but the guidance given to them about their learning is satisfactory and could be better. Insufficient use is made of assessment information to set pupils individual targets and keep a close check on their progress. Marking is not helpful enough in telling pupils how to improve their work.

Leadership, management and governance are satisfactory. The decision to distribute leadership responsibilities more widely has brought the staff of the two schools together well. New members of the senior management team are enthusiastic about the developments taking place but they have had very little time to influence school improvement. Self-evaluation is reasonably accurate but systems for monitoring and evaluating performance are too recent to have full impact on raising pupils' achievement and standards. Hence standards in the current Year 6 are below average. Being part of the EiC Action Zone the school has access to various initiatives, which help improve teaching and learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure all teaching across Key Stage 2 motivates pupils and engages them fully in their learning so they achieve as well as they can.
- Use assessment information to set pupils individual, challenging targets and monitor closely the progress they make towards meeting them.

- Provide pupils with clear guidance on how to improve their work.
- Develop the monitoring roles of senior managers and governors with a clear focus on raising achievement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. There is no published national data for the school as it was formed less than one year ago. Children enter the Foundation Stage with skills that are generally below those expected for their age and pupils make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Although standards in the current Year 2 are well below average, this reflects the significant number of pupils in this year group who have a variety of learning difficulties or other complex needs. The achievement of these pupils is good from their low levels of attainment on entry to Nursery.

Achievement in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory owing to satisfactory teaching and uneven progress across the year groups in the past. Standards in the current Year 6 are below average. The targets set for this year group are challenging and unlikely to be met. Pupils who are particularly vulnerable, those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including and those with severe and/or complex learning difficulties, also make at least adequate progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

From an early age pupils gain in self-esteem and confidence. They are polite, behave well and co-operate with each other. They are gaining an understanding that there are spiritual and cultural aspects that enrich their daily lives. Through discussions and other activities they gain a better understanding of their own feelings and learn to appreciate the needs of others. Most pupils say that they enjoy their lessons, although this enjoyment is not always evident where the teaching is less motivating and fails to capture the imagination and interest of all pupils. 'I think learning in Years 1 and 2 was better because it was more fun', was one older pupil's way of putting it. Pupils understand the benefits of healthy food and exercise. The new healthy tuck shop is popular and already contributing to the development of healthy lifestyles. During playtimes, pupils are active and take part in a range of games and sports that promote physical exercise and encourage co-operative play. School councillors are keen to do a good job and understand they represent the views of their class. They are actively involved in making important decisions about the school; for example, by appointing new staff, including the headteacher. Pupils are developing skills that equip them well for their future lives. The school is working hard to improve the below average attendance.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is inconsistent throughout the school. Not enough of the teaching is good enough in Key Stage 2 to enable pupils to make good progress overall. A noticeable feature of all lessons is the positive relationships between pupils and staff that lead to pupils' good behaviour. In general, teachers show good knowledge of the subjects and they explain ideas clearly. Pupils with potentially challenging behaviour are managed successfully, and fully included in lessons. Teaching assistants contribute positively to pupils' learning by working closely with individuals or groups to ensure they progress. Consistently good teaching in the Foundation Stage, based on children learning through lively practical activities, helps them achieve well.

Good teaching, usually in Key Stage 1, is characterised by a brisk pace and stimulating practical activities that challenge pupils of all abilities. Lessons are varied and imaginative and as a result pupils' attention and engagement are high. Here pupils enjoy learning and make good progress. These strengths are not often found in satisfactory lessons. The pace and challenge of work is slower, learning is less enjoyable and pupils show less interest. As a result progress is not as good as it could be.

When marking work teachers do not give enough guidance to pupils on what they need to do next to improve. The school assesses pupils well but makes insufficient use of the information to set individual targets and track pupils' progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is being developed to give greater emphasis to creativity and learning through enjoyment. In Key Stage 1, there are some good imaginative links between subjects that bring a relevance and excitement to learning. In Key Stage 2, literacy and numeracy are now being increasingly integrated into other subjects with positive results. For example, a Year 6 history lesson successfully linked the study of World War 2 to pupils' writing skills and promoted good learning. The school is offering an increasingly wide range of enrichment activities such as sports and visits both at home and abroad. Pupils also have the opportunity to learn a foreign language. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good. An outstanding feature is how the activities are planned to ensure that indoor and outdoor areas are used fully as complementary learning spaces. The curriculum continuity to Year 1 is exemplary, with play being carefully and seamlessly integrated into the more formal aspects of learning. The school is successful in promoting healthy and safe lifestyles.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

A strength of the school is the care and support offered to all pupils; parents' appreciation of this is shown through their comments. One parent at the breakfast club put it succinctly, saying: 'I have no concerns about my daughter being here because I know the school will take good care of her'. Procedures for health and safety, risk assessments and checks on adults new to the school are robust. Child protection procedures are in place and understood well by staff. Pupils trust their teachers and say they feel safe and well cared for.

Insufficient guidance is given to pupils to make it clear to them how they can improve their work. There is good support for vulnerable pupils including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Effective links with outside agencies ensure pupils receive the help they need. Pupils with special educational needs in the resource provision are provided for well and helped to take a full and active part in lessons. The school does all it can to support pupils when they first start Nursery and in their move to secondary education.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. Amalgamation was a success owing to the headteacher's clear-sighted approach and a willingness among staff to embrace change. The views of parents, pupils, staff and governors have been actively sought and have influenced priorities in moving the school forward. Parents voice positive opinions about the new school. The headteacher has made a good assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of both schools and is using this to improve provision. Self-evaluation is reasonably accurate but the school has misjudged the speed of change since the amalgamation. The school's plan for improvement identifies the right things, although its systems for checking on performance are still developing and have not had time to have full effect. Decisive actions have been taken, with the support of staff, to address the different approaches to teaching used by the two former schools to ensure consistency and improvement. A good start has been made on developing a whole school curriculum that has a greater emphasis on creativity and enrichment in order to raise pupils' achievement.

Governors are supportive of the school and have played an active part in the amalgamation process but their role in monitoring the work of the school is insufficiently developed. The school has firm plans, in partnership with the local authority and other agencies, to provide extended services to the community. The school is demonstrating a good capacity to move forward through the measurable progress it has already made in such a short time and because of the unity of the staff team.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for being friendly and polite. We enjoyed the two days very much and the chance to speak with you. We would like to share with you what we thought.

These are some of the things we enjoyed the most.

- The way everyone has worked hard to bring the two schools together successfully to form one and how you all get on with each other so well.
- The more exciting lessons where you get involved in your work and really enjoy your learning; they do look fun as some of you told us.
- You behave well and make a good contribution to improving the school through the School Council. It is splendid the way you get involved in appointing new staff.
- It is good that you learn to take care of yourself and others and how to keep fit and healthy.

We know your headteacher wants to make your new school outstanding so we have suggested a few things which we think might help.

- To make all lessons exciting and fun so you all enjoy learning. You could help by telling your teachers what you find interesting and which lessons you like best.
- We thought it might help you in your learning if you have targets to work towards and for your teachers to check regularly to make sure you are going to reach them quickly enough.
- We think that teachers could give you more helpful comments when they mark your work so you know how to improve. This again is where you can help by letting your teachers know if you understand your work or not and asking them what you can do to improve if they forget to tell you.
- Ensure that staff and governors are routinely involved in checking the work of the school closely.

With very best wishes to you all for the future