

Sandilands Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105469
Local Authority	Manchester
Inspection number	342858
Inspection dates	9–10 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Allan Torr HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	380
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Mark Lyons
Headteacher	Mrs Joan Grant
Date of previous school inspection	24 March 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. Inspectors observed learning in 20 lessons and observed 12 teachers. They held meetings with staff and governors, representatives from the local authority, and three groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at the questionnaires completed by 89 pupils, 23 staff and 50 parents and carers. Inspectors looked at pupils' work and a large range of school documents.

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

- pupils' achievement, particularly in mathematics and any difference between the achievement of different groups of pupils
- pupils' spiritual and cultural development
- the improvement in teaching and learning since the previous inspection.

Information about the school

Sandilands is a larger-than-average primary school and there is a much lower-than-average proportion of girls. In some classes, as few as one third of pupils are girls. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for a free school meal is almost double the national average. After two years of significant instability the proportion of pupils leaving and starting the school other than at the start of the Reception class is close to the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average and the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is more than double the national average. Some of these pupils are accommodated within the resourced provision at the school. Just over one in ten pupils has a minority ethnic heritage. There is a children's centre on site managed by Sure Start. There is also a privately managed after-school club which is subject to a separate inspection. The before-school club formed part of this inspection.

The school has gained a number of awards including National Healthy Schools Status. Over the last two years there has been a significant turnover in teaching staff. At the last inspection in March 2009, the school was judged to require a notice to improve because it was performing significantly less well than it should.

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

1

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement. It is now a good school. It has improved significantly since the previous inspection particularly in the quality of teaching and learning and the curriculum. These aspects were inadequate at the previous inspection 15 months ago and are now good and enable all groups of pupils to make good progress. Around three-quarters of lessons observed during this inspection were good or better. Senior and middle leaders have an accurate and detailed knowledge of the school and aspects which need improving. This is because there is a comprehensive and high-quality system for monitoring and evaluating the school's work and an excellent track record of tackling weaknesses and improving teaching. As a result, the school's capacity to improve is outstanding.

Over the last three years pupils have attained standards at the end of Year 6 that were well below the national average. Girls in particular attained well below the average for girls nationally. Standards by the end of Key Stage 1 and the end of Year 6, however, are rising strongly which means pupils are getting ever closer to the national average particularly in English. Standards overall are now broadly in line with the expectations for pupils' ages and the gap between the national average for girls is closing rapidly. In mathematics, standards are rising but remain below average. This is because there is sometimes a lack of challenge in lessons, and mathematical skills and concepts are taught in isolation rather than in a real or problem-solving situation. Some pupils find it difficult to apply their understanding and to explain their thinking and reasoning. Pupils' achievement in information and communication technology (ICT) has improved significantly because of considerable investment in new computers and hardware and a greater focus on pupils using ICT in every lesson. Achievement in other subjects, such as art and design are also rising.

Pupils have a satisfactory understanding and tolerance for people from different backgrounds, those from different cultures and for people in the local community. There are, for example, incidents of pupils using homophobic and racist language. Some pupils have a stereotypical view of different countries and cultures and although there are opportunities to become involved in community projects these are not extensive at a regional, national or global level. Pupils' attendance has risen in each of the last three years and is now in line with the national average. This, alongside improvement to pupils' achievement and skills means pupils are now adequately prepared for their futures. Pupils behave well in lessons, they know how to lead a healthy and active lifestyle and now what to do to stay safe.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment, particularly in mathematics, by:
 - enabling pupils to apply their knowledge and skills in real and problem-solving situations
 - enabling pupils to explain their reasoning and thinking
 - increasing the level of challenge in pupils' work.
- Increase pupils' understanding of people from different cultures and backgrounds, by:
 - improving pupils' contribution to the regional, national and global community
 - deepening pupils' knowledge and tolerance of people of different sexuality, race, religion, age, gender and disability.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils make good progress from their starting points and very good progress in English, ICT and art and design. More-able pupils make good progress. In each of the last three years, by the end of Year 6, a greater proportion of pupils attain the higher Level 5. In 2009, for example, one fifth of pupils attained Level 5 in English. Pupils who are looked after by the local authority make good progress because teachers work hard to break down any barriers to success, such as poor attendance or pastoral needs. Pupils with a learning difficulty and/or disability are very well supported by all staff and they are given carefully selected teaching which is targeted to tackle their specific needs. As a result, they grow in confidence and their achievement is good. Girls in the past have attained well below average standards and have made inadequate progress. Now, in most classes, girls are performing closer to the national average for girls, particularly in English and more are reaching their challenging targets. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve as well as White British pupils.

Pupils are active at break-times and have access to an extensive field, and sporting and play equipment. They have three physical education lessons a week and take part in an extensive range of sporting and other activities during and after the school day. A high proportion of pupils take advantage of a nutritious meal at lunch time and they have a good understanding about how to eat, drink and live healthily. Most pupils feel safe in school. Overall behaviour is good, particularly in lessons where learning is rarely disrupted. Incidents of poor behaviour and inappropriate language are challenged by the school and are reducing. Pupils take the opportunity to apply for and take up roles and responsibilities, such as playground buddy and they have a growing voice in making choices about what they learn about and how they can improve the school.

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	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	3
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	3

How effective is the provision?

Lessons are motivating and interesting. They capture pupils' imagination because the curriculum has been designed in such a way to pose relevant and interesting questions. Topics such as 'What were the differences between the lives of rich and poor people in Tudor Times?' and 'What effect do rivers have on the landscape?' and 'Why was Samuel Pepys important during the great fire of London?' are broken down into weekly or daily questions which pupils find out about. Pupils are quick to pick up new learning and concepts because they ask their own questions and trigger their own lines of enquiry and interest. In Key Stage 1, for example, one pupil showed her excellent topic about guinea pigs to the rest of the school and talked about some of the information she had found out. There is scope to extend the curriculum further to subjects like mathematics to enable pupils to apply and extend their skills in problem solving situations.

In most lessons, pupils are active learners and teachers gauge pupils' understanding to move their learning on quickly during the lesson. As a result, learning time is maximised and pupils are able to build on the knowledge and skills they have already learnt. Teachers monitor the room well and intervene with good quality questions to make pupils think. There is scope to extend this further to enable pupils to think and justify their reasoning more. Pupils are active throughout most lessons and talking partners are used well to enable pupils to consolidate and extend their speaking and listening skills. The breakfast club is satisfactory and provides a useful service for parents and carers and pupils. It has a positive impact on attendance and pupils' readiness for school. The nurture room and the resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are good and play an integral part in Sandilands success with pupils

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with significant needs. Because of this provision, the school is able to tackle the needs of very vulnerable young people; it is able to re-integrate disruptive pupils back into a mainstream class and is able to ensure other pupils in the school to achieve well.

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?

Staff morale is high at Sandilands. The whole staff team has worked very hard to tackle the many weaknesses identified in the previous inspection report under the excellent leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Senior leaders have a very clear focus on breaking down pupils' barriers to learning and enabling them to succeed. As a result, any discrimination or inequality is tackled well. Senior leaders set very challenging targets and in 2009, all groups of pupils exceeded them. Senior and subject leaders have good systems in place to monitor and evaluate learning and to put in place actions to tackle weaknesses. For example, an area of teaching and learning that required improvement was the quality of staff questioning. Leaders organised training sessions and staff meetings followed up by focussed observations. During the inspection it was evident that this aspect had moved from a weakness to a strength and the effectiveness of the leadership of teaching and learning was outstanding.

Governors have a detailed and thorough understanding of the school's strengths. They are motivated, evaluative, insightful and highly skilled. Subject leaders make presentations to the governing body about achievement and provision in their subject areas which enables governors to question, challenge and support most aspects of the school's work. Staff work well with outside organisations, such as the local academy, university, local authority and the parish church. These partnerships are having a positive impact on the curriculum and pupils' outcomes.

The school has an adequate action plan in place to promote inclusion, equality and diversity and community cohesion. The school's safeguarding procedures are good and meet government requirements well.

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	1

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	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
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 enter the Nursery with skills and understanding that are well below those typical of three- and four-year-olds. Their skills in mathematical development and language are particularly low but their physical development is relatively good. They make good progress because the environment, curriculum, resources and the teaching are all good. By the end of the Reception class, most children have caught up and are in line with the national average when they start in Year 1. Their skills are particularly good in physical and creative development and in mathematics. The staff work well as a team to cater for each child. They provide a good range of exciting activities and through questioning they extend children's thinking. In one session, for example, the teacher led a discussion about whether pizza could be classed as a healthy food. The children debated whether the goodness of the vegetables on the pizza negated some of the unhealthy aspects of eating too much pizza. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader provides good leadership. She has a clear vision which is shared by a well motivated, hard-working and skilful staff team. There are good systems in place to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the provision on children's achievement and to identify staff training needs.

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

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers agreed their children enjoy school and are making enough progress. A similarly large proportion agreed the school keeps their children safe, helps them to lead a healthy lifestyle, makes sure they are well prepared for the future, and meets their needs. A few parents and carers, however, commented that the drive and car parking in front of the school is dangerous because it is also used by parents, carers and children. Inspectors agreed. The school has in place a plan to tackle the problem of access to the front of the school during the summer holiday. Over 10% of parents and carers said the school does not inform them enough about their children's progress. Inspectors agree and have asked the school to look into clearer and more frequent ways of telling parents and carers how well their children are progressing. Approximately one in eight parents and carers commented the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors acknowledged there have been incidents of poor behaviour but evidence during the inspection suggested they were dealt with appropriately. Around one in eight parents and carers disagreed that the school takes account of their views. Inspectors have asked senior leaders to look at ways of collecting, collating and acting on parents' and carers' views. The overwhelming majority agreed the school is well led and managed, teaching is good, and staff help them to support their children's learning.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Sandilands 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 50 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 380 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	30	60	15	30	4	8	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	22	44	26	52	1	2	1	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	19	38	23	46	5	10	2	4
My child is making enough progress at this school	19	38	26	52	2	4	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	23	46	23	46	4	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	19	38	24	48	4	8	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	17	34	27	54	2	4	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)	18	36	21	42	3	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	15	30	31	62	2	4	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	12	24	27	54	7	14	2	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	28	27	54	6	12	3	6
The school is led and managed effectively	15	30	29	58	3	6	2	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	22	44	24	48	2	4	2	4

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.



11 June 2010

Inspection of Sandilands Primary School, Manchester, M23 9JX

Dear Pupils

You may remember I came with two other inspectors to see how well your school is progressing. Thank you for meeting and speaking with us during the inspection. This letter is to tell you about some of our findings.

Since it was inspected in March last year Sandilands has made outstanding progress, so much so we have been able to judge it now as a good school. The quality of your lessons and the progress you made were inadequate in the past. These things are now good. This is because your headteacher and teachers have worked extremely hard to improve how you are taught and what you are taught. There is still some way to go to improve the standards you reach by the end of Year 6 particularly in mathematics. We have asked the school to increase the level of challenge and difficulty of your lessons; to give you more opportunities to explain and think about the reason for your answers; and to give you more chances to solve problems.

We judged overall that you are safe when you are in school, behaviour in lessons is good, you live a healthy and active lifestyle and you enjoy lessons, particularly in English and art. A few of you, however, when we met you and read your questionnaire answers said there is some racist and homophobic name calling. We judged that you had only a satisfactory understanding of people from different backgrounds, lifestyles, countries and cultures. We have asked the school to help you have a better understanding of this by getting more involved in the local community and by learning more about people from different backgrounds.

We would like to wish you all the best for the future and congratulate you for how hard you have worked to make the school a better place and to achieve as well as you can.

Yours sincerely,

Allan Torr

Her Majesty's Inspector

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