



Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Ofsted Subgroup

School inspection outcomes: academic year 2016/17

School	Date of previous inspection	Previous Ofsted outcome	Date of most recent inspection	Ofsted outcome
Manchester Academy	24 January 2012	Good	20 September 2016	Requires Improvement
Loreto High School	9 July 2013	Good	27 September 2016	Requires Improvement
Crowcroft Park	20 May 2014	Requires Improvement	27 September 2016	Good
Manchester Communication Academy	19 September 2012	Good	27 September 2016	Requires Improvement
Levenshulme High School	3 July 2013	Inadequate (SM)	5 October 2016	Outstanding
The Birches School	11 July 2012	Outstanding	1 November 2016	Outstanding
The Willows Primary School	11 February 2015	Requires Improvement	2 November 2016	Good
Moston Fields	21 April 2015	Requires Improvement	8 November 2016	Requires Improvement
Connell Sixth Form College	27 January 2015	Requires Improvement	21 November 2016	Requires Improvement
St Chrysostom's	3 November 2011	Outstanding	29 November 2016	Good
The Barlow RC High School	16 October 2012	Good	30 November	Requires Improvement
Baguley Hall Primary	12 February 2013	Good	25 January 2017	Good
Secondary PRU	16 January 2014	Good	30 January 2017	Good
Our Lady's High	10 February 2015	Requires Improvement	31 January 2017	Good
Cringle Brook Primary	N/A	N/A	9 February 2017	Outstanding
Crosslee Primary School	2 October 2012	Good	15 February 2017	Good
Moston Lane Primary	22 May 2013	Good	28 February 2017	Good
St Willibrord's RC Primary	15 May 2012	Good	28 February 2017	Good
St Peter's RC High	18 June 2013	Good	28 February 2017	Good
Manchester Creative Studio	N/A	N/A	1 March 2017	Special Measures
Manchester College	12 May 2014	Good	7 March 2017	Requires Improvement

School	Date of previous inspection	Previous Ofsted outcome	Date of most recent inspection	Ofsted outcome
St Peter's RC Primary	12 February 2013	Good	7 March 2017	Good
St Bernard's RC Primary	21 March 2012	Good	7 March 2017	Good
Rodney House Special School	24 October 2012	Outstanding	14 March 2017	Outstanding
Cravenwood Primary Academy	5 December 2012	Special Measures	21 March 2017	Good
Chapel Street Primary	11 September 2012	Good	21 March 2017	Requires Improvement
Oasis Academy Aspinall	3 March 2015	Requires Improvement	25 April 2017	Good
St Elizabeth's RC Primary	20 March 2013	Good	12 April 2017	Good
Whalley Range Academy	17 October 2012	Good	19 April 2017	Good
Ringway Primary School	27 February 2013	Good	14 June 2017	Good
The Divine Mercy RC Primary	19 September 2012	Good	21 June 2017	Good
Bowker Vale Primary	23 January 2012	Good	5 July 2017	Good
Plymouth Grove Primary	16 November 2011	Good	12 July 2017	Good
St Paul's CofE Primary	1 May 2013	Good	18 July 2017	Good
Alma Park Primary	15 May 2013	Good	19 July 2017	Good

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



22 June 2017

Miss N Forkan
Headteacher
Ringway Primary School
Rossett Avenue
Cornishway
Wythenshawe
Manchester
M22 0WW

Dear Miss Forkan

Short inspection of Ringway Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 14 June 2017, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in February 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. There is a warm, friendly atmosphere when you enter your school. As headteacher, you have established a committed leadership team full of energy and drive. You are ambitious for your pupils, their families and the community you serve

Following the last inspection, you were given a number of areas to improve. These have been tackled effectively. As the school has grown in numbers you have set out clear actions to be taken in planning for improvement. Leaders regularly check the quality of teaching and learning across the school. They rigorously follow up on areas identified for improvement. As a result, outcomes for pupils are good and improving. You provide a range of activities for your pupils to enrich their learning. Staff appreciate the opportunities for professional development. They are benefiting from the sharing of good practice and working with other teachers. This is particularly helpful for those new to teaching. Teachers have high expectations and challenge pupils so that an increased number are working at a greater depth.

The vast majority of parents are very supportive. Those spoken to during the inspection praised how approachable and friendly your staff are. They said that their children settle into school quickly and families new to the area are made to feel very welcome. They appreciate the information they receive about their children's progress and how they can support them at home. Your breakfast club



is very popular. A very small number of parents commented that inappropriate behaviour is not always addressed promptly. However, this was not the view of the majority of parents and no inappropriate behaviour was seen during the inspection. Pupils I spoke to said that behaviour is managed very well and dealt with swiftly so that any falling out or inappropriate behaviour does not happen again.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and value the importance of punctuality and regular attendance. They are polite and confident. They understand that we are all different and they have respect for each other. They speak positively about how your staff help them to improve their work. They are proud of their achievements, especially in reading, and appreciate the incentives to encourage them to read every day. They enjoy the exciting variety of after-school clubs and tournaments they enter. The cooking club is very popular. They enjoy learning to cook with their parents and making omelettes with the eggs supplied by the school's own chickens. The older pupils are looking forward to moving on to high school and have already had visits from their new teachers.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose, staff follow procedures appropriately and any concerns are followed up rigorously. Records are detailed and of a high quality. Pupils spoken to during the inspection say that they know how to keep themselves safe, especially when using the internet. They enjoy coming to school and feel safe and secure. They know whom to go to if they have any worries and are confident that things will be dealt with swiftly.

Inspection findings

- You and your staff have been relentless in your drive to improve punctuality and attendance, particularly for the disadvantaged pupils in school who are persistently absent. You know your families well and work closely with them to provide the support that they need. You have introduced a number of imaginative incentives that are having a positive impact on improving attendance. There has been an improvement across the school and attendance is now just below that of other schools nationally. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils has improved and the attendance of pupils who are persistently absent is also increasing. You work closely with the school nurse and other agencies to support the most vulnerable families. Leaders robustly follow up when pupils are absent and parents are held to account. You are raising expectations and, as a result, pupils are making better progress.
- The number of children joining Reception has increased over the last few years. Most of the children who attend your Nursery stay on to join Reception. However, the majority of children join the Reception class having attended one of a variety of pre-school settings in the area. Although the proportion of children reaching a good level of development at the end of Reception is improving, it remains below that expected for children their age. You acknowledge that there



is still work to do to improve progress rates further and ensure that more children are ready for Year 1.

- You have been proactive in accessing appropriate training for the newly appointed leader to early years. You have identified that more-accurate assessments need to be carried out as the children start school in order to identify any gaps in children's understanding better. The changes made to the teaching of phonics in the early years has already had a positive impact on progress. Adults effectively support learning by addressing any misconceptions and correcting pronunciation. As a result, children are able to apply their skills effectively in their own reading and writing in a range of situations.
- Within the Nursery and Reception areas the wide variety of activities provide children with the opportunity to develop their skills independently and demonstrate high levels of cooperation. For example, in the outside area a group of children were working together to build their own 'den'. They demonstrated focus and determination as they solved the problem of how to fix the covers to the frame they had built. Adults used questions well to support children's thinking and develop their ideas. Teachers use a range of evidence to inform assessments about the children's progress and parents are encouraged to share information and celebrate the children's achievements.
- The results for key stage 1 pupils in 2016 were below those expected for pupils of a similar age nationally for reading and writing. The school's own assessment information shows that results have improved this year, especially for the disadvantaged pupils. You and your leaders have provided training for all staff and changed the way you teach phonics and reading. The actions taken by you have allowed teachers to share good examples of how to teach reading and create exciting reading areas in each classroom. Pupils are making better progress from their starting points and are becoming confident and competent readers. Pupils enjoy reading and are given opportunities to apply their skills in a range of other curriculum areas. Pupils in Year 3 are enjoying reading about the adventures of Mr Carter and his search for Tutankhamun's tomb.
- Phonics is taught consistently across early years and key stage 1. Your leaders are rigorous in the way that they monitor and assess the progress that pupils make. As a result, an increasing number of pupils are reaching the standard seen by other pupils of a similar age nationally. This has had an impact on the progress that pupils make in their writing. Work in pupils' books shows that pupils are challenged and extended writing is of a high quality. An increased number of pupils are on track to reach the expectations appropriate for their age by the end of the year. Pupils are eager to improve their work and they are proud of their achievements.
- Teachers work together to check that their assessments of pupils' work are accurate. They identify the barriers to success and ensure that pupils are provided with timely interventions to support their progress. A range of interventions are used to support learning and school's own assessment information shows that they are having a positive impact on progress. Some pupils are making rapid progress towards the expectations appropriate for their age, particularly in Year 2.



- The support for pupils who have special educational needs is accurate and focused on pupils' specific areas of need. You work effectively with a range of outside agencies commissioned directly by the school to support pupils' needs. You are proactive in accessing advice and training for staff, which results in pupils being well supported. The strong relationships you have with parents and carers benefits the pupils and the progress that they make. Information profiles are very personalised and developed with teachers, parents and pupils. Termly progress meetings enable leaders to discuss individual pupils' needs and assess the impact of the support they are receiving. Monitoring evidence looked at during the inspection indicates clearly that pupils are making good progress from their starting points. The governors monitor these strategies closely to ensure that they are having a direct impact on the outcomes for pupils.
- Leaders ensure that information about pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is shared appropriately with staff. Transition meetings at the end of each year ensure that all relevant information is shared appropriately. Teachers are able to support pupils effectively as they move onto the next stage in their education.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they continue to develop the accuracy of the assessments on entry to Reception so that pupils receive targeted support in a timely manner to diminish the gap further and ensure that a higher proportion of pupils are ready for Year 1.
- they embed the changes made to the teaching of reading and writing and improve outcomes over time, especially at key stage 1, so that pupils are well prepared for the next stages in their education.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Manchester. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Amanda Stringer
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this short inspection, I met with, you your deputy headteacher, members of your leadership team and four members of staff new to teaching. I also met three members of the governing body. I was unable able to speak to a representative from the local authority, who sent her apologies. I conducted a learning walk with you, and visited eight classes and had the opportunity to speak to pupils and see their work. I also listened to a number of pupils read. I met with a group of pupils



during the day, spoke with a number of parents at the school gates and took account of seven free-text comments. There were 20 responses to Parent View, the Ofsted online questionnaire for parents. I scrutinised your assessment information, school improvement planning, the single central record and other safeguarding procedures and practices.

School report



The Divine Mercy Roman Catholic Primary School

20 Blue Moon Way, Rusholme, Manchester M14 7SH

Inspection dates

21–22 June 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The quality of early years provision is outstanding. Children are supported well in developing positive attitudes to learning and acquire a wide range of skills. They make excellent progress in all areas of learning.
- Support provided across the school for vulnerable pupils is exemplary. Leaders understand the needs of their pupils and their families well and provide effective support. They have shown resilience and determination in ensuring that vulnerable pupils attend school regularly to maximise their progress.
- Pupils are well behaved, friendly and courteous in the classroom and as they move around the school. They interact well with each other and adults, demonstrating tolerance, respect and thoughtfulness.
- Standards of reading, writing and mathematics in all key stages have improved significantly over time. Most pupils make better progress than other pupils in primary schools across the country. As a result of secure numeracy and literacy skills, pupils are prepared well for their next stages of learning.
- Leadership of reading writing and mathematics is having a positive impact on standards. Leadership of other curriculum areas is at an early stage of development. There is no coherent plan to develop skills systematically across other areas of the curriculum.
- The quality of teaching of reading, writing and mathematics is consistently good across the school. This can be seen in pupils' good-quality, well-presented work in these areas. In other areas of the curriculum, standards are not always as high.
- Teachers expect pupils to work hard and they encourage positive attitudes. Most pupils are committed to working to the best of their ability and enjoy their learning. However, teaching does not always fully engage all pupils in their learning.
- Pupils and their parents speak highly of their school, describing it as a place where there are very positive relationships, where pupils are looked after well and expected to work hard.



Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership by:
 - ensuring that leaders who are less experienced in subjects other than English or mathematics are clear about how to drive forward standards in their allocated areas of learning
 - developing a coherent, consistent and progressive plan for the delivery of focused skill acquisition in subjects other than English and mathematics and embedding this through focused teaching
 - further developing the existing monitoring of reading, writing and mathematics to include all subject areas.
- Improve teaching and learning by ensuring that:
 - all learning activities are well matched to pupils' levels of ability and interest, across different subject areas, so that all pupils are fully engaged in their learning
 - pupils' work across the school demonstrates good progression in all aspects of their education, including the humanities and technical and artistic learning.



Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders have addressed the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection. Information and communication technology (ICT) is now used well to support learning across the school. Greater numbers of pupils in key stage 1 are now achieving the higher levels in a range of subjects. Leaders are keen to improve further and have been developing strategies to enable most pupils to achieve the higher levels, particularly in writing. The impact of this can already be seen in pupils' writing.
- Leaders have developed a culture where everyone is expected to work hard. They set high expectations for pupils and staff by engendering a strong work ethic from pupils' very early years at the school. In key stages 1 and 2, focus has particularly been on reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders have a clear and accurate understanding of standards in the school in reading, writing and mathematics. Effective use is made of school assessment information to track the progress of individuals and groups of pupils. Leaders have identified groups of pupils, including pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils. They have explored potential barriers to achievement for them. They have shown dogged determination to help pupils overcome these and have been successful in most cases.
- Curriculum planning strongly facilitates the development of reading, writing and mathematical skills for pupils in key stage 1 and key stage 2. Plans for the progression of skills in humanities and technical and artistic subjects are at an early stage of development. Planning in key stage 1 and key stage 2 does facilitate the development of scientific understanding, but in some year groups the planning does not support progressive development of the pupils' learning throughout the year.
- There are robust checks carried out by leaders to evaluate the progress pupils are making in reading, writing and mathematics, and staff adapt and refine teaching strategies as a result of these checks if needed. In other areas of the curriculum, however, this rigour is not as evident and, as a result, pupils do not systematically develop the skills, knowledge and understanding they need to. Leaders accept that the established systems of school improvement now need to include foundation subjects and that newly appointed subject leaders will need the support of other experienced leaders to develop this role.
- Teaching staff are clear about their role in ensuring that pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. There is a shared sense of responsibility for the progress pupils make, which is supported well by the rigorous cycle of appraisal run by line managers for teachers and teaching assistants.
- Staff have access to a range of professional development activities, including sharing of good practice and attending training held both within the school and in other settings. Staff feel that they are well supported, including newly qualified teachers, who say that they value the support they have had from all staff.
- Leaders ensure that pupils have opportunities to enrich their learning and develop spiritually, morally, socially and culturally through a variety of visits, visitors and well-



attended out-of-school clubs, including a residential trip for Year 6 pupils. Effective use is made of reward trips and events for pupils with full attendance, which pupils value. Pupils also value the opportunities they have to take part in competitive sport, as well as their physical education entitlement.

- Leaders ensure that pupils have a strong sense of equality and understand that everyone deserves to be treated well. Systems to deal with the rare instances of bullying are effective, and pupils are confident that they can raise issues with members of staff and that any matters raised would be dealt with properly. Parents agree with this view.
- British values are an integral part of the school's mission and ethos. Pupils demonstrate a clear understanding of tolerance and democracy in many aspects of daily life at school. Leaders ensure that they enjoy taking up roles of responsibility within the school to show their commitment to this.

Governance of the school

- Governors have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and use it well to hold leaders to account for agreed improvement targets.
- They have worked with leaders to monitor school improvement work carefully, ensuring that funding allocated to support disadvantaged pupils is used effectively. They are knowledgeable about outcomes for these pupils and are aware that this group of pupils achieves at least as well as other pupils nationally and, in some cases, better.
- Governors also monitor the effective use of resources to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities so that they are well supported and make good progress. Governors are clear about how sports premium funds are spent and ensure that they are spent on appropriate activities. Pupils now have access to a wider range of sports, and teachers have developed their skills in the teaching of physical education.
- The support of an external consultant is used effectively by governors for the appraisal cycle for the headteacher and for the setting of challenging targets.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are very effective. Safeguarding is a strength of the school. Staff work tirelessly, and in some instances go to extraordinary lengths, to support and to protect a large number of pupils and their families. This is especially the case for those in the most difficult circumstances.
- Staff and governors are well trained and are clear about what to do to support vulnerable pupils. There are positive relationships between staff and most parents who are in need of support.
- Policies and procedures are up to date and meet statutory requirements. Leaders ensure that new staff are engaged following safe recruitment procedures.
- Staff keep records and implement systems meticulously. Leaders liaise closely with each other and follow up issues raised with diligence. They continue to refer and re-



refer pupils to the appropriate agencies where needed until the necessary support has been received. Regular multi-agency meetings take place to ensure that information is shared appropriately.

- Effective use is made of specialist services, including a qualified counsellor on site during the school day, with whom pupils can request a meeting to discuss problems or ask questions. Pupils feel comfortable approaching staff with concerns and feel confident that staff will help them.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers and other staff demonstrate high expectations for pupils' behaviour and a strong work ethic, to which pupils respond well. Most pupils apply themselves well in learning activities and their work is usually well presented.
- Teachers make good use of assessment information to plan activities that support learning, especially in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils are given helpful feedback in these areas to support them in further development. Support and challenge is provided for the most able and disadvantaged pupils in reading, writing and mathematics, who make good progress. ICT is used well to support pupils' learning. However, when learning tasks are not well matched to pupils' ability or interests, some pupils lose focus and are not fully engaged in their learning.
- Teachers and most support staff have good subject knowledge in reading, writing, mathematics and science and are able to support their pupils well, especially those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. A small number of support staff lack the subject knowledge or skills to manage behaviour and this limits their effectiveness.
- The teaching of phonics is secure, and pupils are able to make good use of what they have learned in their reading and spelling. Pupils enjoy reading. They read confidently and are keen to talk about a wide range of books they have read.
- Homework is used well to support pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils are expected to complete this and most do. Pupils who do not are supported to enable them to complete this during lunchtimes. Parents commented that there is useful information widely available for them, including a parent group to help them support their children in progressing well and meeting expected standards.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is variable in some subjects, such as art, technology and humanities. This is evident in pupils' work, where completed tasks do not always lead to the skill or knowledge acquisition planned for that particular area of learning.
- Learning activities in other areas of the curriculum than reading, writing and mathematics for pupils in key stage 1 and key stage 2 are often used to practise and embed oracy, reading or writing skills. This usually results in good-quality pieces of written work. However, the focus on the development of other skills (for example in history, geography, design and technology) is lost and pupils' work, especially in key stage 2, does not demonstrate these skills consistently.



Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- The emotional well-being of pupils is a high priority for leaders, as they have a clear understanding that this is one of the major barriers to learning for their pupils. Very effective use is made of high-quality additional support through trained leaders and a well-qualified counsellor. Pupils are able to request meetings with the counsellor through a 'post-box' system. Pupils reported that they value this facility highly and use it very well.
- The most vulnerable pupils are supported exceptionally well, including with free access to the breakfast club. This has a positive impact on the progress these pupils make.
- Parents and pupils say that pupils are extremely well looked after by staff at the school and there are excellent relationships between themselves and staff. Pupils enjoy coming to school and feel safe. Bullying is rare and both parents and pupils say that it is dealt with effectively when it does occur.
- Pupils confidently say that everyone has the right to be equal, and demonstrate this themselves by the respect and thoughtfulness they show towards each other and adults. Displays and resources available for pupils to use reflect the cultural diversity of pupils at the school and celebrate this.
- Pupils are very confident and self-assured and carry out a range of responsibilities willingly and diligently, including school council, eco-warriors, chaplains, prefects, 'peace-pals', digital leaders, gardeners and sports leaders. Their strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development prepares them extremely well to be active members of their communities.
- Pupils are keen to take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities, such as breakfast club, choir, multi-skills, digital leaders, phonics, football, dodgeball, cooking, tennis, steel pans, football, rounders, gardening and Change4Life.
- Pupils have a sound understanding of safety, including e-safety, which prepares them well for later life. They take up responsibility willingly to keep themselves and others safe, a notable example being the successful work that prefects do to keep everyone safe on the stairs.
- Leaders maintain links with alternative providers and ensure that any pupils attending are tracked with the necessary rigour.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils conduct themselves very well in lessons and move around the school in a calm, orderly manner, without needing significant adult support. This is also evident at breaktimes and lunchtime when pupils play and socialise well, demonstrating a considerate awareness of each other as they play.
- Pupils display positive attitudes to learning and are proud of their work and their



school. This positive attitude is reflected in the progress they make. Most pupils show resilience in their work. However, small groups of pupils were occasionally observed across the school disengaged in learning tasks when they were not well matched to their level of ability or interests. In all classes, pupils' behaviour demonstrated a clear understanding that everyone has the right to learn and the teacher to teach.

- Pupils show respect and thoughtfulness towards each other. They work well collaboratively and share resources generously. They listen to each other's views and genuinely celebrate each other's achievements.
- There are very clear and effective systems in place to encourage good attendance and punctuality to ensure that pupils make the most of the learning opportunities available to them. Leaders are acutely aware of vulnerable groups of pupils and support these families very well, using a wide range of effective strategies to ensure that their attendance is as high as it can be. The attendance and progress of White British and Black Caribbean pupils are below average, but leaders are doing all they can to support these groups of pupils. Current school data shows that this is having a very positive impact on attendance rates.
- Parents feel that behaviour is good and have no well-founded concerns about behaviour or welfare.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils build on the good start they make in the early years foundation stage and continue to make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics as they continue into key stage 1 and key stage 2. This means that by the end of key stage 2, pupils have secure core skills in reading, writing and mathematics, which prepare them well for the next stage in their learning.
- The percentage of pupils who achieve well has increased over time, faster than the rate of pupils in primary schools across the country. Many pupils in key stage 1 and key stage 2 now exceed the standards expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are also supported very well so that they make progress that is in line with or above national averages in all areas.
- Highly effective support for disadvantaged pupils ensures that they make rapid progress. As a result of this well-focused support, the differences between disadvantaged pupils' and other pupils' attainment and progress have been diminished significantly.
- Leaders have also ensured that the most able pupils are supported in attaining the highest standards in reading, writing and mathematics. In key stage 1, the percentage of most-able pupils achieving the higher levels in these areas has increased over time. This continues to be a focus for the school, especially in writing. The high standard of pupils' written work in Year 2 suggests that this work is already having a positive impact.
- The percentage of pupils in Year 1 that achieve the expected standard in phonics is above that of other pupils who achieve this nationally. Pupils across the school have a



secure knowledge of phonics, which they apply confidently to their reading and spelling. Pupils enjoy reading a wide range of books and can talk knowledgeably about them.

- The outcomes for pupils in other areas of the curriculum in key stage 1 and key stage 2, however, are not consistently high. Leaders accept that the same rigour needs to be applied in the progressive development of skills in the humanities and technical and artistic aspects of pupils' education that is evident in reading, writing and mathematics.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- The leadership of the early years foundation stage is outstanding. The leader is an aspirational leader with a clear vision for further developments, ensuring that children achieve the highest outcomes possible.
- There are highly effective partnerships in place with parents, Sure Start, 'THOMP' (a local cluster group) and the local authority, enabling the sharing of information and the development and sharing of best practice. The local authority uses the early years practice at the school as a model of excellence with other schools.
- The early years leader has a clear and accurate view of standards in all aspects of the curriculum and makes effective use of his secure knowledge of data to track the progress of groups and individuals from entry. He continues to track pupils as they progress into key stage 1 to inform further developments in practice in the early years foundation stage. There are rigorous monitoring and evaluation systems in place which encompass all aspects of the early years foundation stage provision.
- There is rigorous performance management and supervision of staff to ensure that the practitioners have the maximum impact on children's learning and development. Adults were observed in both the indoor and the outdoor environment supporting and challenging children through good-quality interaction.
- All welfare requirements are met and staff demonstrate the same diligence in safeguarding children that is evident in the rest of the school. Effective risk assessment takes place, enabling children to explore independently different learning opportunities and environments and to take and manage risks safely. Parents feel that their children are safe and happy at school.
- Parents are encouraged to take an active part in their child's learning. Clear advice is given on what to expect from their child at this stage of their learning and how they can help their child's progress. Parents commented that they value this information.
- The highly stimulating learning environment enables a seamless transition between Nursery and Reception Years and between the indoor and outdoor environment. A wide range of high-quality learning opportunities are offered to the children, including adult-focused and child-initiated activities, reflecting all areas of learning.
- Children demonstrate confidence and enthusiasm in their learning and move freely from one well-defined learning area to another, supported where needed by adults. Children in the Reception Year are highly motivated to complete the 'Butterfly' challenge independently, which is tailored to each child based on prior assessment. This encourages them to practise and master skills that will enable them to progress



quickly.

- The percentage of children who achieved a good level of development in 2016 was equal to national figures. This has been an improvement over time as the percentage of children achieving a good level of development has steadily risen at the school. School data suggests that the majority of children are below or well below typical levels of development when they begin in Nursery. This means that children make excellent progress in the early years as a result of the wide range of high-quality, well-planned learning opportunities delivered through focused and highly effective teaching. This includes children who are disadvantaged or have special educational needs and/or disabilities.



School details

Unique reference number	135648
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10032403

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	455
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Glyn Young
Headteacher	Ann Walsh
Telephone number	0161 672 8660
Website	www.thedivinemercy.manchester.sch.uk/
Email address	head@thedivinemercy.manchester.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 September 2012

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The government minimum national standards were met in 2016 and 2015.
- One pupil attends another educational establishment on a dual-registration basis.
- The school is larger than the average primary school.
- The school is situated in an inner-city area with high levels of deprivation.
- The pupil population includes a wide mixture of ethnic backgrounds.
- There is a large number of pupils for whom English is an additional language.
- There is a high percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals.
- There is a higher-than-average percentage of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.



Information about this inspection

- Ten responses to Ofsted's online parent survey (Parent View) were taken into account and any free-text comments. The school's own parent consultation information was also considered. Account was taken of the 13 responses to the staff questionnaire and the 13 responses to the pupil questionnaire. The lead inspector held meetings with governors, which included the chair of the governing body and two other governors.
- The inspection team observed teaching and learning in all classes. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher took part in some of these visits. Pupils' work from a range of areas of learning across the school was examined. Senior leaders took part in this work with inspectors.
- Inspectors listened to pupils reading and held discussions with groups of pupils. They also talked informally with pupils around the school, in the dining room and in the playground.
- Inspectors held discussions with members of staff, including the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the assistant headteacher, the early years foundation stage leader, the special needs coordinator, the business manager and key stage leaders.
- The lead inspector spoke to a representative from the local authority. Telephone conversations were held with the school improvement partner and a diocesan representative.
- Inspectors examined a range of documentation. This included information about pupils' attainment and progress, leaders' review of current school performance, records of meetings and a report from an external consultant. Inspectors also examined safeguarding documentation and records of attendance.

Inspection team

Claire Cropper, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Sandie La Porta	Ofsted Inspector
Tina Cleugh	Ofsted Inspector
John Shutt	Ofsted Inspector
Clare McGarey	Ofsted Inspector



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School report



Bowker Vale Primary School

Middleton Road, Higher Crumpsall, Manchester, Lancashire, M8 4NB

Inspection dates

5–6 July 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Inspirational leadership from the headteacher and her highly effective senior leadership team, mean that this school has made significant improvements since the previous inspection.
- Leaders have demonstrated a clear capacity to improve the school with the work they have done on raising attainment in spelling, grammar and punctuation, and in improving the progress of White British pupils' writing.
- Pupils' behaviour is excellent because of the emphasis that staff place on pupils making the right choices.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics is significantly above that seen nationally, and their progress in reading and writing is also above average.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, due to the effective support they receive.
- Safeguarding in the school is a strength. It is effectively led so that pupils feel safe. Staff are vigilant and receive regular safeguarding training.
- Teachers ensure that clear assessments of pupils' prior learning inform their plans. Teachers' excellent subject knowledge enables pupils to achieve very high rates of progress in mathematics.
- Pupils in the specialist resourced provision make excellent progress in their work and personal development.
- The excellent relationships between pupils and staff are highly effective in promoting pupils' personal development. Pupils display a clear love of learning. This is an outstanding aspect of this school's work.
- Children in the early years make good progress to achieve broadly average standards, having started nursery with skills below those typical of their age. However, they are not consistently given opportunities to contribute their ideas to activities.
- The quality of pupils' handwriting varies between classes and year groups.
- Leaders' plans for improvement do not have a sharp enough focus on setting aspirational and measurable targets for pupils. Consequently, governors' awareness of how the funding for disadvantaged pupils is making a difference is not as strong as it should be.
- There are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, including in the early years. Although never less than good, the quality of questioning varies between classes.
- The challenge for the most able and the most able disadvantaged pupils does not stretch pupils' thinking sufficiently to enable them to achieve the high standards in reading and writing of which they would otherwise be capable.



Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Leaders, including governors, should build on the school's effective practice to improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - school improvement plans include clear and specific targets for improvement, so leaders can fully evaluate the effectiveness of their actions to improve the school
 - governors deepen their understanding of how effectively the use of the pupil premium funding to support disadvantaged pupils makes a positive difference to outcomes.
- Leaders, including governors, should further improve the quality of teaching and learning across the school, including in the early years, by ensuring that:
 - the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, are challenged to achieve the highest standards in reading and writing
 - the questioning of pupils in all classes matches that of the best teaching and learning in the school
 - consistently high targets are set for all pupils, for example, in the quality of pupils' handwriting
 - children in the early years are provided with time to respond to their learning and make full contributions to tasks.



Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Senior leaders have created a strong learning culture in the school. They set high expectations of themselves, staff and pupils alike. Pupils, the majority of whom are from minority ethnic groups, approach their learning with enthusiasm and enjoyment. The progress they make throughout the school in reading, writing and mathematics is at least good.
- Leaders accurately identify areas for development by reviewing the information they have about pupils' performance. Their priorities include improving pupils' spelling and grammar, as well as targeting the attainment of White British pupils in writing, as this group underperformed in 2016. The positive results of their efforts to address these priorities show that leaders have demonstrated a clear capacity to bring about improvements in teaching and learning.
- Leaders' comprehensive design of the curriculum includes a clear programme of personal development. Pupils reflect well on their own learning, which positively impacts on their progress.
- Leaders motivate and engage staff through clear processes for supporting their professional development. Staff speak with passion about how they have been inspired by the examples set by school leaders. Each member of staff has a comprehensive, individualised plan of support to help them achieve clear and challenging targets. This has been the driving force in improving the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection.
- Middle leaders have contributed well to the design of curriculum subjects for which they have responsibility. They have laid good foundations for the new curriculum. However, some subjects are at differing stages of development, and actions taken by middle leaders have yet to clearly impact on pupils' progress.
- The additional funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is used well to help these pupils to achieve outcomes that are good or better. These outcomes are not always confined to academic achievement but include pupils' ability to communicate effectively and socialise with others.
- Leaders and governors are committed to addressing the individual needs of all pupils. This is exemplified by the excellent provision for pupils in the school's specialist unit for pupils who have behavioural, social and emotional, and mental health needs.
- The curriculum is supplemented by a number of extra-curricular activities, some of which are paid for by the school's physical education and sports funding. Other use of this funding includes pupils' participation in sporting events. The funding is successful in raising pupils' aspirations, because their successes in these competitions is building their confidence and showing them that they can achieve.
- The school ensures that pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted through an awareness of other religions, while encouraging them to show respect for the views of others. Pupils come alive when talking about the debates they have in their classrooms. They understand the principles of democracy, and this also contributes to a strong



awareness of British values, which are promoted through their topic books and frequent assemblies.

- Leaders have a very good grasp of the school's performance. However, their plans for improvement do not provide enough detail for leaders and governors to fully analyse the school's effectiveness. The plans lack clear, measurable targets needed to fully hold leaders to account. Although generally high, the targets set for pupils' performance are sometimes not aspirational enough for the progress of the most able, and the most able disadvantaged pupils.
- Leaders ensure that the funding for disadvantaged pupils is allocated appropriately. The impact on these pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics is highly successful in supporting them to reach age-related standards. However, there are few initiatives to accelerate the progress of the most able disadvantaged pupils to achieve the highest standards.

Governance of the school

- Governors set a clear vision for the school. They 'grow their own' middle leaders and teachers by providing strong development for staff and by having succession plans in place. Governors ensure that the management of the headteacher's performance is incisive by making the best use of external support to set ambitious targets for improvement.
- Governors support and challenge the headteacher well. They understand how well the school has done since the last inspection and have a good understanding of pupils' progress, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Governors are knowledgeable and communicate the ambition and aspirations for the school. However, they do not have a thorough enough knowledge about the effectiveness of the use of the funding for disadvantaged pupils. This is due to the lack of measurable targets in the plans for the use of this funding.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is a strong safeguarding culture in the school. The openness of staff ensures that pupils feel they can approach any member of staff to share their concerns. This ethos feeds into the way in which leaders tackle issues. Pupils are informed about events in the news, such as the recent Manchester bombing. Pupils find this ethos reassuring as it helps them to feel safe.
- Staff receive regular training and updates to make sure that they are aware of current guidelines and legislation. They feel confident about recognising any sign of distress and know how to report any concerns should they arise. Pupils know that they can approach staff with any concerns because of the excellent relationships that exist between staff and pupils in the school.
- Parents are kept well informed about how pupils are taught to keep themselves safe, so this can be reinforced at home.
- Leaders and governors have received training in the safer recruitment of staff. The



checks on all staff appointed to the school are comprehensive and well recorded.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Leaders have demonstrated a capacity to improve the quality of teaching and learning through the consistent approach developed in the teaching of mathematics. The very best learning is facilitated by teachers' excellent subject knowledge. This provides pupils with opportunities to develop their reasoning and problem-solving skills. Progress in mathematics by the end of key stage 2 is significantly above the national average. This is also evident in pupils' books.
- Accurate assessments inform teachers' planning and allow them to offer specific support to targeted pupils at the beginning of each new piece of learning. Assessments are then repeated at the end of each topic to assess pupils' progress. These assessments show good rates of progress for current pupils in reading and writing.
- Pupils clearly exhibit a love of learning. This is fostered by the excellent relationships they have with staff. Pupils receive constant encouragement from staff who provide consistent positive reinforcement. Teachers are supported by highly effective teaching assistants who skilfully intervene in pupils' learning, to prompt them to overcome any difficulties. This support is especially effective for those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The teaching of phonics is very effective. Younger pupils decode words with ease, which leads to them becoming increasingly proficient readers as they progress throughout the school.
- The most-effective learning takes place when teachers ask searching questions to challenge pupils' thinking. However, this is not consistently applied across the school in reading and writing.
- The most able pupils are not fully challenged in their written work to achieve the highest standards, because they complete similar work to other pupils, and questions do not stretch their thinking enough. When pupils are reading, texts are not matched to their interests, nor do they provide the challenge that the most able pupils require.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are humorous, lively and mature. They take pride in being part of this school. They are understanding of others' views, opinions and feelings.
- Pupils' personal development is enhanced by opportunities to contribute to the school, for example, as learning ambassadors or in leading assemblies. The responsibilities that pupils in the school's specialist resourced provision unit are given effectively boost their confidence and self-worth.
- Pupils have an excellent awareness of British values and clearly express what individual liberty and the rule of law mean to them. Pupils understand the principles of equality



and explain without prompting what it means. They are well equipped for life in modern Britain because of their excellent personal development.

- Pupils who are educated in the school's specialist resourced provision talk reflectively about how the school helps them to behave appropriately. They begin to understand the source of some of their frustrations and feelings because of the sympathetic and understanding approach of staff.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils are polite, confident and eloquent when talking about their school. Relationships between pupils and staff are excellent, and this ensures that pupils' behaviour is outstanding. There is no disruption to learning and pupils' conduct round the school and at breaktimes is exemplary. Leaders promote the 'personal integrity' of pupils, which emphasises the need for the highest standards of behaviour when 'no-one is looking'.
- Leaders manage any rare instances of poor behaviour very well. Pupils agree with staff that there is no bullying in school. However, leaders do not rest on their laurels. They closely monitor pupils' conduct to reinforce the school's anti-bullying policy through regular assemblies on this topic. Pupils reported that the use of derogatory language is rare.
- Attendance is above the national average. Strategies to reduce pupils' persistent absence are effective in supporting this very small proportion of pupils.
- Pupils in the specialist unit enjoy the activities they undertake, particularly their outdoor learning experience. This provides opportunities to socialise with their peers and participate in team-building skills. These activities help them to gain confidence and self-esteem. This positive reinforcement contributes significantly to improvements in their behaviour.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The school's commitment to, and excellent provision for, pupils' personal development is best exemplified in the outcomes for pupils in the resourced provision. From their starting points, and despite the complexity of their needs, pupils make outstanding progress. These pupils are becoming self-reflective and articulate. They integrate well with their peers when opportunities arise and speak highly of the support that staff provide.
- Pupils' attainment by the end of key stage 2 in reading and writing is broadly average, with attainment in mathematics being higher. However, their progress in all three subjects is good and in mathematics is significantly above average. Effective teaching ensures that pupils achieve good outcomes relative to their starting points.
- At the end key stage 1 in 2016, a greater-than-average proportion of pupils attained the expected age-related standard in reading, writing and mathematics. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the highest standards was only broadly average.



Standards have risen during this academic year.

- In 2016, Year 1 pupils' attainment in phonics was above average, and leaders are expecting standards to be higher this year.
- Leaders and teaching staff have successfully improved pupils' spelling, grammar and punctuation, and pupils make at least good progress by the end of key stage 2 in these areas.
- Leaders have ensured that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making good progress in the range of subjects that they study.
- Leaders have also effectively improved the progress of White British pupils in writing. These pupils now make good progress and the school's own information shows that their attainment in writing is in line with that of other groups of pupils in the school.
- Disadvantaged pupils are well supported, through the use of the additional funding, to achieve age-related standards. They make the same good progress in reading, writing and mathematics as other pupils in the school. However, there are few strategies to support the most able disadvantaged pupils to achieve the highest standards.
- Despite the many improvements in pupils' outcomes resulting from good leadership and provision, there are less successful outcomes still in the quality of pupils' handwriting and in the attainment of the most able pupils in reading and writing.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years leader has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school's provision. She has been responsible for developing the assessment and tracking of children's learning. This is comprehensive and identifies any gaps in learning at an early stage, so that appropriate interventions can be put in place. This is successful in ensuring that children make good progress towards achieving the early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year. However, the data shows that the most able children are not challenged in their learning to exceed beyond this level of achievement. This is borne out by inspection evidence.
- Outcomes at the end of the early years are good. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development is similar to that seen nationally, despite the fact that children enter the Nursery Year with skills below those typical for their age.
- Relationships between children and staff are excellent. Children exude the confidence that comes from feeling safe and secure in their environment. Children have access to a colourful and well-organised outdoor environment, in which they explore and investigate different areas of learning. Staff have high expectations of children's behaviour, which is reflected in their good level of engagement in activities.
- Teaching in the early years is good, although there is some variability in the quality of teaching between the two year groups. Children respond well to instructions and follow directions provided by staff. However, this emphasis on following instructions inhibits children from contributing their own ideas to their learning, particularly the most able children.
- Additional funding for disadvantaged children is used to provide support where they need to catch up. The support of teaching assistants for children's learning is highly



effective.

- Parents contribute to the initial assessments of children's capabilities, and they are actively involved with their child's education from this point forwards. Staff encourage parents to be involved with their children's education at home by providing workshops and appropriate homework. Parents are extremely positive about the early years provision and staff.
- All statutory welfare requirements in the early years are met, and the school's safeguarding policies and practice ensure that there is consistency in the way in which staff work throughout the school.
- Children end their time in the early years ready for the challenges of Year 1 as a result of the care and attention that they have received from the staff in the Nursery and Reception classes.



School details

Unique reference number	105397
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10003158

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	460
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sarah Starkey
Headteacher	Rachel Jacques
Telephone number	01617 405993
Website	www.bowkervale.manchester.sch.uk
Email address	admin@bowkervale.manchester.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	23 January 2012

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Since the last inspection, the school has established a specialist resourced provision for six pupils aged 7 to 11 who require support for behaviour and social, emotional and mental health needs.
- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is much higher than average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below



average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or education, health and care plan is larger than average.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.



Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in each class, which included joint observations with the headteacher.
- Inspectors examined a range of pupils' work in mathematics, writing and from across the curriculum.
- Inspectors heard individual pupils read from key stage 1 and key stage 2, and during activities in lessons.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils formally in groups and informally around the school.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils in the specialist resourced provision about the support that they receive for their behaviour and their work.
- Inspectors took account of the views of 16 parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.
- Inspectors made observations of pupils' behaviour during lessons, at playtimes, lunchtimes and when pupils were moving around the school.
- Meetings were held with governors, senior leaders and middle leaders.
- Inspectors considered a range of documentation, including the school's evaluation of its own performance and its areas for development.
- Inspectors looked at attendance and behaviour records.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding documentation, considered how this related to daily practice and spoke with staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Steve Bentham, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
David Deane	Ofsted Inspector
Doreen Davenport	Ofsted Inspector
Kathleen McArthur	Ofsted Inspector
Elaine White	Ofsted Inspector



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7 September 2017

Mr Charles Parfitt
Headteacher
Alma Park Primary School
Errwood Road
Levenshulme
Manchester
M19 2PF

Dear Mr Parfitt

Short inspection of Alma Park Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 19 July 2017, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in May 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You provide decisive and lucid leadership that puts pupils at the heart of all you do. You are quick to point out that this is made possible by the efforts of your extended leadership team. As a team, you have a realistic and sharp understanding of where the school's many strengths lie and the areas in which you need to make improvements. You go the extra mile to ensure that pupils feel safe and happy at school, so they can make good progress. Pupils relish the opportunities you provide them with, from caring teachers, 'forest schools' and the 'signing' choir to a wide range of sports. As one pupil said, 'There is never a dull moment at Alma Park.'

While pupils attain standards that are at least in line with national averages across early years and key stage 1, you are aware that attainment in reading at key stage 2 is not as good as it could be. You have analysed why this is and have put in place actions to tackle the issue. Reading is now the focus for improvement for the next academic year. The differences in progress between boys and girls are diminishing. A parent told me that her daughter 'starts and finishes the day with an enormous amount of enthusiasm for learning'.

The proportion of pupils working at greater depth has improved because teachers are typically providing more challenge. However, this is not yet consistent in all classes, particularly in Years 4 and 5. That said, you identify and act on underperformance in a swift and focused way, and support is in place to ensure that



improved gains are realised in those year groups.

Leaders and teachers have adopted a new assessment system that provides the information needed to track the progress that pupils are making. This system is becoming well established in reading, writing and mathematics. Although you are able to speak convincingly about the quality of provision in other subjects, the tracking and assessment procedures in these areas are less secure. You know that subject leaders need to embed assessment and tracking procedures in subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics. This will allow them to measure the progress being made in their subject areas more accurately.

You have driven forward many new initiatives to tackle the areas identified for improvement at your last inspection and, as a result, the progress that pupils now make is improving. The most able pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities now make faster progress than their peers nationally.

Governors have a good understanding of the school's performance and how this compares with that of other schools in the country. They use data well to ask challenging questions and provide effective support and challenge for leaders and staff. They keep abreast of their statutory duties, for example by ensuring that the website is fully compliant. They take their own professional development seriously and routinely undertake training to keep themselves up to date with recent changes in education policy and practice. Consequently, governors have the necessary skills and experience to be effective in their link roles. The guiding principle in all governors' decisions is 'How will it make a positive difference to pupils?'

Parents, pupils and the majority of staff are extremely positive about your leadership and management. Pupils' attendance, behaviour and attitudes to learning are exemplary and the curriculum is inspiring. As one pupil from early years pointed out succinctly, 'We work hard here. It's not easy using capital letters, full stops and finger spaces you know! But we do it because we want to do well.'

Safeguarding is effective.

All policies and practices are up to date, and staff receive regular training and support so they are aware of and alert to the need to keep children safe. Staff who are new to the school receive thorough training to ensure that they understand the school's systems and procedures. The checks that leaders undertake on the suitability of adults to work with children are robust. This is evident from recruitment procedures through to the quality of record-keeping and involvement with external agencies and parents.

Pupils I spoke to said that they feel safe at school. They consider bullying and name-calling to be rare events and they are confident that any member of staff will listen to them if they have concerns. Any notes posted by pupils into the 'Worry Box' are dealt with appropriately in a timely manner. Extensive work on staying safe online means that pupils know how to keep themselves safe from inappropriate adult attention. Parents said that this is a safe school that produces confident, well-



rounded children who have high aspirations for the future.

Inspection findings

- The inspection considered a number of key lines of enquiry. One of these focused on the accuracy of the school's self-evaluation. It is clear that you work very effectively with governors and know the school well. My visit did not uncover anything you were not aware of about teaching or pupils' outcomes. Action is already under way to tackle any relative weaknesses. Your carefully crafted action plan is an effective vehicle for leading the school towards further success. As soon as a shortcoming is spotted, you take appropriate action. For example, current progress information shows that there is still some work to be done to ensure that pupils make more rapid progress in reading so that they are in line with national averages, particularly at key stage 2. You have made this a priority and have already implemented a number of changes to address this. Capacity to bring about further improvement is strong.
- Checks on teaching are frequent and result in clear and accurate advice to help teachers improve. Teachers are supported well. They work well together to share good practice both within the school and with the local cluster of schools. Teachers make the most of the many opportunities provided through external training. Teaching assistants also benefit from appraisals and targeted training. However, some teaching assistants who completed the online survey said that they find the changes in their roles and responsibilities challenging.
- A second focus of the inspection was how well different groups of pupils are performing. Alma Park is a fully inclusive school. Pupils with hearing impairment are integrated into mainstream classes whenever possible. All pupils learn British Sign Language so they are able to communicate effectively with each other in classes and during play, so no one feels left out. It was inspiring to see all the key stage 2 pupils alongside the staff signing the words to a song in the hall.
- The progress that the most able pupils make is tracked and analysed with greater precision. More pupils are now working at greater depth, particularly in writing and mathematics. Interventions are timely and precise, with a strong focus on developing pupils' skills in working independently. As a result, pupils support each other well and are becoming highly adept at solving problems.
- A third line of enquiry considered the quality of early years provision. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development in the early years has risen consistently for the past three years. Assessment on entry is accurate and shows just how well children achieve from their low starting points. The provision in early years inspires pupils who leave ready for key stage 1, with secure foundations and inquisitive minds.
- Pupils' attainment is in line with national averages in mathematics and writing. However, the progress being made in reading by pupils in key stage 2 is not yet rapid enough to ensure that outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics combined are where they should be.
- Discussions with pupils, parents and staff made it abundantly clear that this is a happy, inclusive school where all pupils thrive. Pupils enjoy coming, as evidenced



by the improved rates of attendance and reduction in the number of pupils who are persistently absent. Pupils told me that there is very little, if any, bullying and that everyone is friendly. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and parents have full confidence in the school. At the time of the previous inspection, behaviour and safety were judged to be outstanding, and this inspection would indicate that this aspect of the school's provision has also been maintained.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the proportion of pupils making good progress in reading increases, particularly at key stage 2
- subject leaders' knowledge and understanding of how well pupils achieve in subjects other than English and mathematics are strengthened
- the effectiveness of the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics is consistently good in Years 4 and 5, so that combined outcomes are in line with national expectations.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Manchester. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Maggie Parker
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During this inspection, I met with you, your deputy and three assistant headteachers and four members of the governing body. I also spoke to a representative from the local authority. With you, I conducted a learning walk and visited most classes and had the opportunity to speak to pupils and see some of their work. I met with a group of pupils during the day, spoke with a number of parents at the school gates and took account of 72 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. I also considered 42 responses to the staff survey and one response to the pupil questionnaire. I scrutinised your assessment information, school improvement planning, the single central record and other safeguarding procedures and practices.