

St Agnes CofE Primary School

Hamilton Road, Longsight, Manchester M13 0PE

Inspection dates 17–18 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Children in Nursery and Reception classes make exceptional progress in developing their English speaking skills and make good progress in other aspects of their work.
- Pupils make outstanding progress through the school. By the end of Year 6 they attain well above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The quality of teaching is outstanding.
- The curriculum gives all pupils excellent opportunities to learn and do their best in all subjects.
- Pupils enjoy school tremendously. They behave exceptionally well at all times. They feel safe because they share trusting relationships with each other and the adults in school. Their attitudes to learning are outstanding.
- The school's senior leaders and subject managers are highly skilled. They check the school's day-to-day work very thoroughly and set the highest expectations for all staff.
- The governing body knows how the school works and fully recognises its importance to the community. It makes sure that the outstanding quality of the school's work is maintained.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 25 lessons and parts of lessons.
- Meetings were held with pupils, members of staff and members of the governing body. There were also discussions with parents and representatives from the local authority.
- In addition inspectors took account of the views of six parents who responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation including national assessment information and the school's own assessments, the school's self-evaluation of its work, local authority reports, curriculum information, samples of pupils' work and safeguarding documents.

Inspection team

Kevin Johnson, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Carol Machell	Additional Inspector
Louise Murphy	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a bigger-than-average-sized primary school in which all pupils are from minority ethnic cultural groups, mostly Pakistani and Bangladeshi.
- Most children, when they start in Nursery class, are unable to speak English.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium is above average.
- An average proportion of pupils have their special education needs provided through school action only.
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school exceeds the current floor standards, which are the minimum government expectation for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Allow pupils more opportunities to choose how they will do their work, so that they learn independently without always relying on directions from the teacher.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- When children enter the Nursery their ability to speak English and communicate effectively with others is very low. They are very keen to learn, and the excellent teaching and other help they get in both Nursery and Reception very quickly builds up their confidence. By the time they leave Reception children speak English very well. They know their letter sounds and try very hard to read and write by themselves.
- The good start they get continues in Years 1 and 2. Progress gathers pace because they are taught extremely well and expected to put their English speaking and literacy skills to good use. As a result attainment at the end of Year 2 shows very good improvement, and recent results are broadly in line with the national averages for reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils make rapid progress in Years 3 to 6. Each year many make better than expected progress, especially in developing literacy skills. This has a very good impact on their understanding of mathematical language also. By the end of Year 6 pupils attain levels in reading, writing and mathematics that are well above national averages. School assessments, evidence from pupils' work and their excellent attitudes to learning indicate that their outstanding achievement is on track to continue.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs also make excellent progress from their starting points. This is largely the result of having two teachers in every class. It means that pupils can be taught in small groups where work is carefully matched to their different needs. It also means that there is more teacher support to help them while they do their work.
- Although, for the majority of pupils, English is an additional language, their progress is not held back. Consistent high quality teaching, equally high expectations and the aspirations shared with pupils and their parents, ensure that sustained progress and outstanding achievement are constant goals. This includes pupils whose learning is supported by the pupil premium. The extra teachers funded ensure that boys, in particular, achieve the levels in writing that the school expects of them.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- The relentless emphasis and importance that all teachers place on developing pupils' language skills has a major impact on their outstanding achievement. Teachers explain very clearly to pupils the meaning of the language they need to use in the lesson so that they all understand clearly what they are learning. They encourage pupils to speak and discuss in groups to help them understand their work. This also helps pupils to write accurately across different subjects.
- In a mathematics lesson for example both teachers took time to explain very clearly and show Year 3 pupils the meaning of the words 'halving' and 'doubling' before setting carefully planned problems for different groups to solve. Pupils made rapid progress in their mathematical understanding as a result of the care teachers took to explain.
- Pupils' learning is more effective because of the way that teachers work as teams in their classrooms. It also means that teachers discuss lessons between themselves, evaluate their work and help each other. This keeps up the high standard of teaching.
- No time is lost in lessons. Expectations are always very high and everyone is clear about what to do. Each lesson builds on what pupils have learned before in order to achieve the best possible progress. A Year 1 literacy lesson got off to an excellent start, for example, when the teacher pointed clearly to the improvements needed from the previous work. The clear expectations were followed up by challenging games to improve spelling and help pupils make excellent progress in writing clear meaningful sentences.
- Teachers constantly check pupils' progress as they work. They ask searching questions to make sure pupils understand what they are doing. There is always a new challenge for pupils who

reach their targets in the lesson. Pupils are clear about how well they are doing because they frequently assess their own and others' work. Nevertheless, in some lessons pupils are not given the chance to tackle problems or find things out in their own way and this hampers the development of the skills they need to work independently.

- Pupils always enjoy lessons. Teachers make them interesting by using different exciting methods and resources for learning. Year 4 pupils thoroughly enjoyed a science lesson, for example, where they were able to build and test electrical circuits with bulbs, buzzers and switches. They were also delighted to discover which materials are insulators and which are conductors of electricity.
- Teachers and pupils respect one another. There is always a pleasant atmosphere in lessons, which helps pupils to feel valued and able to do their best.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent and they set their sights high for their own futures, 'doctor', 'dentist' and 'novelist' are some of the goals that pupils set for themselves. In lessons, pupils are always extremely attentive. They listen to teachers, respect each other's ideas and work very hard.
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is outstanding. Pupils fully understand what is acceptable and what is not. They are supportive of one another and show very tolerant and caring attitudes to others. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent.
- Pupils feel very safe in school. They know that the staff will support and care for them. They are also adamant that there is no bullying of any sort nor is there any racist or other kind of name-calling.
- They are aware of potentially dangerous situations outside of school, including misuse of the internet and mobile phones, and have very sensible attitudes about how to keep themselves and others safe.
- The vast majority of pupils arrive in time for school and attend regularly. Attendance is above average.
- Parents fully support the school and have every confidence that their children are safe and very well cared for.
- Pupils' excellent contribution to the everyday life and friendliness of the school sets the highly positive tone for their learning and achievement. They are extremely well prepared for transfer to their next schools.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher's vision for the school, which is to offer only the best for all of its pupils, is clearly embraced by all staff and members of the governing body. She and the other senior leaders keep an extremely high profile around the school to ensure that the school's vision is achieved.
- The quality of teaching is seen by all staff members as the most crucial thing that brings about pupils' outstanding performance. To that end, leaders actively support all teachers by observing their lessons, discussing ways to improve, providing expert guidance and training and helping teachers to support each other. These things result in teachers working as an energetic and successful team in which second best is not acceptable. Teachers' performance is measured particularly by the progress their pupils make in developing literacy skills.
- Since the previous inspection school leaders have worked very successfully with the local authority to deal with the issues identified and set further priorities. That the school has moved from good to outstanding is a clear measure of leaders' capacity to bring about and sustain improvement. It is a credit to the management skills of the headteacher and governors that the

school has been relocated to a new building without any disruption to pupils' progress.

- Outstanding achievement is underpinned by a curriculum that challenges pupils both academically and socially. The main focus is the teaching of literacy so that pupils can learn easily across all subjects. Many first-hand experiences gained through visits and visitors to school enrich pupils' opportunity to learn and develop their English. Recently, for example, pupils were able to impress the Bishop of the Diocese by their questions and comments about his work.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body knows the school well and values the role it plays in the community very highly. Links with all classes provide excellent understanding of the schools day-to-day work. It fulfils its important role in monitoring and accurately assessing the school's effectiveness and planning for future school developments.
 - The governors analyse and compare assessment information and question school leaders over the standards and progress of each group. Its sanctioning of additional teachers, funded through the pupil premium, has proven to be a highly successful action by ensuring that all pupils have equal opportunities to achieve their best.
 - Financial and other statutory responsibilities are carried out with smooth efficiency.
 - Safeguarding arrangements meet all requirements. Relevant training is given high priority and procedures are constantly monitored to ensure the continued well-being of pupils and staff.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	105500
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	402978

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	382
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Mohammed Akhtar
Headteacher	Mrs Nicola Clinton
Date of previous school inspection	5 June 2008
Telephone number	0161 2457131
Fax number	0161 2457137
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