

# Russell Scott Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106206
<b>Local authority</b>	Tameside
<b>Inspection number</b>	377377
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 April 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Denise Shields

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	410
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Shaun Ahern
<b>Headteacher</b>	Stephen Marsland
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 January 2007
<b>School address</b>	Clare Street Denton Manchester M34 3LQ
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## Introduction

### Inspection team

Denise Shields  
Heather Simpson  
Gordon Alston

Additional inspector  
Additional inspector  
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 18 teachers teaching 28 lessons or part-lessons. In addition, the inspection team made short visits to a few 'support lessons' where specialist help is provided by either a teacher or trained assistants. The inspectors listened to pupils read, from a range of different ages and abilities. Meetings were held with five groups of pupils, four members of the governing body and school staff, including senior and middle managers. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's strategic development plan, safeguarding documentation and minutes of governing body meetings. They analysed 133 parents' and carers' questionnaires and questionnaires completed by pupils and staff.

## Information about the school

This is a much larger than average-sized primary school. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those supported by school action plus is above average, whilst the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average. The school houses a designated resource provision for pupils with moderate learning difficulties (totalling nine places), serving a specific area in Tameside; currently this is attended by three pupils. The school meets the current floor standards, which are minimum standards expected by the government.

A new deputy headteacher was appointed in September 2011 and three new teachers joined the school recently. The school holds Investors in People and Healthy School Status and has achieved many awards, including the Activemark and the National Association of Advisors for Computers in Education (NAACE) award.

**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

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

### Key Findings

- This is a good school. It is not yet outstanding because, although teaching is good overall, there are some inconsistencies in its quality and progress in writing is not as strong as in reading. Its main strengths are: high levels of care and friendly relationships enabling pupils to grow in confidence and develop good life skills; and a varied curriculum that broadens pupils’ horizons and promotes their enjoyment of learning.
- Children have a good start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage and there is a rising trend in their attainment by the end of the Reception Year. Pupils who attend the resource provision are taught well and make good progress.
- Achievement is good. Since the last inspection, attainment has risen and is above average in English and mathematics. Pupils’ make at least good progress in reading and mathematics, but their progress in writing is not as strong. This is because pupils do not have enough opportunities to write and improve their spelling in a wide enough variety of circumstances.
- Almost all teaching is good, with examples of outstanding practice. Teachers carefully plan lessons that meet the needs and abilities of pupils. They often use well-chosen resources to ensure that learning is made fun. Sometimes, lessons do not have enough time for pupils to consolidate their learning. The rich curriculum promotes pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- Above-average levels of attendance reflect pupils’ good attitudes to learning. Behaviour over time is good. Pupils say they feel safe in the school, a view endorsed by almost all parents and carers.
- Leaders and managers at all levels are effective and are continually building on the schools well-established strengths at a good rate. Leaders have successfully led improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils’ performance.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the rate of progress made by pupils in writing by ensuring that:
  - pupils have more opportunities to practise their writing skills and improve their spelling in a wide range of contexts
  - there are more exciting themes to increase boys' eagerness to write
  - a whole school approach to teaching handwriting is developed
  - more chances are provided for pupils to improve their speaking skills, for example, through role-play, drama, discussion or group work.
- Remove inconsistencies in the quality of teaching so that far more of it is outstanding by ensuring that:
  - the outstanding practice that already exists in the school is shared
  - teachers always provide enough time for pupils to consolidate their learning either individually or in groups
  - all teachers use questioning that challenges pupils to think more deeply about their learning
  - marking and pupils' learning targets have a more positive impact on pupils' learning in all lessons.

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

Overwhelmingly, parents and carers state that their children make good progress and the school meets their child's particular needs. This is supported by inspection findings. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage enjoy learning. From typically well-below-average starting points on entry to Nursery, children make good progress and achieve well. Through Key Stages 1 and 2 progress continues at a good rate overall. By the end of Year 6, attainment is above average in English and mathematics. The performance of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including those who attend the designated resource provision, is nearly always better than that of similar pupils nationally, reflecting the high-quality care and well-targeted guidance they receive.

Progress for all groups of pupils is better than their peers nationally in reading and mathematics. This level of progress is not matched in writing, although it is satisfactory overall. This is because pupils do not have enough varied opportunities to practise and improve their writing, spelling and speaking skills. Many boys state that writing tasks do not always capture their interest and are sometimes 'too girly'. Consequently, the progress made by boys is weaker than girls.

All pupils read regularly to an adult in school. Pupils comment that they enjoy reading. Pupils' attainment in reading by the end of Year 2 is average. By the time they leave Year 6 it is above average. In all classes, pupils have many opportunities to use their information and communication technology (ICT) skills. Most pupils state that using their ICT skills aids their learning. By the end of Year 6 pupils have a secure understanding about how to use computers.

Pupils show an enthusiasm for learning. This is because teachers are skilled at adapting the curriculum to make learning fun to spark pupils' enthusiasm. Most pupils try their best at all times and concentrate well. This was apparent in a lesson for a group of lower-ability pupils, where they had to calculate the difference in the data shown on a bar graph. Because the lesson had been adapted to meet their abilities precisely, they all successfully rose to the challenge, tried extremely hard and learning was brisk. A small group then willingly took responsibility for their own learning using the computers to practise their multiplication skills. A second group, made huge strides in their learning as they developed different strategies to add two digit numbers to make one hundred; as the teacher put it 'to make cuddly numbers'. Pupils concentrated well because the tasks were made fun; they often helped each other and, with excellent guidance from the teacher, made at least good progress. Many pupils work well with a partner; this is helping them to become confident and independent learners. Sometimes, opportunities are missed to develop pupils' collaboration and speaking skills, for example, by working together in small groups to explore and record their own ideas.

### **Quality of teaching**

The quality of teaching is good with some that is outstanding. This judgement reflects the views of nearly all pupils and their parents and carers. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are taught well and make good progress; this lays a firm foundation for their future learning. Teaching in the designated resource provision is good and the few pupils who attend make good progress. In the best lessons, time is used well and the pace is lively. Ample opportunities are provided for pupils to talk in pairs or small groups: these successfully promote their speaking and listening skills. Skilful questioning deepens pupils' learning quickly, however, this is not consistent practice in all classes. In almost all lessons, teachers make good use of visual resources to bring learning alive and new technology is used effectively to capture pupils' interest. An example of this was observed in a lesson in Year 1, where the interactive white board was used well to re-enforce the basic concepts of adding tens and units together. The teacher displayed pictures of biscuit boxes to represent tens and, single biscuits as units; challenge was added to the activity as more boxes or single cakes were displayed. Pupils' attention was captured. Adept questioning, such as, 'how do you know?' and 'can you explain?' extended pupils' knowledge. Good use of self-assessment enabled the teacher to check their understanding. Pupils greatly enjoyed the activity and their progress was good.

In a few lessons teachers talk for too long, limiting the time that pupils have to engage in individual and group work and consolidate their learning. Generally, teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to supporting all pupils but in particular, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and this adds to the quality of learning for all pupils. In the best practice, marking is helpful and helps pupils to improve. Pupils have a raft of learning targets; in some lessons, as many as four related to just one activity; this dilutes the clarity of the information pupils need to improve their learning in lessons.

In all classes, relationships are strong so pupils are happy to ask for help if they should need it. All adults use praise well to build pupils' confidence and esteem. Teachers encourage pupils to listen carefully to the views of their peers and value

their opinions. Throughout the school basic mathematical and reading skills and strategies are taught well. Generally writing skills are taught effectively, but there is no consistent approach to teaching handwriting. For example, many pupils in upper Key Stage 2 do not yet join letters and this slows the pace at which they can write; a minority still write in pencil.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage form trusting relationships with adults. They behave well and demonstrate relatively advanced personal and social skills by the end of the Reception Year. Pupils are sociable and polite. A very few parents and carers expressed concerns about bullying and behaviour. Nearly all, however, are very satisfied with behaviour. The inspection findings show that behaviour over time is good. Despite the restrictions on the space outdoors, most pupils play well together during lunch and playtimes. Pupils understand and accept the need for rules and enjoy the praise they receive from their teachers and other adults. In discussions with different groups of pupils, they are confident that any occasional misbehaviour is managed effectively and so their progress in lessons is not disrupted. The school uses the expertise of the learning mentor and a range of external agencies to provide excellent support for a very few pupils experiencing difficulties that affect their behaviour or emotional well-being. In many instances this has led to striking improvements in both their self-confidence and behaviour.

Overwhelmingly, pupils say that they feel safe in school. Pupils report that there is always an adult to turn to if they are troubled or sad and that instances of any type of bullying are very rare. This is confirmed by the school's records. The very few incidents of bullying have been dealt with to the satisfaction of everyone involved. Many pupils take on responsibilities, such as acting as playground buddies or working to save the planet as members of the eco-committee. There is a long-established school council which makes a good contribution to many aspects of school life.

### **Leadership and management**

Innovative leadership by the headteacher, supported by able senior and middle leaders and an effective governing body have moved the school forward at a good pace. Teamwork is strong and morale high. Members of the governing body know the school well, monitor its work and are fully involved in determining its strategic direction. Good school improvement planning reflects careful evaluation of the school's strengths and areas to improve. Professional development is closely aligned to school priorities. Outstanding practice in teaching has been shared with colleagues through 'learning three's' (a co-coaching programme) and was appreciated by staff, but has not taken place this year. Strong partnerships have been established with other local schools and organisations. This enables the school to access a greater range of experiences for pupils to enhance their learning and to secure improvements in teaching and learning.

The headteacher and whole staff team ensure that a good climate for learning exists. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. Pupils benefit from an extremely caring and supportive environment in which everyone is encouraged to succeed. The curriculum is good. It is broad and balanced and caters for pupils' needs and

interests. Events such as the wide range of trips and visitors, charitable fundraising and involvement in the local and wider community contribute greatly to the pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school's procedures for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements.



## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



25 April 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Russell Scott Primary School, Manchester, M34 3LQ**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave the inspection team when we inspected your school. A particular thank you to those of you who filled in the questionnaires, were keen to talk with us and welcomed us to your lessons. Please thank your parents and carers who also filled in our questionnaires.

We saw how proud you are of your school and you are right to be so, as yours is a good school. The youngest children get a good start to their education in the Nursery and Reception classes. In Key Stages 1 and 2, good teaching helps you to achieve well, to make good progress and to attain standards in English and mathematics that are above average. You also have good skills in using computers. Many lessons are fun and you told us how much you like learning. Other activities, such as the many visits and visitors help to build your self-confidence. All of you benefit from high levels of care which is one reason why your behaviour is good. Your parents and carers like the school as well and are happy with it. We are pleased that you feel safe and say that bullying of any kind is very rare. Your headteacher, other staff and the governing body know the school well and they are good at finding ways to make your school even better.

These are some things we think will help your school to improve further. We think that teaching could be even better by sharing the best practice, by always giving you time to practise your skills in lessons and ensuring that marking and learning targets always show you concisely how to improve your learning. We also think that in all classes you should have plenty of enjoyable chances to improve your speaking, writing and spelling skills further. We have also asked your teachers to find exciting topics for boys to write about too.

You can all play your part in helping the school to get even better by continuing to work hard. We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Denise Shields  
Lead inspector

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