

St Winifred's Roman Catholic Primary School, Stockport

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106129
Local Authority	Stockport
Inspection number	355888
Inspection dates	29–30 November 2010
Reporting inspector	David Halford

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	369
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cllr Anthony O'Neill
Headteacher	Mrs P Smith
Date of previous school inspection	9 July 2008
School address	Didsbury Road Stockport Cheshire SK4 3JH
Telephone number	0161 432 5782
Fax number	0161 432 5782
Email address	headteacher@st-winfreds.stockport.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors who visited 15 lessons. The inspectors observed 13 teachers and held discussions with governors, staff, groups of pupils and the School Improvement Partner. They observed the school's work, and looked at policies, records of meetings, assessment information and curriculum planning. In addition, 73 responses to the parents' and carers' questionnaires were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Pupils' progress and their ability to work independently.
- If teaching and learning had improved since the last inspection.
- Whether there was sufficient challenge for more able pupils.
- The safety and well-being of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

This is a larger-than-average sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is also below average. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs. Most pupils are White British. Since the last inspection the school has been the subject of a significant building programme, which is still continuing. The school has gained a number of awards including Activemark, Healthy Schools Status, Eco-Schools and the International Schools 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

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. Pupils are cared for outstandingly well and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is particularly strong. The care of pupils is a major feature of the school's work and this is appreciated by the vast majority of parents and carers. One parent commented, 'All my children have enjoyed their time at this school. There is a fantastic ethos and a very strong community which we are proud to be part of.' Good elements of personal development are central to the school's success. Good leadership and management ensure that the provision made for the pupils is effective. Good teaching is promoting good learning throughout the school from the children's first steps in the Reception year until they leave at the end of Year 6. The school has successfully improved since the last inspection. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and its capacity for further improvement is good.

Pupils make good progress throughout the school from starting points in Reception which are typically as expected for their age. As a result, pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 is above average in English, mathematics and science. There are examples of high-quality marking which enable pupils to have a clear understanding of how to improve their work. All staff do not, however, apply this good practice consistently across the school. The curriculum is particularly strong in promoting pupils' basic skills. However, it does not have a strong enough focus on providing creative opportunities for pupils to learn when links are established between subjects and on developing pupils' skills in information and communication technology (ICT) in a systematic manner. The school leaders are at an early stage in developing the role of middle leaders in some subjects so they can make a greater contribution to school improvement.

Pupils behave well and enjoy coming to school; this results in their above-average levels of attendance. They feel safe and the way in which they adopt healthy lifestyles is good. A wide range of enrichment activities extend the curriculum and contribute well to pupils' learning. The effectiveness of the safeguarding procedures is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency in the quality of marking, so that all pupils understand how to improve their work.
- Improve the school's curriculum by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to learn through the use of creative links between subjects
 - developing pupils' ICT skills more systematically in different lessons.

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- Develop the role of all middle leaders in all subjects so they can make a significant contribution to school improvement.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enjoy their work in lessons and are keen to do well. Pupils are keen to talk about the activities they take part in. As a result, they grow in confidence and self-esteem and learn to work collaboratively and independently. This was seen to good effect, for example, in lessons in Year 6. Pupils worked effectively together in a Year 3 lesson about the Romans, and pupils showed much enjoyment in a Year 2 lesson in French.

Pupils' achievement is good. The pace of learning and the rate of progress pupils are making are good and this is the case for all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils have good literacy and numeracy skills and these develop well as they progress through school. Although a relatively small number of the more able pupils attain the higher level in writing by the end of Year 2, most pupils progress well to the higher level in writing by the end of Year 6. Most have good communication skills and they are well-prepared for the next stage in their education.

The pupils have a good understanding of how to keep healthy and they are developing skills which will assist them in adult life well. School councillors take their responsibilities seriously and know that they are making a difference to the work of the school. The Catholic ethos of the school is central to the work of the school and it promotes the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development particularly strongly.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

There have been improvements since the previous inspection in the quality of teaching. It is good overall and lessons seen varied between satisfactory and outstanding. Teachers' questioning skills are generally good and in the best lessons pupils are managed effectively, co-operate well, show an interest and are engaged with their work. However, opportunities are sometimes missed to engage pupils in class discussions about their work. On occasions, activities are not matched closely enough to the needs of pupils, some of whom soon finish the tasks set, as too much time is allowed for them to complete their work; the pace of learning then slackens. But overall, progress in most lessons is good. The good progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is because of early identification of their needs which results in prompt and effective support from teachers and skilled teaching assistants.

The curriculum is strong in promoting pupils' basic skills and is widely enriched by extra-curricular activities and good partnership arrangements to broaden provision. However, many subjects are taught in isolation from each other and pupils have limited opportunities to learn when subjects are creatively linked together to enhance the relevance of the work and to 'bring the curriculum to life'. The care, guidance and support pupils receive is very strong and central to the improvement the school has made. Effective links with outside agencies mean more vulnerable pupils are supported well.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders, managers and staff are ambitious for success. Expectations of pupils are high and good use is made of challenging targets to raise attainment. Purposeful leadership has provided the direction and drive to secure improvement since the last inspection. Subject leadership is well established and effective in literacy and numeracy. Currently, subject leadership is not fully established across all subjects and some middle leaders are not yet fully involved in securing school improvement. Christian values and the promotion of equal opportunities are central to its work. This results in good progress being made by different groups of pupils. Rare instances of discrimination are tackled promptly and effectively. The school has a good understanding of the religious, ethnic and social characteristics of the community it serves and it has good links with a range of community groups. The work of the school is having a positive influence on community cohesion both within school and beyond. Initiatives to strengthen links with families are more variable. Links with most parents and carers are good. Members of the governing body are well informed and monitor the school's performance closely. There is a good balance between offering encouragement and support whilst also providing challenge to school leaders. Members of the governing body have a good understanding of the areas in which the school needs to improve further. Safeguarding procedures are effective and safe working is evident in daily routines. The school gives good value for money.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle quickly into routines. A warm, caring ethos prevails and every child is supported and cared for well. Adults are skilled in promoting children's good behaviour and consideration towards others. Independence is encouraged and many children enjoy playing without adult direction for considerable periods of time. Relationships with parents and carers are positive. Children enjoy learning; for example, in one session they were very excited to discover that Father Christmas had visited their classroom in the night. Children made and wrapped presents before taking them to the 'sorting office'. Outdoors, children enthusiastically built a Polar Express to take presents to Santa, before coming in to warm their hands in front of the 'fire'. All staff are skilled in knowing when to observe, when to intervene, and how to interact with children to enhance their learning.

Leadership is strong. Leaders have a good awareness of the strengths of the provision and where further improvements can be made. For example, a focus for the coming year is rightly on further developing the teaching of phonics. By the end of the year children have made good progress from their starting points.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation	2

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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Stage

Views of parents and carers

A large majority of the parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire were entirely supportive of the school and expressed an appreciation for all the school does for their children. Some highlighted their appreciation of the school's care and concern for families when coping with times of significant difficulty. The inspection team agrees with the supportive comments made. A small minority of parents and carers expressed concerns about the management of the school, its lack of response to parents' suggestions and the challenges experienced by the school during its building work. A very small number of long letters accompanied some of these responses. The majority of parents and carers who expressed concerns indicated that they were happy with the school's provision for their children and felt that they were making good progress. The inspection team judged the school's leadership and management to be good, but suggested to the school's leaders that they might seek ways to improve communication with parents and carers to ensure that all were fully informed about school developments.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Winifred's Roman Catholic Primary School, Stockport to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 73 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 369 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	52	71	20	27	0	0	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	42	58	25	34	5	7	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	27	37	39	53	4	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	29	40	39	53	2	3	2	3
The teaching is good at this school	30	41	37	51	3	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	31	42	36	49	4	5	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	35	48	33	45	3	4	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	28	38	32	44	8	11	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	32	44	36	49	3	4	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	29	40	34	47	2	3	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	29	38	52	7	10	3	4
The school is led and managed effectively	19	26	35	48	5	7	8	11
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	33	45	37	51	1	1	2	3

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



3 December 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Winifred's Roman Catholic Primary School, Stockport, Stockport, SK4 3JH

My colleagues and I really enjoyed our recent visit to your school. Thank you very much for your warm welcome and for looking after us so well. You were very helpful in lessons and when we asked you to explain what you were doing. You were also very friendly around the school. Particular thanks should go to everyone who spoke with us and who helped us to understand why it is that you enjoy going to your school so much.

St Winifred's Roman Catholic Primary School is a good and improving school, with some really interesting work taking place. The staff care for you all very well and make sure you feel safe and secure. Your headteacher and her staff manage your school well. I shall remember my lesson with the Rouge, Jejune and Vert groups and your interesting questioning in Year 6, as well as the discussion I had with those of you who shared part of their lunchtime with me.

When we visit schools we also look for things which will help each school to get even better. We have asked the school to do a number of things. We think your teachers should provide more creative lessons where subjects are linked together and to help you to develop your skills in ICT. We also want teachers who are taking on responsibilities for different subjects to be more involved in improving the work of the school. We also want all your teachers to mark your work very carefully and tell you how to improve.

Thank you once again for all your help when we made our visit to you. We send you all our very best wishes for the future. We do hope that you continue to enjoy learning as much as you do at the moment.

Yours sincerely

David Halford

Lead inspector

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