

St Margaret's CofE (C) Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124268
Local Authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	363978
Inspection dates	25–26 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Joanne Olsson HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	244
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Dutton
Headteacher	Andrew Black
Date of previous school inspection	10 June 2008
School address	Knutton Road Wolstanton Newcastle-under-Lyme ST5 0HU
Telephone number	01782 297760
Fax number	01782 297764
Email address	office@st-margarets.staffs.sch.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

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

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011



Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. In total, eight teachers were observed over seventeen lessons. Inspectors spent ten hours gathering first-hand evidence on the quality of teaching. Meetings were held with different groups of pupils, representatives of the governing body and senior leaders and managers. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including arrangements for safeguarding, information about pupils' attainment and progress, the school's improvement plan and pupils' books. They considered the responses to questionnaires from staff, pupils and 162 parents and carers.

Information about the school

This is an average size junior school. Most pupils are from White British heritage. The number of pupils from minority ethnic groups is lower than the national average as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. 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 and the number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is well below average. Although pupil numbers have fallen in recent years, the number of pupils who move into and out of the school throughout the year is lower than found nationally. The school has received a number of awards, including: Basic Skills Award, Arts Mark, Healthy School Award and the Dyslexia Friendly School Award. The school houses a privately run provision, Southlands Crèche, which is subject to a separate inspection. The latest report is available on the Ofsted website. The school has exceeded the government's floor targets for academic performance in each of the last three years.

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	2
Achievement	2
Teaching	2
Leadership and management	2
Behaviour and safety	1
Does the school adequately promote the pupils' well-being?	Yes
Does the school adequately promote community cohesion?	Yes
Does the school provide value for money?	Yes

Key findings

Pupils' well-being, enjoyment and learning are at the heart of this good school. The success of this cohesive community stems from warm and caring relationships, pupils' outstanding behaviour and an unrelenting focus on recognising and celebrating the talents and achievements of all pupils. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. The positive views of almost all pupils are summed up in the comment 'I am proud to be a part of St Margaret's'.

Pupils enter Year 3 with skills and knowledge that are typically higher than expected for their age. They make consistently good progress and leave Year 6 with attainment levels that are above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.

Pupils' achievement is good because teachers use assessment information to plan relevant activities that meet the needs of most pupils. Pupils' work is conscientiously marked. In writing, teachers provide pupils with effective guidance on how to improve their work further. This practice is less well developed in mathematics and across other areas of the curriculum.

All pupils display positive attitudes to learning. Their considerate and respectful behaviour to adults and to each other ensures all areas of the school are welcoming and learning is rarely disrupted. Pupils say they feel safe and are confident issues they raise are dealt with effectively.

The headteacher, ably assisted by an increasingly strong leadership team, has driven improvements since the last inspection. Secure systems for monitoring teaching mean the school has an accurate understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Assessment systems are used appropriately to check the progress made by all pupils,

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

but this information is not used well enough to identify the precise actions needed to enable all pupils to make greater progress. Nonetheless, the school's successful track record means it is well placed to secure further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so a greater proportion matches the best in the school by:
 - systematically sharing good practice across the school
 - ensuring teachers' marking consistently provides clear guidance for pupils on how to improve their work, particularly in mathematics and across other subject areas
 - ensuring teachers clearly identify the exact steps all pupils, particularly the most-able, need to take in order to make greater progress.

- Develop the assessment system so it is used as an effective leadership tool in driving school improvement and securing stronger rates of progress for all groups of pupils by:
 - evaluating the information on pupil progress to identify any gaps in school provision
 - using the information on pupil progress to plan the precise next steps needed for the school to further improve.

Main report

Pupils say they enjoy school and this is reflected in their high attendance levels. They display exceptional attitudes to learning. They apply themselves well and work with enthusiasm and at a good pace. In a Year 4 lesson pupils bubbled with excitement as they worked in small groups to devise similes to describe common objects. They enjoyed the challenge and constantly tried to improve their work by carefully listening to each other and sharing ideas. In a Year 6 lesson there was excellent collaboration between pupils as they used their prior learning to discuss the similarities between two different texts, demonstrating their ability to evaluate and appreciate challenging literature. Such activities enable pupils to become confident, articulate and independent learners who are prepared to work hard and persevere until they achieve success. As a result, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their school career.

Pupils' academic achievement is good overall. Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is consistently above average. Although attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 fell slightly in 2010, pupils made better progress from their starting points than in previous years. In addition, a greater proportion of pupils attained the higher levels in reading and writing. Work in lessons, in books and the school's information on pupil progress confirm that pupils are making good progress and there is little

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

variation in the achievement of different groups. Pupil progress is stronger in writing. This is because they are able to write for a variety of purposes across a range of subjects. Pupils make better than expected progress in reading because they are interested in books and have developed the necessary stamina to read for sustained periods of time and persevere with challenging texts. They read with fluency and can use prior learning to tackle unfamiliar words and phrases. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make equally good progress as their classmates. This is due to effective planning and the support they receive from additional adults during groups activities.

Pupils say they feel safe at all times in school and that incidents of bullying are extremely rare. Pupils are confident that any issues they raise are taken seriously and dealt with swiftly. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers agree their children feel safe in school. Most agree that bullying is effectively dealt with. Pupils have a well developed sense of how to keep themselves safe, for example, they talk with confidence about e-safety and how they protect themselves at home and school when using personal computers. Evidence gained during the inspection indicates pupils' behaviour in classrooms and around the school is exemplary. Scrutiny of school-based records confirms pupils' behaviour is of a consistently high standard over time. Almost all pupils, parents and carers agree that behaviour is good in the school. Pupils' enjoyment of learning, the rich curriculum, positive relationships and pupils' own mature attitudes all contribute to their outstanding behaviour.

Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is strong. This is evident in their enthusiasm for learning; their well developed sense of right and wrong and their commitment to fund-raising activities. Pupils are proud of their school and are eager to accept responsibilities such as school councillors and prefects. They have a good understanding of different cultures.

Trusting relationships result in calm and safe classrooms in which pupils are willing to 'have a go'. Teachers' plan lively and interesting activities which capture the pupils' interest and fire their enthusiasm for learning. Teachers have high expectations and good subject knowledge. They provide ample time and opportunity for pupils to work independently and collaboratively to practise skills and consolidate knowledge. In the best lessons, learning is effectively modelled and teaching is well structured and precise, so that pupils learning moves forward at a great pace. Although teachers ensure pupils know what they are learning, there is insufficient emphasis on identifying the exact steps all pupils and in particular the more-able need to take in order to make accelerated progress. Reading is systematically taught in all classes. Good teaching during small group reading activities ensures pupils are able to develop effective strategies to help them become confident and independent readers. In some classes, teachers provide independent reading tasks which extend pupils' comprehension skills and develop an appreciation of a wider range of literacy.

In addition to the clear focus on pupils' academic achievement, there is an unrelenting emphasis on promoting pupils skills and attributes in other subject areas. A rich and varied curriculum, a good range of visits and visitors plus a plethora of

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

extra curricular opportunities mean pupils learn through an interesting, exciting and balanced curriculum.

Strong leadership, a clear vision and a determined drive for improvement has ensured a common sense of purpose amongst the school community. As a result all leaders, managers, teachers and governors place pupils' needs at the centre of all that they do. Expert subject knowledge and focused professional development has enabled senior leaders and managers to successfully secure improvements in teaching so that pupils make consistently good progress from their starting points. Regular observation of teaching is robust and incisive, leading to clear whole school and individual priorities. Staff morale is extremely high as each adult has a clear understanding of their role in promoting pupils' progress and well-being. Subject leaders share their expertise on a regular basis but the opportunity for teachers to systematically learn from each other is under-developed. The systems for assessing pupils' progress and checking on their performance across the school have improved considerably since the previous inspection. As a result, the school knows its pupils well and teachers are able to plan to meet individual needs. However, senior leaders and managers do not use the information this generates well enough to tailor school improvement priorities with sufficient precision.

Members of the governing body have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and offer an appropriate level of support. All forms of discrimination are tackled appropriately and the school is a harmonious community. There is little variation in pupils' achievement and pupils of all abilities have equal access to learning opportunities. Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements.

Effective leadership, secure systems for monitoring the work of the school, sound strategic planning and a common drive for improvement means the school has successfully tackled weaknesses identified in the previous inspection. These improvements have led to stronger teaching and accelerated pupil progress. As a consequence of this successful track record the school has good capacity to sustain further improvement.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Margaret's CofE (C) Junior School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 162 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 244 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Q1 My child is happy at school	135	83	25	15	1	1	1	1
Q2 My child feels safe at school	144	89	17	10	0	0	1	1
Q3 The school helps my child to achieve as well as they can	131	81	28	17	1	1	1	1
Q4 The school meets my child’s particular needs	124	77	35	22	2	1	1	1
Q5 The school ensures my child is well looked after	138	85	23	14	0	0	1	1
Q6 Teaching at this school is good	135	83	26	16	0	0	1	1
Q7 There is a good standard of behaviour at this school	118	73	41	25	1	1	1	1
Q8 Lessons are not disrupted by bad behaviour	92	57	63	39	2	1	1	1
Q9 The school deals with any cases of bullying well	104	64	43	27	2	1	1	1
Q10 The school helps me to support my child’s learning	115	71	44	27	1	1	1	1
Q11 The school responds to my concerns and keeps me well informed	116	72	43	27	2	1	1	1
Q12 The school is well led and managed	138	85	23	14	0	0	1	1

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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see 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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 achievement of all pupils. ■ Behaviour and safety. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The effectiveness of leadership and management. <p>and taking into consideration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ how well the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
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.



27 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Margaret's CofE (C) Junior School, Woolstanton, ST5 0HU

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave the inspection team when we recently came to inspect your school. We all enjoyed our time at St Margaret's and we found it a pleasure to talk with you, to look at your work and listen to views about your school. We consider St Margaret's to be a good school. These are the main things we found out about your school.

- Your achievement in reading, writing and mathematics is good. This is because you make good progress during your time at school. Your attainment is above average in all three of these subjects.
- You enjoy school; feel very safe and trust the adults who care for you.
- You think bullying rarely happens and you are confident it is quickly dealt with by adults in the school.
- You have very good attitudes to learning; you are considerate to others; you support each other in lessons and you are willing to work hard and try your best in all that you do. Your behaviour in classrooms and around the school is outstanding.
- Teaching is good at your school. Teachers make your learning interesting and fun. They make sure you learn about lots of different subjects and they expect you to work hard!

In order to make your school even better we have asked the governing body to work with the headteacher and staff to focus on a few key areas. We have asked them to help you make even better progress in all areas of your learning by using the information they have on how well you are achieving more effectively. We have also asked them to make sure all teaching is as good as the best in the school.

We are sure that with such positive personal qualities you will all help your teachers and headteacher to further improve the school. Please accept our best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Joanne Olsson
Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.**