

# St Herbert's RC School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105722
<b>Local Authority</b>	Oldham
<b>Inspection number</b>	355826
<b>Inspection dates</b>	4–5 April 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Georgiana Sale

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>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	305
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Rev P McKie
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs M Sainsbury
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	10 December 2007
<b>School address</b>	Edward Street Chadderton, Oldham Lancashire OL9 9SN
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 19 lessons and saw 11 staff teach. They held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation, including records of pupils' progress, the school improvement plan, assessment information, policies and samples of pupils' work. Information about safeguarding was evaluated. Inspectors also took into account the views of staff and pupils expressed in questionnaires. They received and analysed 77 questionnaires from parents and carers.

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

- How well the school monitors the performance of all pupils and how effectively data are used to plan lessons so that pupils make good progress.
- How good children's outcomes are in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- How effectively leaders and managers, including those in 'acting' roles, identify and then address areas of weakness.

## Information about the school

St Herbert's RC School is slightly larger than the average-size primary school. The majority of pupils come from the local parish. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than average.

The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average overall. However, more pupils are joining the school at the very early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, but the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The school has gained Healthy School status, is a Bronze Eco-School, and has the Platinum Tooth Award, the Activemark and the Artsmark.

The school has recently opened a new Learning Centre and an Early Years Foundation Stage unit. There are significant absences in the school's senior management team with staff temporarily taking responsibility for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher positions.

**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

St Herbert's is a good school. It is a strong, cohesive and safe community where the warmth and good pastoral care given by the staff provide a strong sense of family and belonging. Pupils show great care and support for each other and their good attendance and good behaviour contribute to them making good progress in class. The school has the overwhelming support of the parents and carers who make approving comments, such as: 'St Herbert's has a very welcoming atmosphere; my child loves coming to school and is developing extremely well.' Pupils say that they enjoy school and are happy here.

Children join Reception with skills and knowledge broadly similar to those found nationally and they are given a sound start to their education. Although there are some restrictions on their learning outdoors in the Reception and Nursery classes, children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. In Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils continue this good progress to attain above-average standards in the core subjects of English and mathematics by the end of Year 6. Pupils have good attitudes to learning. These positive attributes give the pupils a good start to their secondary schooling and to their future well-being. Pupils enjoy learning because teaching is good and lessons are fun.

Pupils get on well with their friends and adults, and feel safe. They understand well what they need to do to stay healthy and how to keep themselves safe. The analysis of data about pupils' attainment and progress is good in English and mathematics, so that staff know about the progress being made and whether pupils are on track to meet their targets. However, pupils' learning and the teaching and tracking of progress in information and communication technology are less strong. Overall, the curriculum is good because it includes all pupils and is relevant to their needs. A good range of activities designed to enrich pupils' education that include visits, visitors and clubs, makes a significant contribution to the curriculum and to pupils' good personal development.

The school has an accurate knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses. Well-targeted work has brought improvements in pupils' performance, for example, in English, particularly in the quality of pupils' writing. Leaders recognise where more needs to be done, for example, that the use of the new Early Years Foundation Stage unit needs to improve so that children have more free access to the outdoor provision, and that the governing body needs to review policies and procedures in a more consistent manner. The headteacher and all staff form a strong cohesive team. They are dedicated and want to improve their practice. These strengths give the school a good capacity to improve further.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in information and communication technology by:
  - ensuring that all teachers have an accurate knowledge of National Curriculum levels in information and communication technology
  - using this accurate knowledge to plan and provide suitably challenging learning opportunities for all pupils across all years.
- Ensure that policies and school procedures are systematically reviewed by the governing body.
- Ensure that children in the Early Years Foundation Stage always have access to outdoor provision by:
  - teachers making sure that this element is in all their plans
  - using staff more flexibly.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils say they enjoy school, and this is reflected in their good attendance, behaviour and progress. They are mature and confident learners and have very positive attitudes to work. They enjoy being challenged with the variety of work that they are given. They enter the school with broadly average skills. The work seen in lessons and in pupils' books confirms that, by the end of Year 6, attainment is above average and the progress of all the pupils is good. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive highly individualised and robust support, which enables them to make good progress.

Many pupils show their good understanding of healthy lifestyles by eating a healthy lunch and the vast majority participate in out-of-school physical activity clubs. The highly positive ethos of the school is a good testament to the pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding, which is well planned for through numerous opportunities both in and out of school. The school council has helped to decide on spending for play equipment and all pupils help in raising funds for charity. Pupils have links with the wider community through the church, and international links with Gambia. They leave the school with well-developed skills in literacy and numeracy, but these are not so strong in information and communication technology. They also have the confidence and personal qualities they need to succeed at secondary school.

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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*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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?

A key strength in the effective teaching and learning is the warm relationships between staff and pupils. Classrooms are busy and purposeful places where pupils work well alone or in groups. Teachers carefully assess pupils' work, and use targets to set work which is enjoyable and challenging for most pupils. Marking is thorough and gives very clear feedback on how to improve, especially in English and mathematics.

All pupils benefit from the well-planned curriculum that includes many cross-curricular opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills. For example, effective writing was evident in Year 6 pupils' diaries, written as if by a Victorian servant. Opportunities to practise and apply their information and communication technology skills are less evident. Their experiences are further enhanced by a good range of out-of-school clubs that are well attended.

Good pastoral care provides a strong backbone for the work of the school and is much appreciated by pupils and parents and carers. The school has strong, effective partnerships with other professionals to give timely, targeted support when necessary to remove any barriers to learning for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or personal difficulties, so that all these pupils make good progress. Transition arrangements for pupils leaving or joining the school are very effective and ensure that children have a smooth transition into the Reception class and for pupils later, to high school.

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*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, middle managers, including those in acting roles, and the governing body, have ensured improvements in pupils' achievement despite a time of significant staff absence. Accurate school self-evaluation means that development priorities are correctly identified. The headteacher has taken focused actions, which together with the regular, effective use of data to evaluate and analyse the school's performance, have ensured that the impact of initiatives can be measured accurately. The headteacher, for example, has taken successful action to improve the overall quality of teaching and learning and the curriculum.

The school promotes community cohesion well. Interaction with the local community is strong and the church plays a fundamental role in the life of the school. Pupils have a developing awareness of global issues and through linked schools, engage with children from different ethnic groups and different school settings.

The school works well with parents and carers and makes good use of external agencies to make sure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well, in and out of class. Consequently, these pupils make good progress. The new Learning Centre is providing further help to parents and carers, for example, with adult phonics classes, so that they can help with their children's reading, and family fitness classes. The school takes strong steps to break down any barriers to achievement. It is inclusive and promotes equality of opportunity well, taking steps to avoid any discrimination.

At the time of the inspection, safeguarding procedures were satisfactory. The governing body is well informed, has relevant expertise and plays an active role in school life. However, it is not systematically reviewing school policies and procedures. The school gives good value for money.

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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children have a sound start to their education and progress well. By the end of the Reception Year, the majority of children have exceeded the nationally expected level. They show great interest in their learning and respond well to the secure class routines. They play and learn together well and show great respect for each other. Teachers use a range of teaching strategies to make effective use of the indoor learning resources. However, children do not yet have free-choice access to outdoor provision all the time and hence this restricts their ability to explore and investigate. Despite this, overall, children make good progress, especially in their communication, language and literacy skills and in their personal, social and emotional development. Teaching is generally well planned and relationships are strong. The acting Early Years Foundation Stage leader is enthusiastic and shows a strong vision of how to develop the new unit further. She has ensured that all the welfare requirements are met and that children's progress is monitored closely. Good relationships with parents and carers and outside agencies are developed and these contribute to the good quality of care that children receive.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation	3



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Stage

## Views of parents and carers

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers found the school helpful and supportive of their child's needs and many spoke positively of what a safe and happy place the school was, and how much progress their child had made. The inspectors endorse this. They were also appreciative of the strong community in the school and the new provision of the Learning Centre and Early Years Foundation Stage unit. A very small minority of parents and carers had concerns about how well the school listened to them and helped them to help their child. Evidence gathered during the inspection supported the views of the majority of parents and carers.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Herbert's RC 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 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 77 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 305 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	46	60	29	38	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	60	78	15	19	2	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	38	49	37	48	1	1	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	39	51	29	38	4	5	2	3
The teaching is good at this school	42	55	31	40	3	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	40	52	31	40	6	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	49	64	28	36	0	0	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)	31	40	35	45	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	41	53	29	38	4	5	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	34	44	32	42	1	1	3	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	24	31	42	55	5	6	2	3
The school is led and managed effectively	36	47	29	38	5	6	3	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	42	55	32	42	2	3	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and 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 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.

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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



6 April 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St Herbert's RC School, Oldham, OL9 9SN**

We thoroughly enjoyed inspecting your school and I am writing to thank you for two very interesting days. Your thoughts and views helped us to make our judgements about the school. This is what we found out.

- You make good progress and you work hard in lessons.
- You are well cared for and supported by the adults in the school, which means that you feel safe and that most of you have a healthy lifestyle.
- You are taught well and we agree with you that your lessons are fun and interesting.
- Your behaviour is good and you are kind and considerate with each other.

We have asked the leaders of your school to do the following things to make it even better.

- We have asked your teachers to plan more opportunities for you to use computers in your lessons.
- We think the governing body should look more regularly at everyday procedures in the school.
- We want the children in the Nursery and Reception to be given more opportunities to learn outdoors.

We wish you every success in your time at school.

Yours sincerely

Georgiana Sale

Lead inspector

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