

Ince St Mary's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106447
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	377402
Inspection dates	15–16 September 2011
Reporting inspector	Diane Auton

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	184
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michelle Thornton
Headteacher	Gillian Talbot
Date of previous school inspection	25 February 2009
School address	Derby Street Spring View Wigan WN3 4TJ
Telephone number	01942 866416
Fax number	01942 864772
Email address	headteacher@admin.incesaintmarys.wigan.sch.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 10 lessons and observed 7 teachers in their classrooms. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff, groups of pupils and parents and carers. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including pupils' progress and attainment data, the school's planning documents, policies, procedures and records. They reviewed information provided by parents and carers in 33 completed questionnaires. They also took into account the views pupils and staff expressed in the questionnaires they returned.

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

- Progress and attainment in mathematics across the school and whether the school has addressed past inconsistencies in attainment between English and mathematics.
- Whether teaching is consistently effective across the school.
- Whether the school's revised curriculum provides sufficient opportunities for pupils to develop and improve their basic skills in literacy and numeracy.

Information about the school

The school is smaller in comparison to most other primary schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is a little below average. Most pupils are White British, with a very small proportion from minority ethnic backgrounds. A new deputy headteacher was appointed in January 2011.

Since its last inspection the school's Healthy School status has been confirmed for the second time and the school has also achieved the Bronze Eco-Schools award. The school provides a breakfast club each day during term time.

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. Effective leadership has brought about on-going improvements in provision since the last inspection. As a result, attainment is rising rapidly. However, although pupils' overall attainment is now broadly in line with national expectations, it is higher in English than in mathematics.

Most children enter the Reception class with skills that are below expectations for their age group. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 has been broadly average for the past two years. This is in marked contrast to the four previous years, when it was well-below average; it reflects the positive changes that have taken place and the good progress pupils now make from their starting points. School leaders are not complacent and recognise that there is work to be done to ensure that the momentum of improvement is sustained in all areas, most especially in mathematics. Attainment in reading has improved considerably since the last inspection, as a result of a successful improvement drive, including the involvement of an increasing number of parents and carers reading with their children at home. Initiatives to improve pupils' writing skills are bringing about rapid improvements in the quality of their written work. This is having a positive impact on their enjoyment of learning and on their progress and attainment across the curriculum. However, the breadth and frequency of opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills through problem solving and investigations in their topic work are limited. Although the quality of teaching is good in most of the lessons, with some effective strategies in use, there is a very small amount of satisfactory teaching. Effective support is provided for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and this enables them to make the same good progress as their peers and to be fully included in all aspects of school life.

Pastoral care is good and pupils respond well to this, with older children taking on responsibilities around the school, including acting as buddies to younger ones. This enhances the school's supportive family ethos. Above-average attendance and good punctuality testify to the school's effective partnership with parents and carers. Good provision and leadership in the Early Years Foundation Stage get children's education off to a positive start.

The headteacher, supported by an effective deputy headteacher, has created a strong team ethos, with a clear focus on school improvement. Subject leaders are starting to influence improvements and ensure the good quality of provision. Self-

evaluation is accurate, based on systematic monitoring and rigorous assessment. All of this, together with the skills and talents of staff and leaders and a knowledgeable and effective governing body, is successfully bringing about improvements to provision and pupils' achievement, demonstrating that the school has good capacity to continue to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue the drive to raise pupils' attainment and further accelerate their progress, especially in mathematics, by:
 - providing pupils with a wider range of opportunities to apply, practise and develop their mathematical skills regularly through work in other subjects
 - ensuring that the very small amount of satisfactory teaching is eliminated so that all teaching is at least good and learning is supported by an appropriate pace in all lessons.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils' attitudes to school are positive. They show interest in their work and are responsive learners. They enjoy working with a partner or in a group; this is helping them to develop their thinking and to offer their ideas with growing confidence. Their concentration and study skills are developing well; they listen carefully and work hard in lessons. Attainment in English was higher than in mathematics in both 2010 and 2011. Assessment data and evidence seen in lessons and in samples of work from the last school year all show that the majority of pupils across the school now make good overall progress and that their attainment is rising. As a result of actions that have been taken to develop and improve provision in both mathematics and English, the attainment gap between them is narrowing. However, progress in mathematics, although greatly improved and good overall, is still not as rapid as that in English in every year group. Pupils' overall achievement is good. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress in relation to their starting points and abilities, in line with that of their peers.

Pupils show a good understanding of issues around personal safety. They form good relationships with each other and with the adults in school and they say they are confident help is on hand if they encounter any problems. Pupils and parents agree that school is a place of safety. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves healthy and they participate enthusiastically in the range of activities provided to support their health, fitness and well-being. They enjoy taking responsibility, for example as influential school councillors. They are enthusiastic fund-raisers for charities at home and abroad. All of this, together with their rapidly-improving basic skills, contributes to preparing them for the next stages in their education. Pupils show a good understanding of the sound moral values the school promotes and this is reflected in their good behaviour and considerate attitudes. Attendance is improved and is now above the national average.

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	3
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	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Good teaching is contributing well to pupils' learning and improving progress and to their personal development. Most lessons are planned well to take the range of pupils' needs into account and learning usually moves along briskly; this is helping pupils to progress more speedily. A small proportion of lessons seen in the inspection was satisfactory rather than good, however. This was because the pace of learning was too slow and, as a result, some pupils lost concentration and made less progress in the lesson than they might have done. Regular assessment means that class teachers have a clear overview of progress and this helps them identify where extra support is needed. Teaching assistants help to support pupils' learning effectively, especially those who have additional needs.

The curriculum promotes pupils' learning and personal development well. Pupils enjoy an increasing number of opportunities to practise and develop their skills in reading, writing and information and communication technology (ICT) through work across the range of subjects. The school has correctly identified a need to find more opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills in cross-curricular topic work, in order to help improve their confidence, ability and understanding as mathematicians. Topics that are relevant for pupils are helping to make learning interesting. The curriculum is enriched by opportunities for pupils to develop skills in sports and the arts. A range of visitors and visits helps to promote pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education. Good teaching and support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities ensure that they enjoy full access to learning and are included in everything on offer.

Pastoral care is good and the school works sensitively to support pupils and their families whose circumstances make them most vulnerable. This is helping to break down barriers to learning and progress that pupils sometimes encounter. Attendance and punctuality are promoted very effectively. Strong links with local high schools benefit pupils at transition. The school collaborates well with a wide range of

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

agencies that support pupils' health, welfare, social and learning needs. The well-attended breakfast club is appreciated by pupils and parents and starts the school day off happily.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Staff and the governing body share the headteacher's firm commitment to continuous improvement and her ambition to achieve the best possible outcomes for pupils. Leadership has been further strengthened by the recent appointment of a new deputy headteacher. Middle leaders contribute increasingly to ensuring the good quality of provision and to helping drive forward improvement initiatives. The school plans appropriate actions for raising attainment and increasing progress, and the information from termly progress reviews is used well to plan 'next steps' in learning. A supportive and well-informed governing body provides effective support and challenge to the school. Rigorous and well focused monitoring has helped to raise the overall quality of teaching from satisfactory to good. Leaders are aware that further action is needed to eliminate a very small amount of satisfactory teaching.

Parents and carers appreciate all that is done to support their children's welfare. Pupils benefit from the effective partnership between home and school, which is illustrated in their above-average attendance. It is supported by good communications, including regular newsletters, meetings and questionnaires. The school complies fully with statutory requirements for safeguarding, health and safety and child protection through well-managed procedures and through an on-going review of their effectiveness. Its inclusive ethos supports the good promotion of equal opportunities and access to educational entitlement. The school contributes to community cohesion through frequent involvement in community activities and also through its new and developing links with schools in France and Africa. A wide range of partnerships helps support pupils' personal and academic development well.

These are the grades for the 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	3

The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2
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Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress and develop very positive attitudes, becoming happy, interested learners. They progress well, so that by the end of the year, most children are working securely at the expected levels for their age. The quality of teaching is good and children are provided with a good balance between activities they choose for themselves and those led by adults. This supports the development of independence skills well. Assessment is informed by evidence gathered through observations of the children in their activities and staff use this information well to help them plan the next steps in their learning. The setting is effective in identifying and supporting children with additional learning needs. Children interact well with each other and enjoy warm, trusting relationships with the caring staff; as a result, they grow in confidence, they are happy and secure and ready to learn. They settle quickly because induction procedures are sensitive and the staff establish the positive relationships with parents and carers that prevail throughout the school. The setting is led and managed well and the staff team works together well. Despite some limitations in the current accommodation, staff have created a stimulating and supportive learning environment both indoors and in the outdoor area. Provision is monitored regularly and this supports on-going improvements. Procedures to ensure children’s welfare are very good and meet all requirements. Links with Key Stage 1 have been strengthened to improve the support for children at transition and to ensure good continuity of provision.

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 in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Most of those who responded to the questionnaire said they agree or strongly agree that they are happy with their children’s experience at the school. Parents and carers who met with a member of the inspection team commented on how eager their children are to come to school each day and on their confidence in the staff team. They remarked on the good home-school communications, saying how they appreciate the fact that the school consults them regularly through questionnaires and meetings. Their comments indicated that parents and carers place a high value on the school’s caring ethos and that they feel they are very well informed about their children’s progress and attainment. A small number of parents and carers expressed some disagreement. Inspection findings support the views of the vast majority of respondents.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ince St Mary's CofE Primary 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 33 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 184 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	17	52	14	42	1	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	20	61	13	39	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	11	33	16	48	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	12	36	15	45	2	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	13	39	15	45	1	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	14	42	14	42	2	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	45	15	45	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)	11	33	17	52	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	16	48	13	39	1	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	14	42	13	39	0	0	1	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	11	33	17	52	2	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	14	42	16	48	1	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	17	52	12	36	1	3	0	0

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 is for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 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 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.



19 September 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ince St Mary's CofE Primary School, Wigan, WN3 4TJ

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave the inspectors when we visited your school. As you know, we came to see how well the school is doing and how you are all getting on with your learning.

We found that Ince St Mary's CE Primary is a good school where rapid improvements are taking place. It is a happy place for you to learn and grow together. You are well behaved and polite young people. Your attendance is very good. You work hard in your lessons, you enjoy your work and you get on well with each other and with the grown-ups in school. They look after you well. They have been working hard, too, to make sure you are taught well. You are making good progress in your learning and standards are rising rapidly, although they are not yet as strong in mathematics as they are in English.

These are some things I have asked the school's leaders to do, because I think they will help your school to carry on improving.

- Make sure that you have plenty of opportunities to develop and apply your mathematics skills in your topic work.
- Make sure that teaching is always good or better.

You can help by continuing to do your best and by continuing to be happy learners.

With my very best wishes for the future

Yours sincerely

Diane Auton
Lead inspector

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