

St Hugh's CE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105699
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	377281
Inspection dates	03–04 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Andrew Swallow

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Annette Minnis
Headteacher	Lynne Burnley
Date of previous school inspection	20 May 2009
School address	Wildmoor Avenue Holts Oldham OL4 5NZ
Telephone number	0161 770 3171
Fax number	0161 770 3172
Email address	info@st-hughs.oldham.sch.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 13 lessons and observed eight teachers. The inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at the school's improvement plans, self-evaluation, policies, assessment and tracking systems, safeguarding procedures and pupils' work. Inspectors examined questionnaires from 72 parents and carers, as well as those from pupils and staff.

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

- The starting points of children entering the Early Years Foundation Stage and rates of progress made by the time they enter Year 1.
- Pupils' attainment and achievement in reading and writing across Years 1 to 6.
- The quality of teaching across Years 3 to 6, given significant changes in staffing since last inspection.
- The extent to which the governing body fully and systematically evaluates the school's performance.
- The impact of changes in senior leadership since the last inspection on the quality of the school's work.

Information about the school

Most pupils at this smaller-than-average primary school are of White British heritage but an increasing number are from minority ethnic groups. A small number are at an early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be entitled to free school meals, and with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is high. An increasing number of pupils join or leave the school during the year than is usually the case. The school admits children into part-time education from the age of three into the Early Years Foundation Stage provision. Among the school's awards are the Basic Skills Quality Mark, Investors in People Gold Standard, Every Child a Reader and National Healthy Schools status.

Since the last inspection the proportion of pupils entering the school with special educational needs and/or disabilities has risen. There have been significant changes in staffing, including changes to the senior leadership team.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

St Hugh's Primary is a good school and it is improving. It is a happy and highly inclusive school where pupils behave well and feel exceptionally safe and secure. This is due to the outstanding care and guidance shown by all adults. Parents and carers confirm how much they feel welcomed in school. They say typically that the school provides stimulating experiences for their children and caters very well for their 'learning, social and emotional needs.' As a consequence, attendance is rising and is now above average.

Adults promote pupils' understanding of what it means to belong to a community outstandingly well. The school has excellent partnerships with other schools in different parts of the region and abroad. These partnerships, together with an impressive array of visits and visitors to school, result in pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The good curriculum incorporates motivating activities of which the vast majority of pupils take full advantage. They particularly benefit from the many sporting events which make a positive contribution to their good understanding of the importance of living healthily. Pupils also enjoy regular opportunities to play musical instruments, sing, dance and perform in front of audiences.

Pupils' attainment and achievement have risen since the last inspection. Most children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are significantly lower than those expected for their age, particularly in their communication, social and emotional development. They have an outstanding start, gaining substantial confidence in their personal qualities, with an increasing number working towards, and many reaching, the overall goals expected for their age. Nonetheless, several pupils still face challenges in forming letters and using numbers accurately by the time they enter Year 1. Pupils' attainment across Key Stages 1 and 2 is broadly average and their overall achievement is good, albeit pupils' progress in writing is not as strong as in reading and mathematics.

Teaching and learning throughout the school are predominantly good, with stimulating activities that are matched well to learners' needs. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is a particular strength. Lessons comprise relevant and 'real life' scenarios, often linked to the locality, for pupils to learn through experimentation and investigation.

The headteacher is aspirational on the part of all pupils. She sets the tone for an exceptionally caring and supportive environment. Good procedures are in place to confirm the school's performance. Self-evaluation is accurate. The governing body is

highly visible in the school community, understands the strengths and areas for future development, and is confident in challenging the school to improve its outcomes. Senior leaders and managers recognise the key priority of raising overall attainment further and, particularly, of accelerating pupils' progress in writing. All these characteristics highlight the school's good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all pupils make at least good progress, especially in writing, across Years 1 to 6 by:
 - improving the consistency in good and better teaching of writing skills in all years, especially sentence building and effective use of language
 - maximising opportunities for pupils to talk, share ideas and viewpoints, as a prelude to writing
 - sharpening the use of the school's information on pupils' progress to tackle earlier underperformance in writing
 - focusing the school's monitoring of teaching, in general, on the impact that it has on pupils' learning and progress.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Most pupils achieve well and enjoy their learning. They readily pool ideas and develop each other's thinking. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 collaborated enthusiastically in their roles as local newspaper journalists, used computers to research famous people from the region and planned their editorials carefully to have maximum impact on their readers. Year 4 pupils were stimulated by a photograph of the home front in the Second World War, talked through their reactions with each other and sketched out in note form the subsequent historical accounts that they would write. Pupils of all abilities, and from different ethnic groupings, engage equally well in such tasks. Their positive responses help to narrow the attainment gap between different groups, particularly for those with specific learning needs.

Attainment is rising and pupils make good progress from their starting points. Progress is especially good in reading and mathematics. Although pupils' progress in English is not as strong, there are clear indications that, as a result of recently implemented strategies, it is now accelerating. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are at the early stage of learning English make good progress. This is because these pupils' needs are identified early, they are involved well in general learning experiences and benefit from successful support from other adults inside and outside lessons.

Pupils develop good individual skills and qualities. Attendance has risen since the last inspection to above average. Many pupils show a good understanding of how to eat healthily and a desire to stay fit. They behave well and say they feel exceptionally safe and well cared for in school. The vast majority make an outstanding contribution to school life and to the surrounding community. Pupils take seriously their roles as school councillors, fundraise readily for national and global charities, and take part in a wide range of competitions and sporting and enterprise challenges. They enjoy helping to organise concerts and performances, attending church functions, and

designing and planting gardens for the local council. As a consequence, their spiritual, moral and social qualities develop exceptionally well.

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	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop 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

How effective is the provision?

Significant changes in staffing have taken place recently, but the overall quality of teaching remains good. In general, teachers create an extremely supportive environment that ensures all pupils feel involved. In the best lessons everyday life scenarios regularly prompt pupils to talk and develop their ideas together. Stimulating resources, such as pictures, curious objects and opportunities to role play, ignite pupils' curiosity and involve them quickly in their learning. These strengths are not always in evidence. On occasion, some teachers tend to talk too much, over-direct activities and do not stimulate pupils sufficiently to share views and deepen each other's thinking. For the most part, teachers and other adults assess accurately pupils' developing knowledge and understanding, using a range of questioning techniques to encourage pupils to think for themselves. The quality of marking and written, as well as oral, feedback has improved since the last inspection, and is increasingly effective. As a result, most pupils understand what they are aiming for, how well they are doing and what they need to do next. Information gathered about individual pupils is used carefully to match activities closely to the wide range of pupils' needs. Information and communication technology enhances pupils' communicating, research and recording skills. Many pupils are proficient in using digital cameras, computers and film-making equipment. The teaching of writing skills across the curriculum is becoming embedded, but there is scope for all adults to extend pupils' use of language in different circumstances and develop confidence in using relevant expressions for effect.

The curriculum is good. A range of visits and visitors into school extends what is on offer. For example, pupils benefit from specialist music tuition, extra-curricular activities that include gardening, Spanish, sport and computers, and innovative experiences offered by African storytelling, art and drums, Chinese New Year

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

celebrations and French days. The curriculum to promote pupils' social and emotional development is particularly strong. Good use is made of the local environment to stimulate pupils' learning. The 'forest school' affords exciting opportunities to learn about the countryside. At the same time, teachers use links with schools in France and Africa to stimulate pupils' understanding of life in a global society. Links across all topics for pupils to practise their key literacy and mathematical skills are developing and have the potential to make a real difference.

Pupils receive outstanding pastoral care and support. They are very well known as individuals and have confidence in all adults. All staff ensure high levels of welfare, especially for the potentially most vulnerable pupils. Well-targeted support enables those with specific needs to make the best of the opportunities provided by the school. Effective links with families and secondary schools mean that induction and transition processes result in all pupils moving smoothly through the different phases of their education. Adults have high expectations, resulting in above average attendance for most pupils, consistently good behaviour and harmonious relationships.

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?

The headteacher is ambitious and inclusive on the part of all learners and sets a clear direction and tone for the school's work. Senior leaders and all teachers are fully committed to high-quality care and welfare arrangements, and to achieving higher outcomes for all pupils. Morale is good. Self-evaluation is accurate and there are appropriate procedures in place to keep the school's work in check. The recent reorganisation of the senior leadership team has devolved greater responsibility for checking the impact of provision on pupils' achievement to leaders and managers across the school. However, these measures, together with the more rigorous use of the information that the school holds on pupils' rates of progress, are at an early stage of implementation. As a result, they have not yet had time to tackle successfully the underperformance of certain pupils in writing.

Procedures to safeguard pupils are good. They include comprehensive arrangements for recruiting and training staff, and for assessing and managing risks. The school works very effectively with key agencies involved in the care and welfare of pupils, and the curriculum is planned well so that pupils develop a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. The relevant members of the governing body meet regularly with the headteacher to review the impact of safeguarding procedures. The governing body carries out its statutory duties efficiently and provides good support. Its members are confident in challenging the school systematically about the progress that groups of pupils are making during the school year and have identified the need for pupils' stronger achievement in writing.

The good links with the church and local schools enhance the quality of learning experiences for all pupils. Parents and carers are kept well informed about pupils' progress and well-being through regular meetings, questionnaires and newsletters. The school provides equal opportunities for all pupils to achieve and tackles vigorously any discrimination that arises. The systematic checking of pupils' progress ensures that no one group is disadvantaged, particularly pupils from minority ethnic heritages and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The promotion of community cohesion is excellent because it is carefully planned and evaluated. It leads to a strong sense of unity within the school which is extended by national fundraising, links with schools in France and Africa, and innovative partnerships with local schools with pupils from different religious, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. All of these arrangements provide excellent opportunities for pupils to appreciate the rich and diverse backgrounds of different people in society.

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	1
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	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make outstanding progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Most enter the Nursery with personal and communication skills that are significantly lower than those expected for their age and with very low confidence in recognising numbers and shapes. Nevertheless, all integrate well and quickly learn to listen attentively and concentrate on their work. From the outset, adults provide very strong support for children's welfare, learning and development. Relationships with families are highly effective. An excellent flow of information and regular communication about individual children's needs and developments ensure that carefully selected activities stimulate learning. Teaching is imaginative. Activities are carefully planned to respond to all of the key areas of learning. There is an excellent balance of teacher-directed and child-initiated experiences. Opportunities are sometimes missed, however, to ensure that resources for outdoor play are as equally stimulating as those indoors and that outdoor activities build upon children's learning in the classroom. Nonetheless, children are regularly encouraged to develop their own ideas and understanding through constant talk and activity.

Children respond positively to the very clear expectations and appropriate praise. Consequently, the vast majority gain social and emotional confidence, with an increasing number nearing many of the overall goals expected for their age. This is primarily due to high-quality observations and detailed planning by adults that meets very well children’s needs. Nonetheless, a large number still face significant challenges in writing and calculating by the time they enter Year 1. Outstanding leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures that adults are highly motivated and work very effectively as a team, with a common sense of purpose.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

Over one third of parents and carers responded to the inspection questionnaire. Almost all responses were highly supportive of the school. These comments reflect the good feedback from the school’s own surveys. Inspection evidence corresponds with the many positive views expressed by parents and carers, in particular about the outstanding quality of care, guidance and support that all children receive, especially those with specific needs, and about the good teaching and effective leadership.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Hugh's CE 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 72 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 207 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	39	54	21	29	2	3	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	46	64	17	24	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	35	49	31	43	2	3	2	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	40	56	30	42	1	1	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	43	60	25	35	4	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	41	57	30	42	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	40	56	31	43	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)	36	50	32	44	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	39	54	31	43	1	1	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	37	51	25	35	4	6	4	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	33	46	33	46	0	0	4	6
The school is led and managed effectively	40	56	26	36	5	7	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	48	67	17	24	6	8	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.



5 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Hugh's CE Primary School, Oldham OL4 5NZ

Thank you for your very warm welcome when inspectors visited your school. We very much appreciated your help and enjoyed chatting with you and listening to your views. This letter is to let you know what we found out.

St Hugh's Primary is a good and improving school. You get off to an outstanding start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where you learn very well. You make good overall progress across Years 1 to 6, with many of you now approaching average standards in reading and in mathematics. We agree with many of you and your parents and carers who told us how kind the adults are and how much you enjoy school. You behave well and are very supportive towards each other. Many of you set an excellent example by participating enthusiastically in the many interesting experiences that adults organise on your behalf such as African drumming and storytelling, through your work on the school council and your innovative teamwork in enterprise challenges. We were really impressed by your enthusiasm for learning about the lives of children from all over the world, including those who come from different backgrounds close to your school. You clearly enjoy the many opportunities to sing, dance, play musical instruments and take part in concerts and performances. All the adults take good care of you. These things happen because your headteacher and members of the governing body work hard to improve what is happening in school.

One reason for the inspection was to see what your school could do even better. I have asked your headteacher, the governing body and teachers to work on some things. I would like them to ensure that you all make at least good progress and attain higher standards in writing across Years 1 to 6.

You can all help by continuing to work hard and supporting each other to reach your targets, and by attending school regularly.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Swallow
Lead inspector

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