

# Castle Hill St Philip's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106472
<b>Local authority</b>	Wigan
<b>Inspection number</b>	377406
<b>Inspection dates</b>	24–25 May 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Kathleen McArthur

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	198
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Phyllis Bold
<b>Headteacher</b>	Wendy Hilton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 March 2009
<b>School address</b>	Hereford Road Hindley Wigan WN2 4DH
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## Introduction

Inspection team

Kathleen McArthur  
Louise Murphy

Additional inspector  
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 13 lessons taught by nine teachers and held meetings with groups of pupils, governors and staff. They observed the school's work and looked at pupils' workbooks, improvement plans, school and national data, monitoring records and procedures for the care and protection of pupils (safeguarding). They analysed responses in the 132 questionnaires received from parents and carers and in those completed by pupils and staff.

## Information about the school

Castle Hill St Philips is smaller than the average-sized primary school. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The school meets the current floor standards set by the government, which are the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

There has been considerable staffing change and disruption since the previous inspection. The school holds a number of awards including the Eco Schools Green Flag and Investors in People.

A private provider offers before- and after-school provision on the school site. This provision is inspected separately and receives a separate report, available on the Ofsted website.

**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

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key Findings

- This is a good school. It is not outstanding because although middle leaders and members of the governing body are committed and supportive, they are not yet making enough difference in the drive to boost the rate of achievement and improve teaching further. Pupils enjoy school and, 'It's a lovely school', and, 'It's a happy place', were typical comments.
- The imaginative curriculum and the Early Years Foundation Stage are particular strengths of the school. Responses in parents' and carers' questionnaires all showed that they agreed their children are well looked after and many commented that staff are approachable and helpful.
- Achievement is good and attainment is broadly average. Children get a good start and progress well in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils continue to make good progress as they move through the school. They enjoy reading. Consistently applied strategies for teaching letters and sounds have proved effective in raising attainment in reading and writing.
- Good teaching, the rich curriculum and careful use of assessment information in lesson planning ensure all groups of pupils achieve well over time. Pupils say they enjoy their lessons, especially those where they set themselves questions, research the answers and become 'experts' in different topics.
- Well-promoted spiritual, moral, social and cultural development results in good behaviour and attitudes. Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They cooperate well with classmates and staff and are polite and friendly towards visitors. Behaviour is managed consistently, so the school is calm and harmonious. Pupils are confident that staff deal swiftly and effectively with any problems that may arise.
- Inspiring leadership by the headteacher and deputy headteacher provides a clear vision for school improvement, supported by staff and governors. Accurate self-evaluation, rigorous performance management and professional

development have ensured that all pupils are taught well and attainment is rising.

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

- Raise achievement and standards further by:
  - ensuring all teaching reflects the best practice found in the school
  - further developing the skills of middle leaders in monitoring attainment, teaching and learning across the school
  - ensuring all members of the governing body have access to training and gain the knowledge and skills to offer more informed challenge and support.

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

Lesson observations show pupils are hard working and enthusiastic. They behave well and cooperate willingly with staff and classmates, which supports their good progress. Individual and additional learning needs are met well through good teaching. Pupils supported at school action plus, those with a statement of special educational needs and those who may be vulnerable owing to their circumstances receive well-organised support. Consequently, any potential barriers to learning are minimised and they progress as well as their classmates.

Inspectors agree with parents' and carers' questionnaire responses that progress is good. When children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage, attainment is below that typically found, especially in language and communication skills. Good provision in all areas of learning ensures they progress well, particularly in their language development. For example, children recently enjoyed watching and writing about the chicks as they hatched. By the end of Reception, children's skills are just below those expected.

Attainment at the end of Year 6 has risen steadily over time and is broadly in line with national averages. School leaders acted promptly when data showed that girls often did better than the boys and introduced curriculum topics and materials that appeal to boys. Themes such as the 'Dangerous Day' and Year 1's pirate theme captured boys' enthusiasm and successfully narrowed the attainment gap between boys and girls. A major emphasis on writing has successfully boosted attainment and in 2011, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher level was significantly above the national average, but this is not yet the case in mathematics or reading. Pupils write at length, use a range of vocabulary and organise their writing well. Literacy and numeracy skills support learning across the curriculum, for example, writing about events in Victorian times and drawing up charts of science investigation results.

Pupils are keen readers and many say their parents and carers hear them read at home. Attainment in reading is broadly average at the end of Key Stage 1. Younger pupils enjoy regular letters and sounds lessons, which aid progress in reading and spelling. By the end of Year 6, attainment in reading matches the national average,

with a greater proportion of pupils attaining the higher level. Older pupils say school offers plenty of reading opportunities and enjoy discussing books during lessons.

## **Quality of teaching**

Pupils say, 'All lessons are fun, the work isn't easy but it's good!', and inspection findings confirm parents' and carers' views that teaching is good. Well-promoted spiritual, moral, social and cultural development results in good behaviour and friendly relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff. Teachers have high expectations and lessons consistently include a wide variety of interesting activities and resources. Pupils commented that staff, 'Bring learning to life' in mathematics with meaningful problems. Lessons generally move along briskly, allowing sufficient thinking time for pupils to formulate their answers. Well-deployed teaching assistants make a good contribution to learning. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive skilled support, well matched to their particular needs. Good quality assessment and tracking systems give a clear view of pupils' progress, and staff make good use of this information in lesson planning. Some examples of outstanding teaching were observed. For example, after one lesson, pupils confidently led a plenary session, displayed their work on the visualiser and invited classmates to suggest 'three stars and a wish'. In some lessons, pace and challenge are not as focused and pupils do not have enough opportunities to contribute and become more confident learners. Pupils clearly understand the marking system because it helps them improve their work.

## **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Inspection evidence supports the views of parents, carers, pupils and staff that the school is a safe, caring environment. The curriculum ensures pupils know how to look after their own safety, for example when using the internet. A few parents, carers and pupils expressed concerns about behaviour. The inspection found behaviour to be good. It is managed consistently and the number of incidents has reduced over time. Pupils understand the three school rules and say they are fair. They know bullying can take different forms such as cyber-bullying but do not regard it as an issue. Pupils know how to deal with any problems that may arise and their comments demonstrate trust in the staff, 'They understand our problems and listen to both sides, and, 'If we get angry, staff help us get over it well', for example in the quiet 'time out' zone. Pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable are cared for well. Attendance is average, and the school works hard with families to promote regular, punctual attendance. Pupils are keen to win the vouchers and class cups for the best attendance. They feel very much part of the school and the school council enables them to contribute their views and ideas.

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## Leadership and management

Leaders, managers and staff share an ambitious vision and strong commitment to ongoing improvement. Accurate self-assessment leads to clear priorities and tightly focused plans backed by rigorous actions and success criteria. Areas for improvement from the previous inspection have been successfully tackled, and parents and carers said they have seen improvements. Well-planned professional development and specific performance management targets based on thorough self-evaluation have rapidly boosted the proportion of good teaching. However, best practice leading to outstanding teaching is not always shared. Middle leaders are often excellent practitioners in their areas of responsibility but have not been sufficiently trained to contribute fully to raising achievement. The governing body is well led and supportive but not all governors have accessed training to enable them to provide more informed challenge. Equality of opportunity has high priority and there is no discrimination. Good procedures identify and meet the needs of all pupils, and any remaining minor gaps in performance are rapidly narrowing. The school works closely with all external agencies to remove any barriers to learning, especially for pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable.

The curriculum is good because it fully covers all basic skills, links subjects creatively through imaginative topics and prepares pupils well for the future. Varied additional activities capture pupils' interest, enrich their experience, and promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very effectively. Good examples are Faith Week, expert sports teaching and visits extending topic work, such as going to the museum to look at Egyptian mummies. Clubs are very popular, and are often designed to appeal to different pupil groups; boys in particular enjoy the 'gardening gang' where they grow fruit and vegetables. Parents and carers feel well informed and helped to support learning at home. Safeguarding arrangements meet all current requirements and give no cause for concern. Staff training in respect of safeguarding is up-to-date and the site is well maintained and very secure.

## 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

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



## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



28 May 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Castle Hill St Philip's CofE Primary School, Wigan, WN2 4DH**

Thank you for welcoming the inspectors. You were polite and helpful and very keen to tell us about your school. We enjoyed listening to what you had to say, and could tell that you enjoy being at Castle Hill. We were impressed by your good behaviour and the way you help each other and your teachers. Your parents and carers told us they are pleased with the school. I enjoyed the Reception class assembly where they shared what they had learned about spring, and I could see everyone wanted to win the attendance voucher!

The inspection judged your school to be good. Children get a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The leaders and managers keep you safe and care for you well, and you trust them to help with any problems. You are keen to learn and said you enjoy lessons, especially the topics. Teaching is good so you progress well and reach the standards expected for your age when you leave the school.

We have asked the leaders and managers to help you achieve even higher standards by ensuring teaching is always the best it can be and making sure all school leaders and managers know the best ways to improve the school.

I am sure you will all do your very best to help the leaders, managers, governors and staff as they work hard to make Castle Hill School even better.

Yours sincerely

Kathleen McArthur  
Lead inspector

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