

# St Margaret's CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105493
<b>Local authority</b>	Manchester
<b>Inspection number</b>	377253
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 May 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Shirley Herring

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 controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	416
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Tim Smith
<b>Headteacher</b>	Alison White
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 February 2009
<b>School address</b>	Withington Road Whalley Range Manchester M16 8FQ
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## Introduction

### Inspection team

Shirley Herring  
Jennifer Lawrence  
John Shutt

Additional Inspector  
Additional Inspector  
Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 16 teachers in 26 lessons, observed support staff working with individual pupils outside the classroom, listened to pupils read and held meetings with groups of pupils, staff and a member of the governing body. They observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books, documentation regarding the safeguarding of pupils, assessments and the tracking of pupils' progress, the analysis of the progress of different groups of pupils and the school development plan. They scrutinised 126 questionnaires completed by parents and carers as well as those completed by pupils and staff.

## Information about the school

The school is larger than the average-sized primary school and the numbers are increasing. The majority of pupils are of minority-ethnic heritage. A high proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language, the most predominant languages being Arabic, Somali and Urdu. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average, as is the proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs. The school gained the Eco Schools Green Flag Award in 2011.

There have been several changes to the leadership of the school since the last inspection. The headteacher spent two terms as acting headteacher prior to her permanent appointment in April 2011. The deputy headteacher was appointed in October 2011. There is a new Chair of the Governing Body.

The school met the current floor standards, which the government sets for the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

**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>3</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key Findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It has improved significantly over the past two years. The school is not yet good because there are still variations in pupils’ achievement due to some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. The very harmonious atmosphere between pupils, from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, stems from the school’s strong commitment to developing pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit from an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.
- Achievement is satisfactory over time but is improving securely and rapidly. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 2 and attainment is now broadly average. In Key Stage 1 achievement is improving but does not yet match that in Key Stage 2. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage achieve well because of the high emphasis placed on developing language and social skills.
- Teaching over time is satisfactory and inspection evidence demonstrates it is improving securely; it is often good with now only pockets of satisfactory teaching remaining. The improvements in the teaching of writing have helped to raise attainment significantly over the past two years and the more recent focus on mathematics is beginning to make an impact.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Pupils work productively with each other and treat everyone with courtesy and respect. They show good attitudes to their work and this contributes well to their learning.
- The headteacher and senior leaders have established a strong drive for improvement. Good performance management and actions, such as well-focused staff training, are having a positive impact. The proportion of teaching that is good has increased significantly, consequently the proportion of pupils attaining the level expected for their age in English and mathematics in Year 6 has almost doubled since 2009.

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

- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching to raise achievement, especially in Key Stage 1, by:
  - ensuring a good pace in lessons, with clear time limits and expectations, to keep pupils involved
  - reducing the use of worksheets so that pupils organise their own ways of working in order to promote their independence and understanding
  - developing the role of subject leaders in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning in their subject.

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

Parents and carers are happy with the progress their children make in school. Children enter the school with a range of skills that overall are well below what is usual for their age. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, but nevertheless their attainment is below the expectations for their age by the time they enter Year 1. The school rightly places great emphasis on developing children's personal and social skills and so they make particularly good progress in this area of learning.

Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1. After several years where attainment at the end of Year 2 has been significantly below average, the school's comprehensive records of pupils' progress show that there has been considerable improvement in the rate of their progress this year. Pupils currently in Year 2 are working closer to the level expected for their age, particularly in writing. This is as a result of a wide range of strategies that have been introduced by the new senior leadership team, including a high priority placed on improving writing. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 2, and this accelerates in Years 5 and Year 6 because of consistently good teaching in the older classes. After several years when attainment was significantly below average attainment rose in 2011. Results showed attainment as above average in English and broadly average in mathematics. Rigorous assessments of the attainment of pupils currently in Year 6, and the work in pupils' books, indicate that improvements have been maintained and that attainment is broadly average overall. Attainment in reading is slightly below average in Year 2 and is broadly average in Year 6.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs progress at a similar rate to their peers because of the good level of well-targeted support they receive. Pupils who enter the school speaking little English receive good support from staff and from other pupils. They learn English quickly and so they make similar progress to others in their class.

Learning is most effective when lessons are interesting and pupils are actively engaged. This was seen in a mathematics lesson where pupils sharpened their recall of multiplication facts by reciting a 'rap', by challenging their partner in a tables game and then using their knowledge to solve multiplication problems. Learning is less effective when pupils have to spend too long listening to the teacher before getting actively involved with their independent work.

## Quality of teaching

Pupils, parents and carers are of the view that teaching is good. Inspection evidence shows that whilst there are many examples of good teaching there are variations across the school and so the inspection judges teaching to be satisfactory. Records of pupils' progress support the view that while the quality of teaching is improving quickly and there is much which is good, there remains some which is satisfactory.

Lessons are generally well planned and work is well matched to the needs of different groups, including those pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs. This was seen in a literacy lesson where pupils were set appropriately challenging texts to describe a character. Appropriate prompts were strategically placed to remind different groups about their targets, for example use of punctuation, connectives or more advanced vocabulary. In the more effective lessons teachers give pupils good opportunities to explain their thinking to help them to develop their understanding, whether explaining how to find 75% of an amount or the difference between an orphan and a refugee. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are supported well in lessons and their learning is similar to others in the class.

Where teaching remains satisfactory the pace of learning is sometimes too slow and pupils begin to lose concentration. On occasions teachers do not always check that those groups working independently are on target to complete their tasks. In some classes there is an over-reliance on worksheets and this can restrict opportunities for pupils to organise their own work and develop independence.

Teachers mark work carefully and give pupils clear guidance on how they can improve. This is more established in literacy books and has helped to improve the quality of writing. This is now extending to mathematics. Teachers place an increasing emphasis in the curriculum on using and developing basic skills in other subjects. Consequently, the quality of writing has improved and opportunities for applying numeracy skills are improving.

Teachers provide excellent opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils work together extremely successfully in lessons and cooperate very well in the playground. Learning about religions, other cultures, art and music is given much prominence and pupils have many opportunities to explore ideas and develop their understanding of spirituality.

Teachers provide a good range of purposeful, practical activities in the Nursery and Reception classes that show a good understanding of how young children learn. Letter sounds and counting skills are taught systematically and well, and so children make good progress in developing these basic skills.

## Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils are polite, calm and thoughtful and cooperate well to create a safe and well-ordered environment. They show a good attitude to their work and collaborate sensibly with a partner in class; this contributes well to their learning. Parents and carers and pupils themselves agree that behaviour is good and state that rare instances of bullying of any type are dealt with swiftly and effectively. Pupils say they feel safe, secure in the knowledge that there is an adult they can talk to if they have a problem, for example by visiting the

'Place to Be' at break times. They understand how to recognise risk and how to minimise it, for example, by learning about road safety in assemblies, and they have a good awareness of e-safety. Parents and carers appreciate the workshops in school that have helped them to support their children in this aspect.

Attendance has improved significantly year on year, reflecting the wide-ranging efforts of the school, coordinated by the attendance manager. Older pupils play a valuable role as peer mentors on the playground. They help to address potential tensions by asking pupils to consider how they and others feel, and this fosters an ethos of care and respect for each other.

## **Leadership and management**

Parents and carers are of the view that leadership and management are good. They point to examples of improved communications over the past two years, including weekly newsletters. They also appreciate the workshops which help them to support their children's learning.

The senior leadership team, strongly led by the headteacher, demonstrate a clear vision, with well-targeted initiatives which are helping to raise attainment. Staff training, a consistent approach to marking pupils' work, and a clear focus on developing basic skills have helped to improve teaching. This has resulted in a significant improvement in attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 over the past two years and these strategies are now having a positive impact on attainment in Key Stage 1. Rigorous systems for assessing and tracking pupils' progress have been adopted and are being used effectively to identify and address any underachievement at an early stage. The school has a strong commitment to equal opportunities. The progress of different groups is analysed carefully and additional support is provided promptly so that gaps are narrowing and more pupils are reaching the level expected for their age by the end of Year 6. Subject leaders monitor the curriculum and the work in pupils' books. However, their role in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning in lessons has not yet been developed fully. Well-focused actions to reduce absences have resulted in a good improvement in attendance.

The governing body know the school well and provide good support and constructive challenge for the leadership team. They are well aware of their responsibilities in safeguarding pupils and staff and the required systems and procedures are in place. Good links with partners in the Primary Inclusion Partnership and the Place2Be service support the school in providing good pastoral care for pupils to enhance their well-being.

The school's strong commitment to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has resulted in extremely harmonious relationships amongst pupils from a wide range of backgrounds and cultures. One pupil explained that, 'The best thing about our school is that it's open to everyone, despite their different cultures.' and this is evident throughout the school.

The curriculum is satisfactory and improving. Strong attention to pupils' personal development has had a good impact on pupils' behaviour. The decision to link subjects together provides extensive opportunities to write and this has resulted in a good improvement in the quality of writing. The focus on developing numeracy skills across the curriculum is now having an impact.

Improvements over the past two years in the quality of teaching, in attainment, particularly in writing, and in attendance indicate that the school has a good capacity to improve.



## 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.**



30 May 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of St Margaret's CofE Primary School, Manchester, M16 8FQ**

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. You are well behaved and treat everyone with courtesy and respect. Well done! We were pleased to see that more of you are coming to school every day and this is helping you to improve your work. We enjoyed talking to you in lessons and in small groups and we found your views very helpful. We agree with the pupil who said that one of the best things about St Margaret's is that it's open to everyone, despite their different cultures. Many children join your school speaking very little English and I know how much you help them to settle in and find their way around.

Lessons are generally interesting and there is always an adult around to help those who sometimes find learning difficult. Most of you reach the standard expected for your age by the time you leave Year 6. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes make a good start to school life because their teachers plan a good range of practical activities indoors and outside to help them to learn.

We think that St Margaret's is a satisfactory school, though it is improving all the time. It is part of our job to suggest ways that a school could be even better. We have asked that all teaching is as good as the best so that your achievement continues to improve, particularly for those in Key Stage 1. The teachers are going to make sure that you can get on quickly with your work in all lessons and also give you more chances to set out your work in your books rather than on worksheets. Those teachers who have a management role are going to check that you are doing well in all subjects.

Thank you once again for being so pleasant and helpful. We hope you enjoy the next half term and continue to come to school every day.

Yours sincerely

Shirley Herring  
Lead inspector

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