

The Cathedral School of St Peter and St John RC Primary

Mount Street, Salford, M3 6LU

Inspection dates 25–26 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Pupils make outstanding progress.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make rapid progress, often from low starting points.
- Outstanding progress continues through Key Stage 1 and 2.
- By the end of Year 6, attainment is above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- High quality teaching contributes to pupils' outstanding progress.
- Teachers' expectations of learning and achievement are consistently high.
- Challenging and interesting learning activities are very well matched to pupils' abilities and needs.
- Pupils are fully engaged, highly motivated and make exceptional gains in their learning.
- Pupils are enthusiastic learners.
- Their relationships with adults and their peers are very positive.
- Pupils show considerable care and respect for others.
- Behaviour is often outstanding.
- Attendance is above average.
- Highly effective leadership and management are the key to school's success.
- The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and support.
- An extremely positive climate for learning has been created.
- Leadership is very effective at all levels and teamwork among the staff is a real strength.
- Leaders successfully promote high quality teaching and an exciting curriculum.
- Governors make a valuable contribution to the school.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 15 lessons.
- The inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, other staff, an external adviser, members of the governing body, pupils and parents.
- Pupils were heard reading.
- The inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection but there were very few returns.
- The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the school's policies, assessment information, pupils' work, teachers' plans and school improvement planning.
- The inspectors analysed 16 questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

Derek Watts, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Paul Latham

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school.
- About half of the pupils are White British. Other pupils come from a range of ethnic backgrounds with any other White background being the next largest group.
- The overall proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- Over half of the pupils are known to be eligible for school premium and this is much higher than average.
- A small proportion of pupils have parents who are members of the 'Showman Guild' a travelling fairground group.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, the minimum standards set for attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Extend the partnership with parents and increase the use of technology in pupils' learning and in supporting parents as outlined in the school improvement planning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Since the previous inspection, pupils' achievement has improved from good to outstanding.
- Children enter the Nursery with knowledge, understanding and skills much lower than expected for their age. They make rapid gains in their learning because of excellent teaching and the exciting learning opportunities provided. By the end of Reception, attainment is close to average in most areas of learning.
- Outstanding progress continues through Key Stage 1 and 2 and, by the end of Year 6, attainment is above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- All groups of pupils are making at least good progress and for most, their progress is outstanding. Pupils from the fairground group achieve very well.
- The more able are fully challenged and extended, and this is reflected by the above average proportion of pupils who attain the higher than expected Level 5 by the end of Year 6. Pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs make at least expected progress because of the well targeted support they receive. Effective use is made of additional funding to support the well-above-average proportion of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium. Most of these pupils make outstanding progress and their attainment exceeds that of pupil premium nationally.
- Pupils make good progress in speaking and listening because teachers place considerable emphasis on these skills. Effective questioning by adults and paired discussion contribute well to pupils' progress.
- The school rightly places considerable emphasis on the teaching of reading skills and promoting positive attitudes to reading. As a result pupils thoroughly enjoy reading and make exceptional progress. They benefit from the discrete, regular and systematic approach for the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make). This helps to ensure that pupils acquire essential reading skills very well. In Year 1, pupils quickly identified words containing the 'ay' sound after skilful consolidation and reinforcement by the teacher. The older pupils read widely and apply research skills effectively to their studies. Achievement in writing is outstanding. Pupils successfully write in a range of styles and for different purposes. Their writing is interesting and imaginative. Grammar, spelling and punctuation are accurate. Pupils' handwriting is well formed, joined and neatly presented. Pupils take pride and care in the presentation of their work. Pupils apply their writing skills well in other subjects.
- After the previous inspection, raising pupils' achievement in mathematics, especially in Key Stage 2, was a key improvement point. Through effective leadership, this area has been tackled well. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils made outstanding progress when using place value to solve problems.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- The quality of teaching is the key factor contributing to pupil's outstanding achievement.
- Pupils said, 'Our teachers are passionate and understanding.' and 'They help us to learn and understand.'
- Teachers plan their lessons extremely well. Specific learning intentions and a range of quality learning activities are identified. Teachers effectively share the purpose of the lesson with the class so pupils know what they are expected to learn.
- Pupils respond extremely well to teachers' high expectations of learning and behaviour.
- Teachers' enthusiasm and very secure subject knowledge inspires and motivates the pupils.
- Staff promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well. Teachers make classrooms attractive and stimulating and create a very positive climate for learning. Staff establish high quality relationships with pupils. Pupils show consideration and respect for others' feelings and views. They work extremely well in teams.

- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, exciting and stimulating activities are provided inside and outside the classroom. There is an effective blend of adult-led activities and those chosen by the children. Children have plenty of opportunities to explore, be creative and learn independently.
- The teaching of basic skills including handwriting and numeracy is highly effective. Teachers' very clear demonstrations and modelling move pupils' learning on very well.
- Throughout the school, teachers assess pupils' attainment accurately and use this information very well to plan interesting and challenging tasks which are well suited to pupils' abilities. Pupils are challenged well and they make exceptional progress in acquiring knowledge and deepening their understanding.
- Teachers use questioning skilfully to challenge pupils' thinking, to explore their ideas and to check their understanding of new learning.
- Technology is used to good effect in support teaching and learning and there are clear plans to extend the use of this and involve parents, particularly those who do not have the facilities at home.
- Teaching assistants are well deployed and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. In particular, they provide guidance and support for pupils who need extra help.
- Visiting teachers make a valuable contribution, particularly in the area of art and design. Pupils' displayed art work is of a high calibre.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Children settle quickly into the Early Years Foundation Stage because of the very positive atmosphere and the high quality relationships with adults.
- The school has a very positive ethos where expectations of behaviour and conduct are always high. A pupil remarked, 'In this school, you feel like you want to learn.' Pupils were proud to tell the inspectors that behaviour was usually excellent. In over half the lessons seen, pupils demonstrated exemplary attitudes to learning and outstanding behaviour. The school's clear and detailed records indicate that behaviour is typically of a high standard.
- Pupils report that bullying in the school is unacceptable and very rarely occurs. Pupils show a very clear understanding of different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying. They know the steps to take to prevent bullying. The school has highly effective policies and procedures for dealing with misbehaviour, including bullying, should it occur. Pupils are also confident that staff soon, 'sort things out'.
- Attendance is above average. Pupils want to come to school and are keen to arrive on time.
- The learning mentor makes a valuable contribution to raising attendance and maintaining very positive behaviour.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and direction for the school.
- With her staff, she has created a very positive ethos where all groups of pupils thrive and develop. Team work is a real strength and all staff demonstrate a commitment and determination to doing the very best for the pupils. As a result most pupils are achieving and developing as well as they can. High aspirations, high expectations and continuous improvement pervade the school's professional culture.
- Leaders and managers have been extremely well developed and trained. As a result they are fully effective in monitoring and improving their areas of responsibility. For example, leaders of English, mathematics and the Early Years Foundation Stage all lead by example in the classroom and have successfully influenced others in bringing about improvement.
- Through rigorous and systematic self-evaluation, leaders and governors have an extremely clear overview of the school's performance. The findings of review are used effectively to inform planning and action to bring about improvement. Since the previous inspection, key

areas of achievement, teaching and leadership have improved from good to outstanding.

- Senior leaders are fully focused on improving teaching and the curriculum. Teaching is successfully monitored and developed so that it is at least good and often outstanding.
- Classroom observations, coaching, sharing best practice in school and with other schools and a clear appraisal system all contribute to the high quality practice.
- Newly qualified teachers are carefully mentored by experienced teachers whose practice is outstanding.
- **The governance of the school is outstanding**
 - Governors are led by an enthusiastic and well informed Chair. Members of the governing body have a clear understanding of the school's community and its performance. They provide much support and appropriately challenge the leadership.
 - The school makes good use of external advice and support particularly in the areas of literacy and numeracy. The local authority have plans to use the school's expertise more widely to support other schools.
 - Very few parents responded to the online questionnaire, 'Parent View'. However, the school's own surveys and discussions with parents indicate that they are very pleased with the care and education provided. The school responds to any concerns on a swift and personal approach.
 - The school strives to help parents to support their children's learning and there are plans to extend this approach and to involve parents in the school's increasing use of computer technology.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	105964
Local authority	Salford
Inspection number	402996

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	190
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Iain Clarke
Headteacher	Margaret O'Brien
Date of previous school inspection	20 May 2008
Telephone number	0161 8344150
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