

# St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School Wigan

Thorburn Road, Norley Hall, Wigan, WN5 9LW

## Inspection dates

24–25 March 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Leadership at all levels is good. Senior leaders' and governors' clear vision and determination has brought about rapid improvements to the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement since the previous inspection.
- Provision in the early years is effective and children get a good start to their education. Adults carefully attend to each child's individual needs. Children make good progress in all areas of learning.
- All groups of pupils make at least good progress in Key Stages 1 and 2, and particularly in mathematics. By the end of Year 6 in 2014, standards in reading and writing were average and above average in mathematics. Attainment is rising to above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The quality of teaching is good. Pupils are keen to learn and generally concentrate well in lessons.
- The behaviour of pupils is good and, at times, outstanding. Pupils agree. They say, 'in our school we are all friends and look after each other'.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is successful. Parents overwhelmingly agree the school cares well for the pastoral needs of the pupils.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptionally well promoted. Principles of respect, valuing one another and serving the community, are woven meaningfully into all aspects of the school's work. As a result, pupils become caring young citizens of modern Britain.
- The rapid improvements seen in the quality of teaching and achievement means the school is well placed to continue to improve.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Work set in reading and writing is not always challenging enough to extend the capabilities of each pupil to the maximum, including for the most able pupils.
- The skills of subject leaders, other than those leading English and mathematics, to check the quality of teaching and pupils' learning are not fully developed.
- A small proportion of pupils are absent from school too often. Furthermore, too many families take their children on holiday during term time. As a result, some pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in every class. Three observations of learning were carried out jointly with two deputy headteachers and one assistant headteacher.
- The inspectors held discussions with pupils to ascertain their views of school and their learning. Pupils' work in their books was also scrutinised.
- The inspectors listened to pupils read in Years 1, 2 and 6. They observed the teaching of reading skills and talked to pupils about the books they have enjoyed and those that they are currently reading.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, staff and a representative of the local authority as well as with members of the governing body.
- The inspectors looked at a number of documents, including safeguarding records, the school's improvement plan, the school's data for tracking pupils' progress, reports on pupils' achievement, and records of pupils' behaviour and the school's checks of the quality of teaching.
- The inspectors talked with pupils as they played at break times, and visited the dining hall at lunchtime. They observed pupils' behaviour as they moved around school.
- There were not enough parental responses to view the online questionnaire (Parent View). The inspectors took account of the school's own parental survey as well as the views of the parents with whom inspectors spoke. They also took account of returns to the staff questionnaire completed during the inspection.

## Inspection team

Clare Henderson, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Doreen Davenport	Additional Inspector
Bimla Kumari	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is an above average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils, those supported through the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Early years provision is available full time in the Reception classes.
- Extended school provision for children from birth to three and also before school and after school is provided on site. This setting was inspected separately and the report can be found on the Ofsted website.
- Five teachers have joined the school since the previous inspection.

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

- Raise standards further and accelerate the progress that pupils make by:
  - making sure that work set is challenging enough in reading and writing to extend the capabilities of pupils, including for the most able pupils.
- Raise attendance further by finding additional ways to stress to parents, especially those who take their children on holiday during term time, the importance of regular attendance.
- Continue to support subject leaders, other than those leading English and mathematics, to develop their role in checking the quality of teaching and pupils' learning in order to make sure that their actions have a positive impact on pupils' achievement.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- Senior leaders and governors share a united determination to bring about improvement and have resolutely tackled the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection in 2013.
- With strong support from the local authority and external consultants, leaders have successfully improved the quality of teaching and driven up pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, a culture where good teaching and behaviour flourish is now evident. All of this demonstrates the school's capacity to bring further improvement.
- Senior leaders and governors evaluate closely what is working well and have a clear view of priorities for the school. Actions are precise and effective and as a result, teaching is better and standards in reading, writing and mathematics have improved significantly.
- The checking of the quality of teaching and pupils' progress by senior leaders is rigorous and frequent. The outcomes of this evaluation help teachers to identify their strengths and areas for improvement. Support is provided so that teaching improves. The headteacher, aided by other senior leaders, ensures that teachers' salary and movement along pay scales are focused efficiently on improving teaching and pupils' learning.
- Subject leaders with responsibility for subjects, other than English and mathematics, are not fully effective. They do not regularly check the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects to make sure that planned actions have a positive impact on pupils' achievement.
- The pupil premium is used successfully. The disadvantaged pupils learn successfully because of the additional support they receive. This additional help has accelerated their progress effectively.
- Staff do not tolerate discrimination and work diligently to promote good relations and provide pupils with equality of opportunity. This is evident in the way pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are welcomed and supported effectively.
- The curriculum is good and has breadth and balance with an effective emphasis on English and mathematics. It includes a wide range of activities and themes that strongly promote the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Assemblies which consider value and beliefs, learning to speak French and studying religions that are different to their own secures the pupils' understanding of cultural diversity and British values. Pupils are taught the value of, and reasons behind, rules and laws, and about the consequences when they are broken. As a result, pupils are well prepared for life and democracy in modern Britain.
- Although strong links exist with parents, leaders and governors acknowledge that they need to find additional ways of working with the families who, despite the school's best efforts, take their children on holiday during term time.
- The primary sport funding is used effectively. A specialist sports teacher leads staff training and develops the expertise of the staff. Surveys show increased participation in sports clubs, such as rugby and karate. Furthermore, pupils are now involved in organising clubs. For instance, Year 6 pupils run a dance club for pupils in Years 5 and 6. These opportunities have a strong impact on improving pupils' confidence, health and well-being.
- Leaders and governors ensure that current vetting of staff and other statutory safeguarding arrangements fully meet requirements and keep pupils safe.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors use their skills and expertise effectively to influence the work of the school. They rigorously check data about pupils' achievement and gather information from leaders to compare progress in school with national data. Governors receive detailed reports from staff leaders and visit the school regularly to see the work at first hand. As a result, decisions are based on accurate information about the impact of actions on pupils' achievement. Governors have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and question senior leaders closely to ensure that good teaching is rewarded and underperformance tackled. They use this information effectively to hold the school to account for school improvement. Governors ensure that additional grants, such as the funding for sport and the pupil premium are used effectively and have a positive impact on pupils' outcomes.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils are good****Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are polite and their pride in the school is clearly evident in the way they willingly welcome visitors. One comment reflecting the views of others, exclaimed, 'We are all friends here!'
- Staff and pupils get on well together. They share highly supportive relationships which underpin pupils' good attitudes to learning. As a result, the school is a harmonious community.
- Most pupils are proud of their work and give of their best. In particular, the diligent way that some pupils share their ideas is often a key factor behind their rapidly improving progress. However, behaviour is not outstanding because, occasionally, a few pupils need reminders from staff to concentrate fully and to get on with their work.
- Pupils behave well around the school moving quietly and sensibly within the school building. They are polite and open doors for visitors and talk eagerly about how they enjoy school.
- Their behaviour at breaks and lunchtime is good because of the good array of equipment available, such as exercise cycles, an assault course and, for quieter times of reflection, the spiritual garden. This ensures pupils' spiritual, social and moral development is promoted very effectively.
- Pupils undertake their various responsibilities well; for example, members of the school council diligently represent the views of other pupils. Older pupils also welcome opportunities to be prefects and to support younger pupils in their classes and at break times.
- Despite the efforts of leaders attendance remains below average. Parents do not ensure their children always attend regularly and too many take their children on holiday during term time.

**Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. All staff provide a caring and inclusive atmosphere in all parts of the school. Pupils in most need are well supported.
- School safeguarding procedures are well documented and fully implemented by all staff in order to keep pupils safe.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school. This is also the view of all the parents to whom the inspectors spoke.
- Pupils are taught e-safety (how to use computers safely) and understand how to keep themselves safe, both inside and outside school. Pupils have a good understanding of bullying and the different types of bullying, including physical, racial and cyber-bullying.
- Pupils express confidence in the swift and effective way that staff deal with inappropriate behaviour and the very few incidents of bullying. Consequently, pupils express little concern regarding bullying in school.

**The quality of teaching is good**

- The quality of teaching is typically good. As a result, it helps pupils to make better progress in literacy, reading and mathematics than in the past.
- Teachers have improved the way they check pupils are learning as well as they should. They regularly check pupils' progress and plan learning experiences that generally are at the correct level for pupils. Teachers ensure that in mathematics the most able pupils are set work that extends their learning. For example, in Year 6, pupils rose to the teacher's challenge and rapidly and enthusiastically solved algebraic problems. However, at times work is too easy including for the most able in reading and writing.
- Teachers check pupils' work effectively. They are raising expectations of what pupils should achieve to match those in the new National Curriculum. Most of the work currently seen in pupils' books reflects at least good learning.
- Reading, writing and mathematics skills are applied well in other subjects. For example, pupils confidently use their writing skills to record science experiments and use their reading skills to research historical facts. Furthermore, the successful teaching of writing ensures that pupils apply their skills in spelling well at these times.
- Reading skills and phonics (the sounds that letters make) are taught well. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to practise these skills when completing comprehension and writing activities. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds also enjoy learning phonics and benefit from careful adult support.
- Teachers place an increasing emphasis on developing the pupils' knowledge of the four rules in number and this is improving pupils' progress in mathematics. The challenge for the most able pupils in

mathematics is high. Extra mathematics lessons are very challenging and as a result, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 6 was above the national average in 2014.

- Teachers' marking of pupils' work is effective in encouraging them to think about how to improve their work. For example, marking comments led pupils into using grammar and punctuation skills effectively to improve the quality of their descriptive writing.
- Teachers work closely with teaching assistants to ensure that additional adult attention given to the pupils addresses their particular learning needs. This ensures that pupils across the range of abilities, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, are supported successfully.
- All staff are skilled in talking with pupils and questioning them to ascertain their level of understanding. Teachers respond well to the pupils' answers and use them effectively to check whether they need to explain further or whether pupils are ready to move on.
- Pupils appreciate the value that all adults place on their opinions. In response, pupils confidently offer ideas about the methods they are to use to improve their learning. This is helping to raise pupils' achievement. For example, pupils in Year 5 shared their ideas with enthusiasm when researching and discussing the difference between the methods used for trout and dairy farming.

### **The achievement of pupils** is good

- The achievement of pupils is good. Pupils' progress is rapidly improving and much higher standards are reflected fully in the school's records of pupils' developing skills and their work in books.
- Inspection findings are based on observations of pupils' learning and school records show increasing proportions of pupils exceeding expected levels of skill for their age. As a result, attainment for the current Year 2 pupils is on track to reach at least the average levels achieved in 2014 in reading, writing and mathematics. Accurate checks of pupils' skills indicate that standards are rising and pupils are on course to reach above average levels by the end of Key Stage 2 this year in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils make good progress in reading as they move through the school. They know the sounds that letters make and they use their understanding to read fluently and accurately. This was evident in the Year 1 phonic screening check (the sounds letters make) in 2014, when the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level was closer to the national average than in the previous two years.
- Pupils continue to show interest in all year groups in reading books, researching information on computers and writing imaginatively. They very confidently apply skills in mathematics to aid their learning.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make at least good progress. This is due to careful checks of their understanding, which ensure that the support provided by the school effectively meets their needs.
- The achievement of the most able pupils is good, especially in mathematics where the challenge for these pupils is consistently high. In Key Stage 2 national tests in 2014, the proportion of pupils reaching Level 6 level of attainment was above the national average. Their achievement in reading and writing is good by the time they leave in Year 6 with more on target to reach Level 5 this year. However, at times tasks for these pupils are not fully challenging them to achieve the best they can because at times the work is too easy.
- White British pupils achieve well. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds have their needs quickly identified and make good progress in response to effective adult help.
- Disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium funding have their needs tackled at an early stage. They are supported by additional adults in and out of classrooms and make good progress. Often, within the different year groups, a large proportion of the disadvantaged pupils also have complex learning difficulties. This leads to variation in levels of attainment. In 2014, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 was below that of other pupils in the school by four terms in mathematics and two in reading and writing. Their attainment was the equivalent of about two terms below other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The gap between the disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged in school was wider than expected in 2014 when the attainment of non-disadvantaged pupils was above average in reading, writing and mathematics. The gap is closing rapidly for the disadvantaged pupils currently in the school and, in some year groups, these pupils achieve better than their classmates.

**The early years provision****is good**

- The large majority of children join the school in the Reception classes with skills that are below those typical for their age. Often communication and language skills are even less well developed, especially for the boys.
- Strong links with the pre-school and parents before the children start school, together with good teaching and very caring support ensure children settle well and make good progress in all the areas of learning.
- The leadership of the early years is good. An assistant headteacher and the recently appointed lead teacher encourage teamwork and manage the work of all staff effectively.
- Adults work well together to plan learning activities that stimulate the curiosity of the children. For example, they engage the interest of boys as they make a spider man car or go on a bug hunt. These activities successfully extend children's speaking, listening and mathematics skills as well as extending their knowledge and understanding of the world in which they live.
- Through thoughtfully posed questions, most, but not all adults develop children's communication, writing and mathematics skills effectively through a wide range of interesting practical activities. These include the most able children confidently writing sentences which include capital letters and full stops.
- Children generally mix and play well together. A large majority continue to learn well when adults leave their activity to support other children more closely. However, a few children find it difficult to play without adult supervision. The friendly relationships promoted by adults, and shared between all the children, play a supportive role in lifting children's confidence, especially those with special educational needs. Overall behaviour and safety are good.
- Children from minority ethnic backgrounds are warmly welcomed and quickly settle alongside their classmates. All adults check the progress of children carefully. They keep detailed records about the children's improving skills and use these effectively to plan activities that develop and extend their learning further.
- Early years staff work closely and supportively with parents and keep them well informed about their children's progress. They work hard to encourage good attendance. However, not all parents follow their guidance.
- From their different starting points, children of all abilities do well by the end of Reception Year across all areas of learning. As a result, the proportion of children attaining a good level of development rose on the previous two years and was close to national proportions in 2014. This shows that children are well prepared for future learning in Year 1.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	131228
<b>Local authority</b>	Wigan
<b>Inspection number</b>	461229

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<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>	369
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ruth Fisher
<b>Headteacher</b>	John Bruen
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 April 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	01942 222721
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