

St Jude's Catholic Primary School

Worsley Mesnes Drive, Worsley Mesnes, Wigan WN3 5AN

Inspection dates 22–23 September 2015

Overall effectiveness **Good**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and the majority of staff have a firm and resolute determination to continually strive to improve pupils' outcomes.
- As a result of rigorous actions undertaken by leaders, there have been significant improvements in the quality of teaching and in the outcomes for pupils across all key stages since the last inspection. As a result, the school is improving.
- Outcomes for pupils are good. From starting points which are below those typical for their age, pupils make good progress and reach standards which are similar to the national averages by the time they leave school.
- Children in the early years get off to a good start and are encouraged to be independent learners from a young age. Teaching is good and children make good progress.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work together effectively so that support is readily available for all groups of pupils.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and provide pupils with opportunities to extend their learning.
- Governors have developed their skills well since the last inspection and now have a good understanding about how well the school is doing. They provide a good level of challenge to ensure that the school continues to improve.
- Pupils are well behaved and are polite and courteous to each other and adults. They enjoy school and learning about new things.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and have a good understanding about how to keep safe, including on the internet.
- The wide range of opportunities for pupils to participate in extra-curricular activities promotes pupils' health and well-being well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Work is not always matched closely enough to pupils' needs, especially those who are most able. Consequently, pupils, including the most able, do not always achieve as well as they might.
- Teachers do not always follow the marking policy and ensure that pupils respond consistently to the guidance given to improve their work.
- Attendance, although showing signs of improvement, is below national average.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To extend partnership working with parents so that pupils' attendance is improved and overall attendance is closer to the national average.
- To build on the improvements on the quality of teaching by:
 - ensuring that work is always matched to the needs of pupils, particularly the most able, so that they are challenged to achieve as highly as they can
 - ensuring that teachers adhere consistently to the updated marking and feedback policy in order that all opportunities to develop pupils' learning are maximised.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher has a firm and resolute determination to continue to improve the school's performance. He is well supported by senior and middle leaders and the majority of staff, who share this resolve. As a result, there have been significant improvements in pupils' outcomes and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment since the last inspection.
- Regular and rigorous checks on the quality of teaching and pupils' progress ensure that pupils make good gains in their learning. Performance management procedures are robust. The majority of staff are positive about the opportunities for professional development provided. These are linked to both the individual pupil's needs and also to school priorities. Consequently, staff have developed their skills in middle leadership, the delivery of practical mathematics and phonics, for example, which has resulted in improvements in each of these areas and in the quality of teaching.
- Middle leaders use school assessment information effectively, such as lesson observations and looking at pupils' books, to identify the main areas of development in their areas of responsibility. They report regularly to governors on how well the actions they have implemented have improved the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes. However, the use of pupil progress information by middle leaders to closely identify the progress of different groups of pupils is not as well developed.
- The pupil premium funding is used effectively to support pupils who are eligible. Additional sessions to promote pupils' basic literacy and numeracy skills are delivered by teaching assistants and other adults. The funding has also provided pupils with additional enrichment opportunities, such as extra-curricular clubs and visits. Inspection evidence shows that the gaps between these pupils and their peers are closing.
- The PE and sports premium funding is used well and has resulted in a marked increase in participation of pupils in extra-curricular clubs, as well as greater involvement in competitive sports. The employment of a coach and sports apprentice ensures that pupils have developed their skills well. They provide good-quality sessions at the beginning of the day, at lunchtime and in after-school sessions.
- The curriculum has been designed, in conjunction with staff, to reflect the interests of the pupils in school. Following the first year of its implementation, staff are currently undertaking a further review to evaluate its strengths and where it could be improved further. The topics have been chosen to interest pupils and often have an exciting start to capture pupils' interests. As a result, topic and science books show that pupils are learning about a range of different subjects and have good opportunities to practise writing and mathematical skills in other subjects, which aids their progress and development.
- A wide range of enrichment activities provided enhance pupils' experiences. In addition to sports opportunities, pupils benefit from musical opportunities such as the choir and learning to play an instrument. During the inspection, Year 4 pupils were thoroughly enjoying playing drums, following the two-part rhythm well. Pupils have opportunities to go on a range of school visits, including residential trips, and to attend arts and music festivals.
- British values such as tolerance and respect are taught effectively through the curriculum and assemblies. Pupils spoke about how they learn about the values of friendship and forgiveness. These are underpinned by the Christian values of the school. Pupils also raise money for different charities that support pupils' understanding of their role in society in helping others. Representatives of the school council are elected democratically. Pupils have a clear understanding about different religions and cultures, including through visits, visitors and celebrating the different heritages of the pupils within school. These promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well and prepare them for life in modern Britain.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors provide a good level of challenge to ensure that the school continues to improve. Since the last inspection, governors have undergone a review of governance and developed their skills well. Governors are jointly involved in a review of the school's performance with school staff at the beginning of the school year. Consequently, governance is good and governors have an accurate and well-informed view of the school's performance and are aware of areas for development.
 - Governors have undertaken further training to support their understanding of data analysis. They are able to use the school's assessment information to ensure that school leaders are continuing to drive improvements. Governors have a good awareness of how the achievement of different groups of pupils in the school, particularly those who are disadvantaged, compares with the achievement of similar groups of pupils found nationally. Governors analyse how additional funding is used to support these pupils and the impact it is having.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Regular and appropriate training for staff is undertaken

and is up to date. Specific governors with responsibility for safeguarding and health and safety meet regularly with senior leaders to discuss any relevant matters. There are effective partnerships with other agencies to ensure that pupils are kept safe. Staff work together to ensure that pupils learn in a safe environment. The vast majority of parents who responded during the inspection and also those who responded to the school's recent consultation with parents agreed that the school keeps their children safe. Attendance, however, remains below national average and there is more work to be done, in partnership with parents, to improve attendance so all pupils attend regularly.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment **is good**

- Pupils at St Jude's benefit from teaching which is now good. Any weaker teaching has been addressed and, as a result, pupils' outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics are good and have improved significantly since the last inspection.
- Adults know their pupils well and encourage them to be independent and confident learners. In Year 2, for example, pupils were encouraged to explore and explain their answers to a mathematical problem posed by 'Charlie the Crocodile'.
- Teachers and teaching assistants question pupils well and encourage them to think carefully about their answers and to extend their understanding. In Year 6, pupils were asked to discuss and explain what they understood about different symbols representing electrical components. Careful questioning and checking of pupils' understanding by the teacher and teaching assistant ensured that pupils made swift gains in their learning.
- Teachers swiftly identify where pupils may have misconceptions and adjust tasks to ensure that learning is built on effectively. In Year 3, pupils were engaged in writing fables. The teacher quickly spotted common misunderstandings and, as a result of additional explanation from the teacher, pupils were able to build on their skills, following this style of writing. In a selection of mathematics books in Key Stage 2, work showed that tasks had been adjusted as a result of teachers' accurate assessment of pupils' understanding.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and a good understanding of the different stages of learning of the pupils in their class. They plan lessons which take account of the differing needs of the pupils. However, there are occasions when the work set is not matched well enough to the needs of the pupils, especially the most able, so they are not sufficiently well challenged and this slows their progress.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and there are good examples where pupils respond well to the guidance that they are given. In the best examples, pupils wrote more complex sentences following guidance from the teacher and in some mathematics books, pupils were set additional challenges to check their understanding. However, this is not consistent across all classes or subjects.
- Teachers' use of assessment information to track pupils' progress and understanding of pupils' next steps is good. However, the school recognises that teachers do not always consistently follow the marking policy and is currently in the process of consulting on a new marking and feedback policy with staff and parents.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare **are good**

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Older pupils have been trained to support younger pupils' play and this, alongside the lunchtime sports activities, contributes well to pupils' health and well-being. Pupils have grown and harvested their own vegetables, which has given them a good understanding of how to keep healthy. Pupils understand that they should have healthy snacks and even advised the inspector not to eat too much chocolate.
- Members of the school council take their responsibilities seriously and have been involved in the design of the new playground equipment and in the appointment of some new staff.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and understand how to keep themselves safe, including on the internet. They are aware of potential dangers outside of school and say that the school talks to them about these.
- Staff focus on raising pupils' confidence and finding opportunities for them to think for themselves in order to help them understand how to become more successful learners. In Year 4, pupils were considering what they wanted their 'goals' to be over the coming year. They were asked to reflect on

their achievements in the previous year and to identify something they wanted to improve. This gave pupils a good opportunity to reflect on their own personal development.

- Pupils have a good understanding of different forms of bullying. They say that incidents of bullying are uncommon, and are confident that these and other incidents would be sorted out by adults who look after them. Although a very small number of parents expressed some concerns about bullying, inspection evidence showed that any such incidents and concerns are being managed following appropriate procedures.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around school and in lessons. They are polite and well-mannered and these expectations are reinforced by adults in school.
- Pupils are rewarded with 'gold coins' for good behaviour and learning, and these encourage pupils to participate well in lessons. Occasionally, pupils are not as engaged in their learning because tasks are not matched accurately to their different needs and they can become distracted.
- At lunchtime, the youngest children are helped with new routines by adults so they settle quickly. In the breakfast club, pupils of all ages play together and enjoy sharing a healthy breakfast.
- The school has a wide range of strategies to promote good attendance and punctuality. As a result, there has been an improvement in punctuality and in reducing the number of pupils who are frequently absent. However, the school's attendance remains stubbornly below national average. The recent appointment of a pastoral manager to work with pupils and their families is showing some improvement in attendance. As yet, these actions have not been effective in ensuring that all parents make sure their children attend regularly. The school acknowledges that further work, in partnership with parents, needs to be done to improve this further.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Outcomes for pupils across the school have improved significantly since the last inspection because of the rigorous actions of leaders and the determination of staff to continue to improve these.
- The proportion of pupils who achieved the expected level in the Year 1 phonics check has improved over the last three years. In 2015, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level was above the national average. This is as a result of a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) and careful tracking of each pupil to identify where the next step in their learning is.
- By the end of Key Stage 1 in 2015, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level for their age was in line with national figures in reading, writing and mathematics. An increasing proportion of pupils are reaching higher levels, particularly in reading and mathematics, though these remain below the national averages.
- By the end of Key Stage 2 in 2015, the majority of pupils reached the expected levels for their age. Half of Year 6 pupils reached the higher levels in reading and a third in mathematics. The proportion of pupils making expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics was similar to the national averages. The proportion of pupils making better than expected progress was similar to the national averages in reading and mathematics and slightly lower than this in writing. This represents good progress from their starting points.
- The progress of pupils currently in the school is good. Across the school, inspection evidence shows that the majority of pupils make at least expected progress and a good proportion are doing better than this from their different starting points in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Those pupils who are the most able make similar rates of progress to their peers. However, there are occasions when work does not always match the needs of pupils, including the most able, and they don't always achieve as highly as they might. Pupils also feel that work could sometimes be harder.
- The recent focus on developing pupils' writing skills is evident in their work and progress. Across Key Stage 2, the standard of handwriting is improving and pupils are developing more complex and interesting sentences. Pupils write at length and also in different subjects, such as history and geography topics.
- The attainment and progress of pupils in reading is good. Regular sessions where reading strategies are taught and pupils have to answer questions related to the text have resulted in improvements in pupils'

reading skills.

- The focus on developing mathematics strategies through the introduction of 'success ladders', which give pupils guidance on which steps to take to successfully tackle a new concept, and a focus on mental mathematics, have ensured that there is a consistent approach across the school. As a result, the proportion of pupils making at least expected progress has improved across all year groups.
- School assessment information shows that those pupils who are disadvantaged make progress which is at least as good as that of their peers. As a result, gaps between the proportion reaching at least expectations for their age are closing in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are well supported by teaching assistants and teachers. Any support is matched accurately to their needs and as a result pupils make good progress from their different starting points.

Early years provision

is good

- Children start Nursery with skills which are typically below that for their age, particularly in language and communication. A small proportion of children have skills which are significantly below those. Children make good progress from their starting points because the environment is welcoming and provides pupils with a range of different activities to engage them. Links are made to the topic pupils are learning. Some children were enjoying making currant buns out of dough while others were counting buns in the mathematics area.
- The majority of children who attend Nursery join the Reception class. They are joined by a number of children starting from different settings, including home. As children move through the Reception Year, they continue to make good progress and most children reach a good level of development and are ready to start Year 1. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development has increased over the last two years and reflects the continued improvements to the provision in early years.
- The quality of teaching across the early years is good. Teachers and teaching assistants promote independence and have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and conduct. Children in Reception 'sign in' each morning, writing their name under their name card. They make decisions about the activities they want to engage in from evaluating the 'activity board', which shows which activities they can choose to engage in and also whether there is any space available in each activity.
- Phonics is taught well. Children work in small groups with an adult, learning new sounds that are applicable to them. One group were learning the 's' sound, identifying correctly objects starting with the same sound. Another group were listening to sounds which together made a word, identifying the right object for this. Children gained confidence and improved accuracy as a result of the teacher's correct pronunciation and articulation of sounds and words.
- Questioning is used well to develop children's learning. In one example, targeted questioning challenged the most-able children in Nursery to develop their counting and early number skills. They were asked 'how many cakes are left?' of the cakes in the baker's shop. The children responded well and chose to continue the activity after the teacher's input had ended.
- However, on occasion, opportunities to extend children's learning, particularly that of the most able, are missed because adults intervene too quickly and solve problems for them.
- Parents are encouraged to contribute to their child's learning and are able to access the information on their learning through the online system. Parents also have opportunities to attend the regular 'play and stay' sessions. These have improved partnerships with parents in supporting their children's learning.
- Leadership of the early years is good. Staff work well together to identify the different needs of the children and ensure that activities are planned to stimulate them, based on accurate assessment. Assessment information is carefully checked and appropriate additional sessions put into place for children identified as in danger of falling behind and for those who are disadvantaged.
- Children's behaviour is good and children play cooperatively together. Children are well cared for and established routines and regular checks on equipment ensure that children are kept safe.
- Children are beginning to understand the differences between themselves and others. One group of children were working with the teacher to identify the different parts of the body. Using an outline of one of their classmates, they were checking where to put the different parts.

School details

Unique reference number	130384
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	10002186

This inspection 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	212
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mildred Edwardson
Headteacher/Principal/Teacher in charge	Stephen Barrand
Telephone number	01942 204091
Website	www.stjudes.wigan.sch.uk
Email address	headteacher@admin.saintjudes.wigan.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11–12 September 2013

Information about this school

- St Jude’s Catholic Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion that speaks English as an additional language is smaller than the national average. A small proportion of pupils are from Traveller backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those with special educational needs is broadly average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is well above the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government’s current floor standard, which is the minimum expectation for pupils’ attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- There have been changes to senior leadership in the last two years, including the appointment of a deputy headteacher.
- The early years is comprised of a Nursery that provides part-time sessions and a full-time Reception class.
- The school provides a breakfast and after-school club for its pupils, which formed part of the inspection.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of lessons or parts of lessons and also looked at pupils' work.
- The inspectors listened to pupils from five different year groups reading, and talked with them and other groups of pupils about their lessons and school life.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, teaching assistants, representatives of the governing body, the school improvement consultant and a representative of the archdiocese.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised documentation relating to pupils' progress and to school management, including the arrangements to ensure that pupils are kept safe.
- The inspectors spoke to parents, took account of the seven responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View), the school's consultations with parents and other communication from parents.

Inspection team

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