

# St Winifred's Roman Catholic Primary School, Stockport

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106129
<b>Local Authority</b>	Stockport
<b>Inspection number</b>	309037
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 July 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Leszek Iwaskow HMI

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 on roll</b>	
School	358
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Anthony O'Neil
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs P Smith
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 March 2004
<b>School address</b>	Didsbury Road Stockport Cheshire SK4 3JH
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 4325782
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: outcomes for pupils in terms of the quality of their learning and how this impacts on their achievement and standards; whether the curriculum was broad and balanced and appropriate to their needs; and how outcomes reflected on the quality of the leadership and management in the school. The quality of the school's own self-evaluation was also investigated.

Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation form, national published assessment data, additional documentation provided by the school including the school development plan, internal and external monitoring reports, coordinator and planning files and tracking data. In addition, lessons were observed, pupils' work books scrutinised and discussions were held with the headteacher and the senior leadership team, the chair of governors, teachers and a wide range of pupils including representatives from the school council. Parents' questionnaires were also scrutinised. Other aspects of the school's work were investigated in less detail.

## Description of the school

St Winifred's Roman Catholic Primary School is a larger than average school situated in the suburbs of Stockport. The school serves an area with few characteristics of socio-economic deprivation. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below the national average and there are none with statements of special educational need. The school has achieved the Healthy School Award, the Activemark and Extended School status. It is currently working towards the Eco School award.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

St Winifred's is a school of sharp contrasts with some work which is exemplary and some which is less so. The school does many things well and pupils, parents and teachers have much to be proud of. A strong Catholic ethos permeates everyday life and pupils are happy, feel secure and are well looked after. As one pupil remarked, 'We are all part of one big happy family.' However, there are aspects, such as the quality of teaching and learning and leadership and management, which need improvement if the pupils are to realise their full potential. As a result, overall effectiveness is judged as being satisfactory.

Overall, pupils' achievement is good, particularly in national tests at the end of Key Stage 2. Children enter the school with standards which are broadly average and most make good progress especially in their personal development. Satisfactory progress is made at Key Stage 1. The school has increased resources and support in this area in order to improve standards and is confident that this will have the desired impact. Standards at Key Stage 2 have been improving since 2005 and, by the time pupils leave school, most achieve standards which are well above the national average. Both boys and girls achieve equally well. Pupils benefit from the good support offered at home as well as in school. The use of booster classes, revision opportunities and targeted support that operates throughout the school, ensures that most pupils do well in their tests. The establishment of a dedicated computer suite and discrete teaching of information and communication technology (ICT) have raised standards. Most pupils are confident users of new technology. However, lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work showed that progress in lessons can be variable, especially across foundation subjects, other than English, mathematics and science. Pupils make least progress in those lessons where the teaching is only satisfactory, when there is limited challenge and frequent reliance on worksheets which occupy rather than engage many pupils.

The pupils are a credit to the school and their personal development is outstanding. They are courteous, inquisitive and well mannered. Behaviour throughout the school is very good. Pupils with behavioural difficulties are included well and benefit from the caring ethos and good relationships evident in classrooms. Parents appreciate the high levels of care and support their children receive. Pupils really enjoy coming to school. They look forward to meeting their friends and opportunities to take part in the wide range of sporting and enrichment activities on offer. Attendance and punctuality is very good. Pupils are encouraged to accept responsibility from an early age. Children in Reception worked enthusiastically all day to organise a garden party for their parents and grandparents. They worked collaboratively, preparing food, menus and decorations for the tables. During the afternoon event, they amazed their families with their maturity as they served drinks and food, even finding time to serenade the diners during the festivities. Older pupils act as buddies to younger pupils and help them to settle in. The school council is beginning to have a greater influence around the school. Pupils enjoy helping each other and raising money for a range of charities. They appreciate the need to stay healthy and many participate in the wide variety of sporting activities available after school and during lunch-time as well as 'wake and shake' sessions in the mornings. Most are aware of the need to eat healthily and many choose to do so.

Based on observations of lessons and scrutiny of books, teaching and learning are judged to be satisfactory overall. Only a small percentage of good teaching was observed during the inspection. Pupils identified that they especially enjoy those lessons where they are given opportunities to be creative, work collaboratively and above all when they are challenged. They

talked proudly about how they had to really think to solve some difficult mathematical problems and were excited by their forthcoming visit to Quarrybank Mill, as part of their study of the Victorians. However, they also identified that in some classes and subjects they frequently had to complete worksheets which were often undemanding and only required simple comprehension skills. Satisfactory lessons were characterised by lost opportunities to use new technology to present visually stimulating material to pupils and the pace was often leisurely. Frequently teachers dominated conversations and set tasks where pupils accumulated facts and knowledge and were occupied but they did not necessarily develop their thinking skills. In only a few observed lessons was provision made to accommodate pupils of differing abilities. In some lessons the more able pupils found the work easy and frequently had to wait while others caught up. Support provided by teaching assistants is not always used to best effect in lessons, although they provide effective support to small groups of pupils who are withdrawn for additional work in English and mathematics. When good teaching was observed, pupils were animated by the activities set. Their energy and interest were directed into tasks which they were clear about and challenged their creativity. Even pupils with behavioural difficulties were excited and productively involved.

The curriculum is good overall. The school provides a broad curriculum which ensures coverage of all subjects with especially good provision for literacy, numeracy and ICT. The school identified that foundation subjects were not always being taught or covered in sufficient depth. The current planning is being restructured to better meet pupils' needs as part of a skills based curriculum to support learning in mathematics and literacy. This work is ongoing and the school acknowledges that there still remain issues regarding greater depth of coverage which it is hoping to resolve in the near future. The curriculum is enhanced and enriched by a good range of extra-curricular clubs and visits. There are well established links with Whitworth Art Gallery in Manchester and art is a focus of much of the creative work around the school especially during 'Arts week'. Pupils benefit from involvement in the National Primary Mathematics Challenge and initiatives such as 'Healthy Schools Week'. Smaller numbers are involved in the Young Entrepreneurs project which allows them to extend their talents.

The school considers that care and guidance is a priority and provision for this is good. Care for oneself and care for each other permeates the school. Pupils identified that adults are easily approachable and they are aware of what to do and who to go to when they need help. Child protection and risk assessments are in place. Pupils and parents did, however, express concerns about the state of repair of some of the outdoor play areas. There are issues with uneven and deteriorating surfaces which can be a hazard during wet periods. Accidents are recorded although not always in the correct format. Pupils generally behave sensibly when playing in the cramped outdoor conditions, although several did quip that, 'Growing up is about taking a few knocks. We don't want to be wrapped up in cotton wool.' Pupils are aware of their targets in core subjects and they are determined to reach these. The school is determined to provide all pupils with the best possible care and support. Pupils are very appreciative of the way in which they are looked after.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school's self-assessment does not take a realistic view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. This makes it difficult to provide a clear strategic overview of priorities to take the school forward. There are undoubtedly many areas of effective practice, linked particularly to the care of pupils. However, weaknesses in classroom practice have not been sufficiently recognised or challenged. Individually, some initiatives are being driven forward, such as the changes to the curriculum, but collectively there is a lack of shared vision about how the school will improve in the future. Provision for

ICT has been improved since the last inspection although there has been less progress in improving outdoor provision for the Foundation Stage. Funding restraints have created difficulties and restricted some initiatives. Governors are supportive but have not always been sufficiently proactive in challenging and holding management to greater account. The capacity for improvement is no better than satisfactory and is dependent on how quickly and effectively governors and management can work in partnership to create a clear vision and strategy to take the school forward.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 3**

The Foundation Stage is satisfactory with some aspects which are good. Children enter the school with standards which are broadly average and most make good progress in their attitudes and emotional development as well as their literacy and mathematical skills. Communication and thinking skills is an area that the teachers are working hard to improve. Children are assessed thoroughly and detailed records of their progress are kept. There is a good balance between adult led and child initiated activities, although there are insufficient opportunities for continuous outdoor provision. This was an issue at the last inspection and, although some improvements have been made to facilities, these remain insufficient to enable this aspect of learning to be well developed. Children are not able to move freely between indoor and outdoor provision because these areas are detached. The warm and very caring environment helps children settle in very well and be happy.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure that there is a cohesive well organised plan which provides a shared vision for the school, focuses clearly on outcomes for pupils and requires greater accountability at all levels.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in lessons to ensure that these are consistently good.
- Improve facilities to ensure that continuous outdoor provision requirements can be fully met in the Foundation Stage.
- Make certain that procedures are fully followed to ensure that children are safe when playing outdoors.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.



## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

This letter is to tell you about my recent visit to inspect your school. I saw many aspects which I was pleased with but I also felt that there are some areas which should be improved and I am sure you all would like to play your part in ensuring that this happens.

I particularly enjoyed meeting you and talking with you, whether this was more formally in meetings and in your classrooms or more informally in the playground or dining room. You are a real credit to the school and your parents and teachers have much to be proud of. I was impressed with your politeness and inquisitiveness and with your friendly welcoming smiles. You are very proud of your school and the good results you attain in examinations due to your hard work and the help and support of your teachers and parents. You enjoy school, are rarely absent and appreciate the many opportunities offered to participate in sport and visit interesting places in the local area and further afield. You enjoy your break-times and playing in the outdoors areas. However, you and your parents did express concerns about the condition of these. I am aware that some of the intended improvements and new buildings are to start shortly. Hopefully, when these are completed the play areas will also be much improved and will allow the younger children, especially, to make better use of the outdoor environment to support their learning.

You particularly enjoy those lessons where you can be creative, where you work together and where you are encouraged to think. I noticed that you enjoyed solving problems, particularly in mathematics and I was impressed with the art work which is on display in many areas of the school as well as your singing. I have asked your teachers to consider your preferences and make your lessons even more interesting by bringing more lessons to life. You also need to play your part by trying just that little bit harder.

You are very happy in your school and enjoy being part of a really caring community. As one of you said to me, 'We are all part of one big happy family.' You and your parents appreciate the efforts of all the staff in the school. The headteacher and all the staff and governors are determined to make further improvements so that it will become even better.

I am sure you will give your teachers all the help and support they need to continue to improve the school and build on the firm foundations that are in place.