

St Hughs CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105699
Local Authority	Oldham
Inspection number	324256
Inspection dates	20–21 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Carmen Markham

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	192
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs A Minnis
Headteacher	Mrs Lynne Burnley
Date of previous school inspection	26 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Wildmoor Avenue Holts Oldham Lancashire OL4 5NZ
Telephone number	0161 7703171
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This small school serves an area of some significant social disadvantage and eligibility for free school meals is well above average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. A small but increasing number are from other ethnic groups; very few are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average. More pupils join or leave the school during the year than is usually the case. The school admits children into part-time education from the age of three into its Early Years Foundation Stage provision. The school has been awarded the National Healthy School Award and the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with some outstanding features. St Hugh's is a very inclusive school that ensures that the needs of all pupils are met and that they make good progress. The school values parents and the local community and is very successful in involving them in the life of the school. This contributes greatly to the outstanding pastoral care and personal development and well-being of pupils throughout the school. Provision in the Nursery and Reception years is outstanding. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school.

The dedicated headteacher and her leadership team have a very strong vision of high standards and good progress for all pupils. To achieve this they have made pupils' personal development and well-being a priority. Very good financial management has ensured that the school is able to provide a rich learning environment and high-quality additional support for pupils who need it. Music has been used very effectively throughout the school to promote confidence, self-esteem and enjoyment of learning. The school makes an outstanding contribution to community cohesion. This is seen in the way in which all the school's pupils are fully included in the life of the school. In addition there are close links with schools with pupils from different backgrounds and cultures. This has provided first hand-opportunities for pupils to work with others and so to experience and value diversity. The school has good capacity to improve.

Attainment on entry to the school is well below national expectations. Good leadership and management have enabled the school to raise standards by improving teaching and introducing a variety of support strategies to respond to individual pupils' needs. This has been successful; pupils' progress records demonstrate that the achievement of pupils in both key stages is good. However, despite good progress, pupils have not fully compensated for low attainment on entry, particularly in relation to speaking and listening. By the end of Year 6, overall standards are below the national average. Standards in mathematics and science are broadly average but they are below average in English.

Teaching is good and there are some examples of exemplary practice. Committed teachers are very skilled in meeting pupils' varying needs. They work closely with very able teaching assistants to ensure that learning is relevant, practical and exciting. A rich curriculum is well planned to consolidate the learning of basic skills. Pupils' progress is systematically tracked across the school and teachers set learning targets for their pupils. However, teacher assessments are not always accurate and do not consistently provide a secure picture of pupils' attainment. This can limit the ability of some teachers to accurately identify the next steps for learning and slows the progress of a minority of pupils, particularly in English.

Most pupils are very enthusiastic about their learning; they enjoy school and their behaviour is outstanding. They respond well to the responsibilities they are given and, through the school council, they are involved in making decisions that will affect them. Pupils know how to stay safe and healthy, and the actions they need to take to improve their work. Pupils are proud of their school's Healthy School status and value the special events and competitions organised by the school, such as 'St Hugh's has got talent' and 'circus' week.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Most children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are significantly lower than the expectations for typical three-year-olds, particularly in their communication and

personal and social skills. Carefully planned induction procedures ensure children quickly gain good learning habits and play well together. Achievement is outstanding in relation to their starting points and capabilities. By the end of the Reception Year, many children are working at a good level of development and attain skills that are only just below those expected for their age. This is the result of excellent teaching in a well-planned environment. Indoor and outdoor provisions are both equally impressive. The staff's initial assessments of children's skills are thorough and they monitor their progress rigorously. Children are given rich opportunities to engage in imaginative and creative play. There is a good balance between adult-led activities and allowing children to choose for themselves. The care of children is outstanding. A high priority is given to ensuring that all children feel safe and happy. Relationships are excellent and, consequently, the children develop confidence and are well behaved. There are effective partnerships with parents/carers and other providers. Parents are involved in their child's learning and kept very well informed of their progress. They are very pleased with the quality of the provision. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are excellent.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English throughout the school.
- Improve the accuracy of teacher assessment to ensure that teachers are clear about what children need to do to improve their work and raise standards.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

In the past, pupils joining Year 1 have not had the benefit of the current good Early Years Foundation Stage provision that the school has now developed. Similarly, pupils entering Year 3 did not have good foundations on which to build. On entry to Year 1 and Year 3, pupils' skills in reading, writing and mathematics have been well below expectations for their age. However, good strategies to support learning are now helping pupils to make progress and achievement is good throughout the school. Although standards overall remain below average in both Key Stages 1 and 2, standards in mathematics and science are broadly average. However, English, in particular writing, is not as strong because pupils' speaking and listening skills are not well developed by the time they start school. Although boys do not achieve as well as girls in Key Stage 1, by the end of Key Stage 2 there is little difference. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well as they are very well supported in school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Personal development and well-being, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are outstanding and are a strength of the school. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and behave very well. They are friendly, well mannered and considerate to each other. They have excellent knowledge of what it means to lead a healthy lifestyle. Pupils enjoy coming to school and most attend regularly. Pupils feel safe, knowing that their views are important and respected and that they can discuss concerns with staff. Pupils readily accept responsibilities to contribute to the community and to develop their future economic well-being. They take on responsibilities around school, such as helping the younger children at playtimes and lunchtimes and they are developing a good understanding of racial equality through links with other schools. The school

council leads school fundraising for a variety of charities and pupils learn how to plan events, work in groups and manage finances.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning, make good progress and enjoy their lessons because teaching is effective and behaviour is effectively managed. Excellent relationships give learners the confidence to respond to appropriate challenges. Pupils cooperate well with each other on a good range of practical tasks. Teachers' planning is good and takes account of pupils' different learning needs. Teachers regularly assess pupils' work to inform their planning and to check pupils' progress. However, the quality of marking is variable and, although there are examples of good practice, teacher comments to help pupils to improve their work are not always useful. However, pupils' targets in English and mathematics help them to understand how well they are doing and as they are regularly involved in assessing their work they do know what to do to improve. Good use is made of a range of resources, including information and communication technology. Teachers and support staff make good use of questioning to extend speaking, thinking and learning. All classrooms are well organised and managed, and provide a happy and safe place where pupils can learn.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Personal, social, health and citizenship education is at the heart of the school's curriculum. The curriculum is carefully planned to match pupils' different needs and abilities. There is an appropriate emphasis on the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, which is contributing to recent improvements in the achievement of pupils throughout the school. Good links are made between subjects to promote the development of basic skills and to enrich learning. Pupils are very pleased that they have opportunities to learn French and to swim. A very good range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities, including music, do much to improve the self-esteem and confidence of pupils. Many pupils play in the school brass band and have taken part in concerts within the school and the local community. Learning is brought alive by visits, which are carefully linked to topics; displays relating to these visits indicate that many pupils have been inspired by their experiences. The very well attended drop-in breakfast club has a positive impact on learning by ensuring that pupils are alert and nourished at the start of the school day.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pastoral care is outstanding. There is a high level of commitment from all staff to ensure that children feel safe, happy and cared for. Clear and established procedures to promote child protection and safeguarding procedures meet requirements. Health and safety arrangements, including risk assessments, are good. Very high quality partnership work with a range of agencies makes an outstanding contribution to the well-being of learners. An excellent example of partnership working is the 'Bronchial Boogie' project which provides outstanding support for pupils with asthma in partnership with the music service and Health Care Trust. The school is rigorous in monitoring and tracking pupils' absence. Innovative measures are improving

attendance which is now in line with the national average. Pupils, who are vulnerable because of exceptional circumstances in their lives, are cared for very well. Minority ethnic groups, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who have English as an additional language are identified quickly and given excellent support. Therefore, they achieve as well as other pupils. Pupils' progress is systematically tracked across the school and teachers set learning targets for their pupils. However, in a few instances, teacher assessments are not accurate so target-setting and support provided by staff may not be appropriate.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The committed headteacher, her leadership team and governors have effectively evaluated the needs of the school and the correct priorities for improvement have been identified and implemented. Realistic but challenging targets are set. The impact of this work is clearly visible in the positive and inclusive ethos that pervades the school and the good progress of pupils. The leadership team strives to ensure that discrimination is eliminated and that all pupils regardless of their gender, ethnicity or learning needs have full access to all the school provides. The headteacher involves all staff in decision making and action planning. This enables them to be fully involved in the management of the school and encourages effective teamwork seen in the management of all aspects of the school, including subjects. The accommodation and resources are well managed to improve learning and benefit from the headteacher's success in securing additional funding. The school provides good value for money.

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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?	2
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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
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 learners' needs?	2
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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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**

On behalf of the inspection team I would like to thank you for making us so welcome in your school. You were all very helpful and polite and displayed a lot of enthusiasm for your work. I admired the beautiful displays of your work, particularly the wonderful art work and writing inspired by 'circus' week and the very energetic art work on Medusa, where movement and colour were so well used. I was very impressed by all your targets displayed around the school and how well you understand what you need to do to improve your work.

Your headteacher and the staff all work hard to make your school effective. You attend a good school and children in the Nursery and Reception years get off to an outstanding start in school. The staff look after you extremely well and you feel safe and happy in school. Overall you make good progress in lessons and you are achieving well. Teachers make sure that they involve you in a lot of interesting activities and visits, including many visits to places of interest like the Oldham Art Gallery and the Year 6 residential visit to Castleshaw where pupils learnt how to work together and enjoy the snow. You also really enjoy your French lessons and swimming.

Your behaviour is outstanding so you are able to listen and learn. We noticed that you take very good care of each other so that you can all enjoy school. Most of you attend school regularly and arrive on time. You know how to stay healthy and safe and make the most of all the exciting activities the school provides before, during and after school, including all the musical and creative opportunities that are offered. I really enjoyed listening to the school brass band playing after school. It was a wonderful end to the school day.

One of the reasons for my visit was to see how your school can improve. I have asked the school to improve standards in English where standards are below average. I have also asked that the school looks for a way to make sure that all your work is assessed accurately so that teachers can do even more to help you to make good progress.