

St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105542
Local Authority	Manchester
Inspection number	336513
Inspection dates	26–27 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Barbara Flitcroft

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	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr S Sibbering
Headteacher	Mrs Lisa Kelly
Date of previous school inspection	13 June 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 12 lessons and observed eight teachers. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, governors and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at its policies, teachers' plans and the school's improvement planning. The team analysed 34 questionnaires from parents and carers, together with those from staff and pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the rate of progress pupils make throughout the school, particularly in mathematics
- how teachers use assessment to plan and provide learning activities to match pupils' learning needs
- the indoor and outdoor provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- how well the school makes judgements about its work.

Information about the school

St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary is a slightly smaller than average primary school. A higher than average proportion of pupils is known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below the national average. Most are of Asian heritage. Very few are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average but a below average proportion of pupils have a statement of special educational needs. There have been some new members of staff since the last inspection but no changes in the senior staff.

Childcare is not provided on the school site; however, there is a drop-in breakfast club for parents and carers, and pupils. The school has recently gained Healthy Schools status.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary is a satisfactory school which is on the up. Its strengths are the Early Years Foundation Stage, relationships throughout the school and aspects of pupils' personal development. Attendance is low despite the school's efforts to promote regular attendance and good punctuality. Pupils generally enjoy school and behave well in lessons and around the school. Links with the local high schools are strong. Fundraising for local, national and international charities supports pupils' awareness of others and those who are less fortunate. Good arrangements to support children starting in the Foundation Stage unit ensure that they settle well. Pupils joining the school part-way through their primary education are welcomed and well supported so that they make new friends quickly.

Children's outcomes are good in the Nursery and Reception classes because staff plan interesting activities both inside and outside that promote children's independence and ensure that they develop their skills well in all areas of learning. Teaching in Years 1 to 6 is good overall and has improved due to well focused leadership and management. The stronger teaching is now enabling pupils often to make good progress in lessons but this has yet to become evident in measures of progress over longer periods of time. As a result, although pupils' overall progress is judged to be satisfactory it is improving. Teaching in mathematics, is mainly satisfactory and occasionally good but it is not as strong as that in other subjects, particularly in Key Stage 2. The progress of pupils is carefully checked and marking is consistently used well to suggest how pupils can improve their work. Nevertheless, sometimes planning does not always use information from assessment and marking to ensure that pupils are consistently set suitably challenging tasks, particularly the more able pupils. Although there have been some improvements to the setting of targets, these are not being used effectively enough across all year groups to accelerate pupils' progress in moving rapidly up to the next level in their work.

The school's leaders have a good understanding of its performance as a result of accurate self-evaluation. Middle leaders play a convincing part in driving forward curriculum developments. Governors are supportive and actively involved in the life of the school; they have a good knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Monitoring of the quality of provision ensures that the school knows where developments are needed. Priorities for action are appropriately focused and show the school's good capacity for sustained improvement. For example, training for staff in giving useful marking feedback to pupils is ensuring that pupils know how to improve their next piece of work. However, the impact of some actions to eliminate inconsistencies has been hampered by absences of some key staff in the past. Now the

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school is back on track to progress even further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and rates of learning and progress, especially in mathematics, by:
 - ensuring that the quality of teaching in mathematics matches the good teaching in other subjects
 - using information from tracking pupils' progress, assessment and marking to match work consistently to pupils' needs and set frequent and measurable targets
 - frequently measure and review learning outcomes throughout lessons.
- Improve attendance and reduce the number of persistent absentees by
 - securing the support and involvement of appropriate outside agencies
 - evaluating its current strategies and reinforcing those which are beginning to prove effective.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils behave well, display good attitudes and relationships in lessons and show great keenness to do well in their work. They enjoy their learning, especially when they are involved in lively activities such as designing visual presentations on laptops, creating a class blog or making clay models of the Greek gods they have researched.

From starting points that are below average in English and mathematics, pupils reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 6. Attainment at the end of Year 6 dipped in 2009 but pupils in the current Year 6 are on track to raise the attainment back up to average levels. Progress overall is improving due to the stronger teaching. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are effectively supported and make satisfactory progress as a result. The attainment of other groups of pupils is average although a very small minority of pupils do not make the quicker progress needed to reach above average levels at the end of Key Stage 2.

Pupils are very aware of the importance of a healthy diet and of taking plenty of exercise. This is reflected in the number of pupils who take part in extra-curricular sporting activities and the high take-up of the healthy school lunches. Staff and pupils have great respect for each other and for the other adults in the school. Pupils say they feel safe. Pupils are confident that they know exactly what to do in the event of a concern.

Pupils make a good contribution to the school community, taking on a range of responsibilities, for example as members of the school council and the eco council. Their contribution to the wider community is satisfactory. Pupils raise money for national and

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international charities. This is contributing to their awareness of cultural diversity worldwide. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall but less strong culturally. As a result of the significant investment in information and communication technology, pupils are developing great confidence in its use. The vast majority of pupils work well collaboratively and apply their basic skills in a range of contexts. This means they are satisfactorily equipped for the next stage in their education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Pupils' strong levels of concentration, allied to teachers' thoughtful questions, successfully boost their oral skills. This fosters excellent attitudes to learning and encourages pupils to try out new ideas confidently. Pupils enjoy opportunities to discuss their learning in pairs and small groups. This supports their good social skills. Pupils make good gains when teachers ensure that pupils know exactly what they are expected to do. However, in a few lessons, mainly in mathematics at Key Stage 2, teachers' lively but sometimes lengthy explanations of new learning are not supported by tasks that

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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fully challenge all pupils, particularly those who find learning easy. Marking is used well to make clear to pupils how to improve their work. Although target setting that ensures pupils know what they need to do to move up to the next level in their work is used in all year groups, it is not used in a consistent way. Some additional adults make a good contribution to supporting pupils' learning in class. However, occasionally, these additional adults are not used effectively to support all groups of pupils.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and suitably enriched by visiting experts such as sports and music specialists who bring additional excitement to learning. Themed events such as 'Super Learning Weeks' bring the curriculum to life. Some links are developing between subjects. A good range of extra-curricular clubs promote pupils' participation. Pupils appreciate visits to local places of interest. The residential stay in an adventure centre for pupils in Year 5 is particularly popular and younger pupils eagerly look forward to their turn to go. Opportunities to participate in local sport competitions promote the skills of pupils who have sporting strengths.

Pastoral care ensures that pupils feel happy and safe. Links with outside agencies are used well to support some pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. The school does not yet do all that it can to ensure that all of those pupils who are fit to attend school do so. Satisfactory transition arrangements help pupils to prepare for transfer to secondary school. The daily breakfast club further supports pupils' personal and social skills and ensures a healthy and prompt start to the school day.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

Good outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the range of satisfactory to good outcomes through the school are a result of the good drive for improvement and the embedding of ambition. Equality is highly promoted and discrimination tackled well in this school, where there are high levels of mutual respect among different groups in the school community. The improvement in pupils' progress also indicates the effectiveness of the school's determination to ensure equality of opportunity. Procedures to safeguard pupils' welfare, safety and health are good. The governing body is committed and supportive of the school but does not pose sufficient levels of challenge to senior leaders. In the past, absences of key staff have slowed down the school's progress but the impact of the school's plans for improvement can now clearly be seen. Capacity to improve is therefore good because of the good contribution of staff at all

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levels to the leadership and management of this hardworking school. The school's promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory. Pupils' awareness of themselves as part of the school is good. Their understanding of those who live in communities other than their own in the United Kingdom and globally is more limited.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress to reach levels that are close to the expected level for their age, because activities are well planned and effectively develop their interests and skills. They enjoy learning, particularly in speech, language and writing, because teaching emphasises these skills. Teaching and learning are good. Children are very well cared for. Parents and carers comment how staff always 'go the extra mile' to meet children's needs. Consequently, children work happily alongside each other and grow in confidence and independence. Well-established routines in the Early Years Foundation Stage unit support children in selecting activities for themselves. They learn to take turns and accept responsibility when sharing equipment and resources in a happy and stimulating environment. For example, some children in the Reception class worked together to make a musical accompaniment with percussion instruments and to dance in their saris from the role-play box to recent film music. Activities are well balanced between those which are initiated by children, promoting independent learning, and those which are led by adults. Staff encourage, support and enrich children's learning well. Good records of regular observations are kept and are used to plan children's learning. Small group adult-led sessions are

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appropriately challenging and relationships are an evident strength. Leadership and management of the Reception and Nursery classes are good; everyone's contribution is valued. There is a clear view of how to improve the provision, particularly the outside area.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The response to the parental questionnaire was low, with only 34 returns. A very large majority of parents and carers who responded to the survey are happy with their children's experience of school, are confident that the school keeps their children safe and feel that teaching is good. A very small minority are concerned about the progress their children are making and how well the school meets their children's needs and prepares them for the future. A small minority feel that the school could do more to take account of their suggestions, are concerned about the way the school is led and managed, and are concerned about behaviour. Inspectors judged leaders' drive for improvements in teaching and pupils' behaviour to be good while pupils' learning and progress are judged satisfactory. The inspection found that the school has acted appropriately regarding staffing changes, although more could be done to ensure that parents and carers are confident that their concerns are addressed. Regular newsletters and opportunities for parents and carers to attend class assemblies make a positive contribution towards the school's sound work to harness the support of parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 34 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 207 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	15	63	6	25	2	8	1	4
The school keeps my child safe	14	58	9	38	1	4	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	11	46	8	33	4	17	1	4
My child is making enough progress at this school	11	46	8	33	3	13	2	8
The teaching is good at this school	12	50	6	25	3	13	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	11	46	7	29	4	17	2	8
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	63	9	38	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	9	38	9	38	3	13	2	8
The school meets my child's particular needs	11	46	7	29	3	13	3	13
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	9	38	7	29	5	21	3	13
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	8	33	8	33	4	17	3	13
The school is led and managed effectively	9	38	8	33	3	13	3	13
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	11	46	7	29	1	4	3	13

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



28 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School, Manchester, M22 5EU

Thank you for your friendly welcome and for helping us when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed talking to you and listening to all that you had to say. St Elizabeth's is a satisfactory school; some parts of its work are good. I am writing to tell you about the judgements that we reached. These are the best things about your school.

- Children in Nursery and Reception get off to a good start.
- Your learning and progress are satisfactory in the rest of the school, but we would like them to be better.
- The teaching is good in most lessons but satisfactory in mathematics.
- The school organises a good variety of activities for you.
- You told us that you like coming to school.
- Most of you attend quite regularly but some of you do not attend as often as you could; attendance at St. Elizabeth's is low when compared with that in most other schools.
- You get on well with one another and you behave well.
- You have a good understanding of how to keep safe and how to live healthily.

To make the school even better, we would like all your lessons to be as good as possible. We have asked the staff to make sure that they set work that is just at the right level of difficulty for all of you, especially in mathematics. We would like you to help by telling your teachers if the work is too easy or too difficult for you. We would also like teachers to make sure you all know what you need to do in order to move up to the next level in your work. We would like you to attend school every day and on time during term time. After all, the teachers can not help you to make progress if you are not in school!

Finally, we would like to thank you again and wish you well in the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Barbara Flitcroft

Lead Inspector

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