

# St Cuthbert's RC Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105553
<b>Local Authority</b>	Manchester
<b>Inspection number</b>	336515
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18–19 May 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Michael Onyon

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	262
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Rev Fr Brendan Curley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr B Hennessy
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 May 2007
<b>School address</b>	Heyscroft Road Withington Manchester M20 4UZ
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 13 lessons, 10 teachers were observed and meetings were held with governors, staff and groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the school's systems for tracking pupils' progress, pupils' books, safeguarding documents, key policies and assessments. Inspection questionnaires were received and analysed from 71 parents and carers.

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

- how well the Early Years Foundation Stage enables children to progress as well as they are able to
- whether the quality of teaching is consistently enabling all pupils to make good progress
- how changes in the way the school tracks the progress of pupils are engaging pupils and helping them understand how to improve
- the impact on learning of perceived strengths in care, guidance and support
- how effectively middle leaders are engaged in bringing about planned improvements.

## Information about the school

This is an above average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. Most pupils are of White British heritage with a small proportion of minority ethnic pupils. Many more pupils than average have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The proportion with a statement of special educational needs is also well above average. The school is designated by the local authority as a 'barrier free' school for pupils with physical disabilities. The school holds the Healthy Schools and Activemark awards.

**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?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

This is a good school. A number of aspects of the school's work are outstanding.

The school cares exceptionally well for its pupils, who thrive in the nurturing family environment where they feel completely safe. Exceptionally strong partnerships support pupils' learning to great effect, particularly for those pupils with special educational needs. The school tackles discrimination extremely well and passionately promotes equal opportunities. At the heart of the school's continued good progress are the headteacher's drive and commitment. All staff share his ambition. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly satisfied with the quality of education provided.

Since the last inspection; sustained standards, good achievement and improvement to the outdoor provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage, demonstrate a track record of improvement, illustrating well the ambition and drive that the senior leadership team provide. Because of its rigorous self-evaluation the school is aware of its strengths and any areas for development and plans carefully to address these. There is a purposeful commitment to develop all staff through focused training. All leaders are increasingly involved in monitoring and evaluating progress. This offers strong evidence of the good capacity that the school has to improve further. Governors provide a good balance of challenge and support and play a significant part in driving through improvements and in shaping the school's future direction. The school provides good value for money.

Children start with skills at levels below those expected for their age, often with weaknesses in language, and personal and social skills. By the end of Year 6 standards are average. This represents good progress. Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning are good. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar good progress and in some individual cases, progress is excellent. Initiatives employed by the school have significantly improved outcomes in mathematics. Teaching is mostly good and sometimes outstanding. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are normally high, but there are times when demands to promote knowledge and understanding further are not sufficiently challenging. In lessons where progress is slower, tasks are sometimes over directed and do not help pupils to think for themselves. New assessment procedures are now being used effectively to identify pupils who need additional support. However, some aspects of assessment, such as identifying what pupils need to do to improve, are inconsistent and this slows the rate of pupils' learning in class and their progress overall.

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

- Further improve the achievement of pupils, by:

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- identifying clearly what pupils need to do to improve and
- consistently presenting the next steps for improvement
- encouraging pupils to assess their own work and that of their peers.
- Sharpen approaches to increase the proportion of outstanding teaching, by:
  - extending opportunities for pupils to think for themselves
  - increasing the demands made of pupils, particularly the most able, to enrich their knowledge and understanding further.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Pupils really enjoy their learning and make good progress in nearly all lessons. When activities are challenging, pupils enjoy the opportunities provided to contribute to their own learning and to reflect on their progress; such as discussing their own views and ideas with a partner and sharing them with a group. They respond well to thought-provoking questions; for example, when considering how best to plan a birthday party, calculating the overall cost. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and minority ethnic pupils make at least the same good progress as their peers because their needs have been accurately identified and intervention and support well matched. The school's average standards and good achievement at the end of Year 6 reflect good rate of improvement since the last inspection. Positive action is successfully improving pupils' problem-solving skills. Current school information shows that pupils are on course to reach challenging targets.

Pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is evident in the quality of their relationships with each other and staff. Pupils are well behaved and demonstrate respect and kindness. They are particularly sensitive to the needs of pupils with disabilities. Pupils report that the school is a place where they feel completely safe. Younger pupils benefit from the house system and the work of the sports leaders which allows them to learn and play with considerate, helpful older pupils. Pupils understand well the benefits of eating a balanced diet and keeping fit. They enjoy a range of responsibilities and the extensive opportunities to raise funds for a wide range of worthy causes. Pupils regularly take part in events in their local community. This helps prepare them well for the next stage in their learning. A number of initiatives are helping to improve attendance and highlight its importance to pupils' learning.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

**How effective is the provision?**

Good teaching creates a very positive climate for learning. Staff are hard working, enthusiastic and display secure subject knowledge. In the most effective lessons, first-hand, active learning captures pupils' interest well and they are encouraged to reason and explain their ideas or solutions to problems. In lessons where progress slows a little, tasks are not always sufficiently enlivened to boost interest and push pupils to think for themselves. Here, too much activity is guided by the teacher and choices for pupils are restricted. Recent adaptations to the assessment systems ensure that progress is regularly checked and any difficulties more quickly identified and addressed. Oral feedback given by teachers is informative, but written feedback in pupils' books does not consistently inform pupils of the next steps they need to take to improve their work. Pupils are given insufficient opportunities to assess their own work and that of their peers to enhance their learning.

The curriculum provides a good range of interesting opportunities for learning because of the way teachers increasingly plan links between subjects. This enables literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology skills, for example, to be practised in a meaningful way. Pupils enjoy the good opportunities to learn in music and French lessons. A good feature of the curriculum is the way it is enriched by clubs and activities after school as well as a range of visits and visitors to support learning and boost pupils' personal development and enjoyment.

Care, guidance and support are outstanding and this helps all pupils to achieve success. This includes those potentially vulnerable or those who face challenging circumstances. Parents and carers are especially appreciative of the high quality of care, pupils'

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enjoyment and the sense of belonging that the school provides. Pupils report that staff are very quick to identify any inappropriate behaviour or concerns and worries pupils may have. Staff are highly skilled at supporting individual pupils and their families. Highly effective partnerships with specialist support agencies enable all pupils to join all activities with their peers.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide a strong leadership team establishing a positive and distinctive vision for the school with inclusion permeating all aspects of school life. All the staff are fully committed to the high aspirations established. Leadership capacity is being systematically strengthened and subject leaders demonstrate growing confidence in evaluating the impact of their actions on pupils' learning. Assessment practice is being systematically strengthened. Good relationships with parents, carers and the local community make an important contribution to the continual drive to raise achievement. Especially effective are the excellent partnerships with a range of agencies providing outstanding support for pupils learning and well-being. Self-evaluation judgements are accurate.

Governors make a good contribution to the drive and direction of the school.

They challenge and hold the school to account in positive ways. Good procedures are in place to safeguard pupils, fully meeting statutory requirements and child protection is especially robust. Concerted action is taken to ensure that pupils of all backgrounds make the same good progress and achievement. As a result, a pattern of good progress and rising achievement has emerged and is being sustained, confirming the school's commitment to equal opportunities. Community cohesion is positively promoted. A variety of links provide pupils with an insight into the diversity of cultures and beliefs in the wider community, nationally and globally.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2

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<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter Nursery with skills at levels below those expected for their age, particularly in their communication and skills. They settle quickly, happily and confidently into routines to make consistently good progress. By the time they enter Year 1, nearly all are working towards the goals expected of them for their age with a small number exceeding their targets. Children interact well with one another and behaviour is very good. They feel safe in the welcoming, friendly and secure learning areas. Excellent relationships with staff enable parents and carers to talk freely about their children's interests and share any concerns; for example working alongside their children at the beginning of the day. Intervention and support are effective and encourage children to be independent and active learners. Teaching is good and sometimes outstanding. Children move confidently between indoor and outdoor areas, questions are skilfully used by staff to prompt the next steps in learning, for example when measuring a range of objects and reporting back to others in the class. There is a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities. The provision is well led and astutely managed. Staff work as an impressive team. All activities are inclusive and good provision is made for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities so that they enjoy all the experiences on offer and make equally good progress.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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



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## **Views of parents and carers**

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers are supportive of the school, and comment very positively about the quality of care and education their children receive. All who responded say that their children are safe and inspectors agree. Parents and carers feel welcome if they have any worries or concerns, and many endorse the view of one parent that, 'this is a good school doing well for our children'. Very few parents and carers had concerns related to information about their child's progress and whether their suggestions are listened to. The inspection finds that ideas presented by parents/carers are carefully considered and the school provides good information about pupils' progress.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Cuthbert's RC 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 71 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 262 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	53	75	18	25	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	62	87	9	13	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	50	70	20	28	0	0	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	48	68	19	27	3	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	53	75	14	20	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	46	65	23	32	0	0	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	50	70	17	24	1	1	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)	41	58	27	38	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	45	63	24	34	0	0	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	43	61	24	34	0	0	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	43	61	22	31	2	3	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	49	69	18	25	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	53	75	16	23	0	0	1	1

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](http://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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



19 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Cuthbert's RC Primary School, Manchester, M20 4UZ

Thank you for welcoming the inspection team to your school. We were delighted to meet you and appreciated your politeness. We were impressed that you demonstrated many mature attitudes in your personal development. You have an excellent knowledge and understanding of how to stay safe. Very well done! We have judged your behaviour to be good. In addition to these positive attributes, you also make good progress in your learning to reach expected standards by Year 6.

Your school is led and managed well. All adults play their part in the smooth running of the school and wanting the best for you. Your headteacher, the teachers and all the other adults give good help and support and the governors keep a close eye on the school. Through the hard work of the adults the school provides you with outstanding levels of care, guidance and support, and good teaching. The subjects you learn are interesting, too, and it is good to hear about your involvement in the school council, as sports leaders and organising your fund-raising for so many good causes. We know you enjoy these activities, along with your after-school clubs, visits and the many visitors.

You attend a good school with things that are outstanding. Congratulations! To help make it even better we think it is important for you to be given activities that make your learning more lively and even more demanding – especially for those pupils who find it easier to learn. In addition you could be given more advice as to how you can improve. We have asked your leaders to encourage you to judge the quality of your own work and that of your friends and to think about how you might improve it.

From meeting you we know that you will be keen to get involved and wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr Michael Onyon

Lead inspector

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