

St Hilda's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106351
Local Authority	Trafford
Inspection number	336661
Inspection dates	20–21 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Nigel Cromey-Hawke

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	371
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Ross Malkin
Headteacher	Mrs Mavis Wilkinson
Date of previous school inspection	11 October 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 14 lessons, observing 12 staff and all classes. They also held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils, and parents and carers. They observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation, including development planning, self-evaluation records, policies and performance data. Questionnaires from 89 parents and carers, 133 pupils and 22 staff were scrutinised.

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

- the quality of the teachers' assessments of pupils' progress
- the effectiveness of the strategies put in place to improve the quality of teaching and learning
- how successfully the leaders, managers and governors identify, implement and evaluate the school's priorities to drive the school forward.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average size primary school. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well above average, being made up from largely Asian British and Black British Caribbean groups. The proportion learning English as an additional language is well above average, of these there are very few at the early stages of learning English. The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, but the number with a statement of special educational needs matches the national average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The school has a variety of awards, including Artsmark, Activemark and International Schools Gold award, as well as Healthy Schools status. The school has undergone significant staffing changes since the last inspection.

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

3

Main findings

St Hilda's Church of England Primary is a satisfactory school. It has some good features. One parent, reflecting a typical view, commented that the school has, 'a great community spirit. There is a sense that everyone is valued and supported.'

Recent challenges regarding staffing are being overcome and the school is moving forward under the leadership of the headteacher, staff and governors. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children generally make a good start to their learning, but some aspects of the outdoor provision are underdeveloped. School data and inspection evidence show that pupils' progress throughout the rest of the school is satisfactory, and in reading often good. By the end of Year 6 pupils' attainment is broadly average, but in some other year groups it is weaker in writing and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress, as a result of the good support they receive. Progress for those pupils whose first language is not English, is satisfactory overall. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, with some that is good. Some activities do not appropriately match pupils' needs, especially the more able, and do not enable pupils to work independently. The satisfactory curriculum has strengths in the arts, sport and in promoting pupils' health. Their awareness of what it means to lead a healthy lifestyle is, as a result, outstanding. There is an effective programme for personal and social education that promotes pupils' personal development well. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school's engagement with parents and carers is satisfactory and community cohesion is good, especially at the international level.

Pupils enjoy their time in school, their behaviour is good and attendance is above average. Pupils say they feel safe and valued in the harmonious and multicultural environment. This is supported by the good care, guidance and support they receive. Governors support the school satisfactorily. Self-evaluation is satisfactory, but is developing well, as the good management structures become more effectively embedded across the school. The school has a clear understanding of its strengths and weaknesses and appropriate plans are in place to bring about improvement. As a result, the school's capacity for sustained improvement is satisfactory.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in writing and mathematics across all year groups by implementing consistently effective assessment practice.
- Ensure that the quality of learning and pupils' progress is good or better in all lessons, by:

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- – consistently matching activities to meet the needs of all pupils, especially the more able
- – allow pupils to demonstrate their learning effectively without adult support.
- Further develop outdoor provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by improving the assessment and monitoring of outdoor activities to ensure that all areas of learning are covered.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before the next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils acquire knowledge, develop understanding and learn and practise their skills satisfactorily. They are keen to succeed, apply themselves well in most lessons, work at a good pace and enjoy learning when provided with appropriate tasks and guidance. Practical learning activities are included in the good lessons that pupils clearly enjoy. However, learning is satisfactory overall because there are inconsistencies in the use made by teachers of assessments to plan pupils' next steps in learning. This is improving as greater staffing stability ensures better continuity of learning. Pupils' attainment by the time pupils leave Year 6 is average. Weaknesses in science have been largely overcome, but standards in some year groups in writing and mathematics remain slightly lower than average, especially at the higher levels. Progress in reading is often good. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is good as a result of the good support and guidance they receive. The progress made by Asian pupils is also often good but progress made overall by other ethnic groups is satisfactory.

Pupils say they feel safe and well looked after. Behaviour is good and often very good within the better lessons. Attendance is above average because the school has all but eliminated persistent absenteeism through the good work of its support staff. The school places a very high priority upon developing pupils' understanding of healthy living, reflecting its award. Pupils engage in many healthy activities and act as health ambassadors across the city through a link with a football club. Pupils also make a good contribution to the daily running of the school, through the active school council and by taking on responsibilities as playground buddies, eco-wardens and classroom monitors. Community involvement through links with the parish church is good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, with strengths in their spiritual understanding. The promotion of skills that contribute to pupils' future economic well-being is satisfactory.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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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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	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is satisfactory across the school. There is some that is good, especially in upper Key Stage 1 and upper Key Stage 2. In the better lessons, good planning ensures that varied activities are provided that meet the needs of pupils and good pace and challenge provided by the teacher stimulates their interest. The school has developed detailed assessment and tracking procedures since the last inspection. In the good lessons, the results of these procedures clearly inform teaching and help the teaching assistants target support sessions where appropriate. Other lessons lack this rigour, however; activities are not as well matched to the needs of pupils, especially for the more able. In some cases there is too much teacher direction and limited independent working, resulting in a slowing of progress and a loss of interest amongst some pupils. The use of carefully targeted assessment tasks in writing and mathematics that help pupils to develop specific skills in these areas is not consistent across all year groups and, as a result, standards in these areas are lower than elsewhere in the school.

The curriculum is satisfactory. It is undergoing a fundamental review. Cross-curricular and themed topic approaches are being introduced, and the role of information and communication technology to support learning is being boosted. Pupils say they find these approaches interesting and relevant. There is a strong focus upon sport, health and emotional well-being. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities with high participation rates, including residential outdoor pursuits. These contribute very well to pupils' health and personal development.

Well organised arrangements for the care of pupils contribute to their generally good development and well-being, and support their learning effectively. Clearly targeted

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support for groups of potentially vulnerable pupils has resulted in significant improvements, especially for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Transition into and out of the school is good. Half-termly inclusion meetings track vulnerable pupils' progress well. The work of the learning mentors and parent support advisor is especially valued in supporting attendance and responding to day-to-day concerns of pupils. The impact of this work is seen in the warm, harmonious atmosphere of the school and the positive relations between pupils and adults within the school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
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	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has responded well to the challenges of recent years, having stabilised the staffing and begun a drive to get greater consistency in the quality of teaching and learning across the school. This vision is shared by the staff and governors. Better systems have been introduced to chart pupils' progress more accurately, although they are not yet used consistently by all staff to shape their teaching. There is a clear and well-coordinated drive towards improvement. Self- evaluation practices are satisfactory but developing well with a now stable staffing situation. The promotion of equal opportunities is satisfactory and the school is working appropriately towards narrowing the achievement gap between the groups of pupils. Discrimination is extremely rare and when encountered is dealt with very well. Safeguarding procedures are good, with good practice being evident in the quality of the school's work with outside agencies that supports vulnerable pupils' personal development and well-being. Partnership working with other agencies is good, especially through the Reading Recovery project, which has resulted in very good progress being made by many pupils. Community cohesion is good overall. The school has extensive international links, reflecting its award, but pupils do not fully understand how it contributes to an understanding of cultural differences. The school's engagement with parents and carers is satisfactory. There are good links with the local children's centre, but participation in family learning opportunities provided by the school to enable parents and carers to help their children with their work at home, has been limited. Governance is satisfactory with the governing body taking an increasingly active part recently in challenging and supporting the school over its performance.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the nursery with knowledge, understanding and skills below those typical for their age. They settle well and enjoy their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage because of the good care they receive and the warm, positive atmosphere. There is a strong emphasis upon developing children's social, mathematical and language skills. Children's learning is well recorded for activities inside, but when outdoor learning takes place this is less secure and it is not always clear that all areas of learning are covered. Parents and carers are well informed about their children's progress and teachers have a good understanding of children's interests and skills. Children make good progress as a result of the good teaching in an environment that caters well for their needs. Those children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who are learning English as an additional language make good progress because of the support they receive. Teachers plan a good range of activities with a good balance between those they direct and the ones that children choose for themselves. As a result, by the time they leave, children behave and are able to play and work well, having reached broadly expected levels across all areas of learning. Leadership and management are good. The staff training is up-to-date and welfare requirements are met. There are good plans in evidence for driving further improvement.

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

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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 very large majority of parents and carers who returned the questionnaires are happy with most aspects of the school. They consider it provides a safe and caring environment for their children and that it is largely well led and managed. Inspectors agreed with these views. A very small minority felt that their views are not taken into account sufficiently by the school and that the school does not help them enough in supporting their child's learning, but inspection evidence shows that the school's practice in these areas is at least satisfactory. The school is led and managed satisfactorily.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Hilda's CE 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 89 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 371 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	52	58	36	40	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	43	48	42	47	2	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	38	43	46	52	5	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	30	34	47	53	7	8	3	3
The teaching is good at this school	35	39	47	53	4	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	31	35	44	49	14	16	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	39	44	44	49	4	4	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)	34	38	39	44	8	9	2	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	27	30	51	57	6	7	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	30	34	47	53	6	7	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	16	49	55	16	18	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	27	30	44	49	10	11	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	38	43	41	46	7	8	2	2

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.



22 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Hilda's CE Primary School, Manchester, M16 0EX

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave me and the team when we inspected your school recently. You were very friendly, polite and enthusiastic about what you do. You told us a lot of interesting things about your school and you are clearly very proud of it.

St Hilda's is a satisfactory school. It has some good features. The headteacher, staff and governors are helping the school to improve. You get a good start to your learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make good progress because of the good teaching, care, and leadership and management. Progress throughout the school is highly varied but satisfactory overall, because of the differences in the quality of teaching across the school and the impact of past staffing changes. Those of you who find learning more challenging than others make good progress. By the time you leave Year 6, you reach broadly average standards, although sometimes standards are above average in English. Most of you say you enjoy school and feel valued and safe, as a result of how well you are looked after. Your behaviour and attendance are both good. Well done! Teaching is satisfactory overall with much that is good. The range of subjects you learn is satisfactory but developing well.

I have asked the school's leaders to consider the following points to help your school to improve further.

- To raise standards in writing and mathematics across all classes by giving you more clearly focused assessment tasks and help in completing them.
- To make sure that all your lessons are at least good, with work that is set at just the right level for all of you, especially those who find learning easier than others.
- Develop the outdoor learning area more fully within the Early Years Foundation Stage.

You can help by telling your teachers how best you learn and if you have any difficulties. I wish you the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Dr Nigel Cromey-Hawke

Lead inspector

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