

St Wilfrid's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111461
Local Authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	337687
Inspection dates	7–8 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Brian Padgett HMI

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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	361
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Roy Newey
Headteacher	Mrs J Boyle
Date of previous school inspection	26 June 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. Fourteen lessons and teachers were observed and meetings were held with parents and carers, groups of pupils, governors and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, looked at school documentation and analysed 161 questionnaires from parents and carers.

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

- how well the school successfully develops the whole child and whether pupils could achieve more academically
- how effective partnerships are with parents and carers, and others
- how well the curriculum contributes to pupils' enjoyment of school and to their personal development.

Information about the school

St Wilfrid's is a larger than average primary school. It serves the Catholic communities of Northwich and the surrounding districts. The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage. There is a small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. Few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, although a much higher proportion of these pupils than is usual have complex additional needs.

The school provides childcare before and after school. This provision was inspected and is evaluated in the report. St Wilfrid's Pre-School operates alongside the school's Early Years Foundation Stage Reception classes. The pre-school is run by a committee that is not responsible to the governing body of the school. It received an independent inspection from Ofsted during the first day of the school inspection. The report for the pre-school can be found on the Ofsted website, under EY305335.

The school has achieved several awards, including Artsmark Silver, Activemark and the Inclusion Award. It has 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 Wilfrid's provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. In several respects it provides well. Pupils gain from a curriculum that gives them exciting opportunities for learning. Their all-round personal development is good and they get a very good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school has an exceptionally welcoming ethos. It has an outstanding sense of community through its close partnerships with families, the church, the pre-school, out-of-hours club and the nearby secondary school. Pupils generally reach above average standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, but this does not represent the best pupils can achieve. This determined the overall effectiveness judgement.

Pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning through Key Stages 1 and 2 and reach above average standards in the core subjects by Years 2 and 6. Progress throughout the school is not uniform and dips in lower Key Stage 2. Pupils make good progress in their personal development. They enjoy school and become mature, well-behaved young people by the time they are ready to move to secondary school. Good opportunities within the curriculum ensure that pupils' achievements include those in the arts and in physical education. The school is very inclusive. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully integrated and they make good progress. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall, and there is teaching of good quality. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good. The work provided for most pupils meets their learning needs but it is not always well matched to these needs for all pupils. The use of assessments of pupils' work in order to promote their higher achievement is developing. The care for each pupil as an individual is especially strong. The school is at the centre of a number of particularly effective partnerships. These begin with very close links with St Wilfrid's Pre-School, with which the school shares premises. There is a seamless transition to school for the Reception children. At Year 6 a similarly close and well-established partnership with the Catholic secondary school on the campus ensures a smooth transition to secondary education. Families are very well supported by the school in its provision of childcare during term time and in school holidays through its Early Birds and Night Owls Club. Parents and carers are very supportive of the school. The school's Catholic foundation binds the school and its families in a common faith. Pupils' spiritual development is outstanding. The school is unusual in having its own chapel.

Leadership and management of the school are effective. The school has responded to recent challenges well, such as re-establishing standards in mathematics after an unexpected fall in results in 2009. The headteacher, in particular, has the trust and confidence of parents and carers, governors and pupils. She tracks and monitors the

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progress of pupils well. The school has a relatively new senior leadership team that is beginning to provide leadership for the staff. The governing body has a broad range of expertise to call on. Together the leaders and managers have an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are in a strong position to secure further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' achievements in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science by:
 - providing a better match of work to pupils' different learning needs and aptitudes, especially in lower Key Stage 2 and for the more able
 - assessing pupils' work more accurately and ensuring that they know what to do next in their learning.
- About 40% of 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 begin Year 1 with levels of development that are above average, on the whole. They reach above average standards at the end of both key stages, indicating broadly satisfactory progress for most pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, about half of whom have complex learning needs, make good progress. Progress is not uniform throughout the school. It dips in lower Key Stage 2 and is better in upper Key Stage 2. More able pupils do not always achieve as well as they should, saying their work is sometimes too easy.

In contrast, pupils make uniformly good progress in their personal development. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. It is less strong in cultural development but outstanding in spiritual development, where the school's Catholic underpinning foundation makes a strong impact. Pupils enjoy their school days. By Year 6 they are responsible, confident young people. They demonstrate many of the skills they will need for success in later life, and a broad interest across a wide range of subjects, especially in sport and the arts. Their ability to take on responsibility is seen in the good work of the school council. From the Early Years Foundation Stage, pupils learn about healthy eating and the importance of exercise, and they grow and eat their own vegetables. Pupils feel safe in school and appreciate the measures the school has taken to ensure their safety. Their knowledge of staying safe is good.

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	2
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	2
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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The school has significant strengths in the quality of its provision. It promotes pupils' personal development well and it provides excellent pastoral care for all its pupils, especially those whose circumstances make them the most vulnerable. Good relationships with pupils and their families are at the heart of the school's provision. It ensures the best transitions for pupils at each stage of their learning. The pre-school has the closest of relationships with the Early Years Foundation Stage and provides a seamless change for most young children. The out-of-hours club, run by the school, is very popular. It provides a safe and enjoyable extension of the school day at the beginning and end of the day. This is an important support for working parents and carers and it is popular with all children. There are excellent links with the nearby Catholic secondary school for sports, for example, and to ensure the best possible transfer for pupils, especially for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The school's curriculum is of a good quality. It is being developed further to provide more meaningful learning of basic skills within a creative curriculum involving other subjects. The school recognises the need to improve teaching of the core subjects, as this is where underachievement for some groups of children, including those who are more able, is to be found. Curricular opportunities for pupils are enriched by a wide range of activities. These include extensive sport, opportunities to engage in the performing arts, regular residential visits and a wide range of extra-curricular activities.

The quality of teaching is not consistent and accounts for the variation in progress in different parts of the school. Relationships between pupils and staff are good. Where teaching is of good overall quality, teachers plan interesting work for a range of abilities

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in their classes and use assessment well, involving the pupils in the assessments, so that the pupils know what to do next. Expectations of teachers also vary and inspectors observed too much work by pupils that was not well presented or where teachers' comments had not been followed up. Some teaching suited only pupils who preferred to learn in a more formal way and did not give sufficient scope to pupils with different aptitudes who might prefer a more active way of learning. Teaching assistants make an important contribution to the progress of pupils, particularly to those with severe and complex learning difficulties.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers of the school have created a powerful school community, forging effective partnerships and developing a clear vision based on the all-round development of pupils. The school is highly inclusive, promotes equal opportunities well and tackles any form of discrimination. Leaders and managers are successful in promoting community cohesion and in embedding in pupils a concern for others, locally and globally. Safeguarding requirements are fully met.

The headteacher has the full support and respect of the school community. She monitors the work of the school carefully. Together with the governing body she has a clear and realistic view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, with sound plans in place to address weaknesses. Supporting her in the school is a relatively new senior management team. The team has made a good start to sharing leadership, leading on the management of pupils' behaviour, the development of the Early Years Foundation Stage and on the key skills of literacy and numeracy. The new team has had some success in arresting an apparent fall in standards in mathematics in 2009. Early indications are that pupils' standards are now again above average in mathematics.

Governors bring many skills to the work of governance. They are involved fully in the life of the school and ensure that it receives and provides good value for money through fiscal prudence. They are firmly rooted in the local Catholic community, as are the parent body. They are well organised, providing support and challenge for the school's leaders, but are less effective in contributing to the strategic direction of the school.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Most children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage (Reception) classes from the associated pre-school. Reception children and pre-school children share the same indoor and outdoor areas for much of the day. This means children entering Reception are already familiar with their surroundings and know the teachers well. This ensures an ideal transition for children and parents and carers alike. Assessments made on entry suggest children enter Reception with levels of development that are typical of children of their age. They enjoy school and make good progress over the year, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and with developmental delay. By the time they leave, most children achieve the learning goals desirable for starting Year 1 and a minority of children are already working within the levels of the National Curriculum. The Early Years Foundation Stage provides learning experiences of a good quality. Most of the time, children learn through their play, with staff providing an imaginative and stimulating environment, indoors and out. They respond well to children's changing interests and enthusiasms. For example, at the time of the inspection, staff capitalised on children's interests in their holidays abroad by creating a flight check-in area for role play. This provided many opportunities for purposeful activities in the different areas of learning. The well-being of children is promoted well and children have a good understanding, for example, of what constitutes a healthy snack. The partnerships with parents and carers and the pre-school staff are excellent. Children feel very safe in this nurturing environment. The Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed well. Assessments of children's learning and development are rigorous and their achievements, including, at the time of the inspection, some wonderful artwork, are continually celebrated with parents and carers.

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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

Parents and carers are very supportive of the school. They are hugely positive about the work of the headteacher. However, their overall positive views do not prevent them challenging the school when they see fit and one third of the responses included written comments with at least one criticism. Inspectors found no evidence for some of the concerns raised, such as regarding bullying behaviour among some pupils or a lack of communication from school to home. Inspectors agreed with the minority of parents and carers who felt their children were not making sufficient progress in school, particularly those with more able children.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Wilfrid'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 161 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 361 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	99	61	58	36	4	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	103	64	54	34	4	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	57	35	84	52	19	12	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	64	40	71	44	22	14	2	1
The teaching is good at this school	67	42	83	52	7	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	70	43	68	42	19	12	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	78	48	71	44	7	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)	91	57	66	41	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	71	44	70	43	10	6	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	59	37	74	46	20	12	3	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	52	32	84	52	23	14	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	88	55	65	40	7	4	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	84	52	65	40	11	7	0	0

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.



09 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Wilfrid's Catholic Primary School, Northwich, CW8 1JW

You may remember when inspectors visited the school towards the end of the summer term. We came to see how well the school was helping you learn and develop. I am writing to you to let you know what we found. Thank you to all those pupils who spoke to inspectors during the two days we were at St Wilfrid's. Your views were important to us and helped us to reach our conclusions.

We graded the school as satisfactory, which means we think it does some things well and that it could do some things better. Two aspects that stood out for us were the excellent care that the school provides for you and the terrific sense of community between the school, your parents and carers, the pre-school and EBNOC. We think these features make the school a very welcoming place to be and help you develop well as young citizens of the future. For instance, you already understand and know a great deal about what you have to do to be healthy. The work you do, especially outside of learning your basic skills, is exciting and interesting. We noted the many opportunities you have to go on residential visits, to be involved in sport, to study music and art and to learn about the performing arts. I was fortunate to see the Year 6 pupils preparing for their Mayflower production. I was extremely impressed at how well they were tackling some very difficult and emotional scenes as pilgrims and sailors. We also think those responsible for running the school, especially Mrs Boyle, are doing a good job and we have confidence in their ability to sort out any problems they face in making the school better still.

You reach above average levels in English and mathematics by Year 6. That's good but we think you can do better. Watching lessons, talking to you and looking through your books convinced us that you could reach higher standards. For you to achieve this, we are recommending your teachers adjust your work so that it matches exactly what you need to learn next. For those of you who find learning easy, this may mean that you are given more difficult work. For those of you who find learning hard, it may be that teachers find different ways of working that suit you best. Either way, it will mean you and your teachers working together to assess how much progress you have made in your learning and setting targets for the next steps. We are sure that your parents and

carers will want to be involved and help you too.

On behalf of the inspection team, I wish you all the best for your futures.

Yours sincerely

Brian Padgett

Her Majesty's Inspector

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