

St William of Perth Roman Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118775
Local Authority	Medway
Inspection number	339301
Inspection dates	6–7 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Jacqueline Marshall

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	204
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rob Twist
Headteacher	Anne Keywood
Date of previous school inspection	19 June 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 10 lessons, observed seven teachers, and held meetings with groups of pupils, staff, school leaders and governors. Although they did not meet with parents and carers, they evaluated 95 parental and carer questionnaires, in addition to 80 questionnaires from the older pupils. They looked at documents including school policies, pupils' progress data, attendance figures and school development planning, as well as pupils' work.

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

- the effectiveness of the school's strategies for improving the learning and progress of all pupils, especially in mathematics
- the extent to which staff use assessment information to support and challenge pupils' learning and raise attainment
- the effectiveness of leaders in checking, reviewing and taking actions to raise standards
- the impact of the considerable staff changes on the school's effectiveness.

Information about the school

St William of Perth is an average-sized primary school. The majority of pupils are from White British families. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average, as is the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs. The range of barriers to learning includes moderate learning difficulties, speech, language and communication issues and behavioural, emotional and social needs.

Since September 2009, five of the seven teaching staff have been appointed, as well as other support and office staff. The headteacher joined in January 2010.

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

This is a satisfactory school. Since the last inspection, it has undergone significant change. The school is now focused solidly on improving learning for the pupils after a period of staff changes and recent appointments. There is a strong, shared commitment to raising attainment for all pupils. Leaders at all levels are beginning to become involved in formal self-evaluation. Senior leaders have an accurate awareness of the school's effectiveness and what it needs to do to bring about improvement. This awareness, combined with the effective action to tackle previous underachievement, shows the school's satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

The school is taking steps to strengthen pastoral care, guidance and support and this has been a key factor in ensuring that pupils feel safe and well cared for. It has worked hard to maintain good levels of attendance and pupils benefit from good relationships with staff and behave well. They talk with enthusiasm about their school and have a good understanding of how to stay safe, as demonstrated by the improvements made to the playground following the school council's identification of how the playground could be made safer.

Teaching is typically satisfactory and sometimes better throughout the school. This is because leaders have focused successfully on improving the quality of teaching to ensure that all pupils make at least satisfactory progress. However, inconsistencies in the quality of teaching remain and, as a result, pupils' progress is better in some lessons and classes than others. Consequently, this led to inconsistent progress as children moved through the school. All teachers check regularly how well pupils are doing, but some do not make sufficiently accurate use of this information to set suitably challenging work for all pupils. This lack of challenge hinders the progress some pupils make. While day-to-day assessment, including marking, is good in some classes and better in English than mathematics, in others it is not used well enough. Not all pupils are made aware of the next, small steps needed to improve their work and this limits their ability to take responsibility for their learning. As part of its drive to raise attainment, the school has begun to focus increasingly on planning investigations in mathematics and science. However, this action has not yet been sufficient to ensure pupils are consistently and systematically developing their investigative skills or being encouraged always to think more deeply about their work. Similarly, while opportunities for the very youngest children to learn through play and investigation are planned daily, they are not sufficiently based on an assessment of what children can do and what they need to learn next. This is particularly the case for activities in the outdoor area.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Secure good achievement for all pupils by:
 - improving teachers' use of assessment information to ensure that lessons always challenge and engage pupils well
 - develop teachers' marking so that pupils understand what to do next to improve their work.
- Increase the effectiveness of all leaders by:
 - developing their role in regularly monitoring and evaluating the work of the school
 - leading improvements and taking increased responsibility for ensuring success.
- Ensure the youngest children get off to a good start by:
 - making better use of assessment to target the next steps in their learning, when planning activities
 - provide a richer range of opportunities that challenge and engage them, particularly in the outdoor learning area.
- Raise attainment in mathematics and science by ensuring that teaching, more actively, promotes an investigative approach to learning and by providing more opportunities for pupils to use and apply their skills.

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

Across the school, pupils achieve satisfactorily in their academic learning. They have good attitudes towards school and can explain clearly what they are learning because this is always shared with them at the start of a lesson. However, at times, the planned learning is not always matched closely enough to the differing abilities of each group or individual to enable all pupils to achieve consistently well. In such lessons, pupils' interest and behaviour dips. Where pupils' learning is good, they talk eagerly about what they have learnt. In a Key Stage 2 lesson, pupils, successfully, reviewed what they had learned during the lesson, using the learning to explain confidently to each other the good elements of their writing and where they could improve.

Pupils, generally, start school with the skills levels and understanding expected for their age, though this can vary from cohort to cohort. They make satisfactory progress throughout the school and, consequently, attainment by the time they leave in Year 6 is broadly average. While in some years there is a large difference between the number of boys and girls, this is, generally, managed well in terms of the types of learning and variety of topics chosen to engage them, ensuring that, overall, there is no difference in their progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, as well as those pupils at the early stages of learning English, also make satisfactory progress as a result of the appropriately targeted support planned for them.

Pupils achieve satisfactorily in their personal and social development. Their enjoyment of school life is evident in their supportive attitudes towards each other, which help to make the school a safe and welcoming place. Pupils say they enjoy school and feel cared for 'because we all get on here and everyone tries hard to be friends'. Pupils enjoy

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being part of the school council and taking on responsibilities. They are looking forward to the additional opportunities to do this being planned by the school to extend this aspect of their personal development. They have a satisfactory understanding of how to keep healthy and develop appropriate skills for the next stage in their learning. While pupils' spiritual, moral and social development and their contribution to the community are satisfactory, they are stronger within the school and local community. Here, relationships are good and children are considerate of each other, valuing and celebrating each other's differences. However, the school is less successful in extending pupils' awareness of the diversity of cultures within the United Kingdom and around the world. The school has identified this as a priority for improvement within its strategy to promote community cohesion.

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	3
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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Good relationships between staff and pupils help to foster pupils' positive attitudes towards learning. Some lessons are planned and organised well, with interesting activities to engage the pupils and high expectations set by teachers. For example, in a

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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Key Stage 1 lesson, pupils achieved well as they improved a well-known author's words. They produced high-quality written work because the teacher shared clear success criteria with them so that they knew exactly how to improve their writing. The most able were challenged very effectively to include inference and succeeded well because of the good links to their reading skills made by the teacher. By the end, pupils' work was being displayed on the interactive whiteboard and they were suggesting improvements to one another's' writing, drawing effectively on the success criteria to do so. The school has introduced more rigorous tracking systems, which are, increasingly, holding teachers to account for their pupils' progress. However, in some lessons and classes, this information is not currently used sufficiently well to plan work that is tailored closely to all pupils' needs. In their marking, teachers do not refer consistently to the next steps in pupils' learning or to pupils' individual targets, particularly in mathematics, in order to show them how to improve their work.

The curriculum is appropriately adapted to meet the needs of different groups of pupils, enabling them to build basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology which are satisfactory. While well-considered links are made between subjects, opportunities to develop pupils' investigative skills and to allow them to practise and consolidate these skills are less well established. Satisfactory enrichment of the curriculum through a variety of visits and visitors, as well as the extra-curricular activities, helps to promote pupils' enjoyment of learning. Pupils' welfare and personal, social and health needs are catered for appropriately because the school works closely with parents and carers and outside agencies, where needed. Systems to identify, support and track the progress of pupils with particular learning needs have been established, but are not yet sufficiently well embedded to make a strong impact on improving their progress.

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	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has, quickly, established a clear vision for the school. The vision is shared by all members of the recently created senior management team, who are equally ambitious for the school. Leaders are becoming, increasingly, involved in analysing performance data to see how well the school is doing and to plan actions for improvement. Senior leaders, including governors, recognise the need to become even more rigorous in their monitoring of teaching and learning to see where it is most

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effective and to ensure consistency. Subject leaders, many new to their role, play an appropriate part in checking how well their subject is doing and planning for improvement. The plans are beginning to be put into action, but there has not been enough time for them to take effect fully.

All leaders, appropriately, support the drive for equality and diversity. They have put in place more rigorous systems to make sure increasingly that pupils from all groups receive the same level of support and achieve well. They play their part in ensuring that safeguarding guidelines are adequately met, with the safeguarding governor making appropriate, yearly checks on the school's procedures and systems. Pupils are encouraged to play their part in the school and the local community. Leaders are also beginning to promote pupils' understanding of different faiths and cultures in national and global contexts.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
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 enter the Reception class with skills levels and understanding that are in line with those expected for their age in all aspects of their learning. They grow in confidence and make satisfactory progress so that attainment remains average as they start in Year 1. The curriculum, as a whole, is adapted appropriately to engage the children in active learning but the outdoor learning environment lacks sufficient quality opportunities to extend and challenge pupils' learning or to enthuse and engage them sufficiently to achieve well. Teaching is satisfactory, with an appropriate mixture of activities led by staff and others chosen by the children themselves. During one session,

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children listened attentively to a story, identifying the rhyming words and then explained how the bear felt, making effective use of 'talk partners' to discuss their ideas. Assessment information is used increasingly effectively to record children's progress, but is not yet used well enough in planning ahead to ensure they make good gains in their learning from day to day. Adults make insufficient use of opportunities to extend children's learning by intervening in their play, either through discussion or by tailoring activities more closely to meet children's needs and interests. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader and her team ensure children are provided with a safe environment in which to learn and grow. They have built on the links with parents and carers to try and develop good levels of communication which support the children's learning positively.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

A very large majority of parent and carer questionnaires were positive and expressed considerable satisfaction with the new leadership and management, as well as the school's efforts to ensure their children are safe and well cared for. Typical comments included; 'SWOP has to be the safest environment and most secure atmosphere for a child to grow in?.the ethos is remarkable'; 'Since the new HT has been in place I have noticed significant changes to learning, feedback to parents, activities organised for children and clear leadership skills from the Head. The school is making a lot of progress in a short period of time'; 'More than happy ? my child thoroughly enjoys school.'

A very small minority of parents and carers reported concerns over their children's progress, how the school informed them about it, and how they could help with their children's learning. Inspection evidence shows that the school, regularly, provides parents and carers with information about achievement, progress and standards. However, the school is working hard to reach out and engage with parents and carers through recent initiatives such as the more detailed home-school book in the Early Years Foundation Stage. A few parents and carers recorded concerns about other issues, including how the school deals with unacceptable behaviour and takes account of suggestions and concerns. The inspection found no evidence to support these concerns.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St William of Perth Roman 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 95 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 204 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	60	65	32	34	4	4	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	58	62	38	41	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	37	40	49	53	14	15	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	34	37	48	52	10	10	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	44	47	40	43	9	10	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	47	51	32	34	15	16	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	53	57	40	43	3	3	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)	35	38	51	55	5	5	2	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	44	47	39	42	7	8	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	43	46	39	42	5	5	5	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	38	41	46	49	8	9	3	3
The school is led and managed effectively	49	53	35	38	2	2	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	52	56	37	40	3	3	3	3

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.



8 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St William of Perth Roman Catholic Primary School, Rochester, ME1 3EN

Thank you for talking to us and showing us your work when we visited your school. We were pleased to hear you like school and we agree that you do best when your teachers plan many interesting things for you to do and get involved in. You all get on with one another and are working hard to behave well in lessons and around the school. We think your school gives you the right help to know how to be safe.

Your school is satisfactory. The curriculum planned for you meets your needs and teachers do what is expected to help you make satisfactory progress in your work. The leaders in the school do a suitable job of running your school. They know what needs to be done to make your school better. In order to help you to make faster progress, we have asked the adults at your school to do three things:

- Make better use of information from assessments and marking to help you understand how to improve, especially in mathematics.
- Keep checking to make sure your lessons are always challenging enough and interesting.
- Develop the outdoor area for the youngest children so that there are even more chances to learn and grow as they play.
- Help you to improve develop your investigative skills in mathematics and science and give you plenty of opportunities to use and practise them.

You can help us by always following the advice teachers give you on how to improve your work. Thank you again for helping us with our work.

Yours sincerely

Jacqueline Marshall

Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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