

St Chad's CofE (C) Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124269
Local Authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	340528
Inspection dates	21–22 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Krishan Sharma

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	131
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Graham Tritton
Headteacher	Jane Nicklin
Date of previous school inspection	15 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed six teachers and a teaching assistant and made 10 classroom visits. Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body, staff and a group of pupils. Inspectors looked at some of the school's policies and procedures, pupils' written work and the tracking data used to monitor pupils' progress. Forty completed parents' questionnaires were analysed as well as those completed by Key Stage 2 pupils and by staff.

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

- standards and teaching of writing across the school and its use in other subjects
- pupils' skills in assessing their own work
- the contribution of middle leaders to the school's self-evaluation.

Information about the school

This is a small primary school. Most pupils are taught in their respective year groups. The Year 3 and 4 pupils are taught in a mixed-age class for part of the day. Most pupils are of White British heritage and a very small proportion belongs to minority ethnic groups. None of the pupils speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the average, as is the proportion of those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The school holds Artsmark Gold, Healthy Schools status, Activemark in recognition for its work in sport, the Dyslexia Friendly School Chartermark, the Eco-School Silver Award and the local authority's Anti-Bullying Award.

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

St Chad's is a good school. Parents are extremely pleased with what it provides for their children. One of them spoke for many others by saying: 'St Chad's has provided the very best start for my child.' Pupils enjoy being at school and they behave well. Their understanding of what they have to do to stay healthy is outstanding. Attendance is above average. Partnerships the school has nurtured contribute well to pupils' learning and enjoyment.

By the time pupils reach the end of Year 2, their attainment is significantly above the national average and has been over many years. Most pupils make good progress from their starting points on entry to school, at the end of Reception and Year 2. By the end of Year 4, most pupils reach standards that are significantly above the levels expected for nine-year-olds. The quality of teaching is consistently good and contributes to good achievement as pupils move through the school. At its very best, teaching is characterised by effective questioning and detailed oral and written feedback during lessons and in pupils' work. This makes clear to pupils how they might improve and prepares them well for assessing their own work. They also have a clear understanding of this when teachers explain clearly what pupils need to do to succeed with a piece of work. However, this does not happen in all lessons and marking is inconsistent. The curriculum caters for all groups of pupils and is engaging; the recent developments are particularly impressive in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school's outstanding arrangements for care, guidance and support ensure that pupils feel fully supported. As a result, they have no hesitation in saying that they feel safe at school and all parents who submitted questionnaires agree with them.

Self-evaluation is well established and substantially accurate. Monitoring includes the collection of a good range of evidence and agreed routines which ensure the school has a good capacity to improve. The success criteria used to evaluate the impact of actions are occasionally insufficiently measurable so that the school has an incomplete picture of the effectiveness of new developments. Middle leaders contribute to checking the school's work but their skills of evaluation, particularly in assessing the impact of teaching on pupils' learning in lessons and in their written work, are insufficiently fine-tuned.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen self-evaluation by:
 - establishing measurable success criteria to assess the impact of all actions and developments on pupils' outcomes and the school's provision

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- ensuring that middle leaders update their skills to evaluate the impact of teaching on pupils' learning in lessons and in their written work
- demonstrating the use of findings to secure necessary further improvement.
- Improve consistency in pupils' self-assessment skills across the school by :
 - ensuring that they know and understand what makes their work good and how they can find it out for themselves
 - using those benchmarks in the oral feedback during lessons and in the marking of their written work.

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

In almost all lessons, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage, most pupils achieve well. They are keen to learn and remain interested in the work they are set. The pace of learning is usually brisk as a result of teachers' high expectations. Consequently, most pupils make good progress. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make good progress, because their needs are precisely diagnosed and interventions are provided to meet them. The very few pupils of minority ethnic heritage achieve well. Over the last three years, the end of Key Stage 1 attainment has been significantly above average. It has been much stronger in reading and mathematics than in writing. Pupils' current written work, tracking data and work seen in lessons indicate that overall this trend is continuing. This represents good progress from pupils' slightly above average starting points on entry to Year 1. The proportion of those achieving the higher Level 3 remains above average. The increasing focus on improving writing is having a positive impact on standards across the school. In one Year 2 lesson, pupils were planning to write a poster. They were systematically following the structure discussed at the beginning of the lesson. Many of them, particularly the higher attaining pupils, were clear about what makes a good poster.

Behaviour is good and pupils work well with each other. Even so, a significant number of pupils expressed some concern with behaviour in the school. The inspector discussed this with a group of pupils who assured him that when challenging behaviour occurs, adults deal with it promptly to minimize disruption for others. Pupils respond well to the range of opportunities given to them for exercising responsibility on behalf of others. They are keen to help others in the community and raise funds for good causes. Good achievement in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and the strong personal qualities they gain at school prepare them well for the next stage of their education. Pupils have a good idea about what is acceptable and what is not. They are willing to reflect on their own and others' actions. They have learnt a great deal about their own cultural heritage and their understanding of other cultural traditions is steadily developing.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	1
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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers' thoughtful planning reflects their high expectations and ensures that in most lessons pupils remain engaged. Together with the full support of the teaching assistants, this enables teachers to secure good progress for most pupils. The teaching of writing is a growing strength because it has been a focus for staff development. Overall, time is used effectively although introductions are occasionally too long and reduce the time available for pupils to work independently. Teachers use interactive white boards regularly and this helps them to give clear instructions and illustrations. Adults' oral comments in lessons and teachers' marking reflect their confidence in making accurate assessments of pupils' progress. At its very best, marking is very informative and leaves pupils in no doubt as to what they have done well and how they could improve their work, but this is not always the case.

The curriculum provides a broad range of experiences to meet the varied needs of most pupils. The inclusion of first-hand and practical experiences, such as those provided by educational visits and knowledgeable visitors, deepen pupils' knowledge, understanding and enjoyment. These all give pupils real opportunities to apply their basic skills. Literacy skills are practised through other subjects more often than numeracy. The use of information and communication technology skills is growing and should receive a further boost when the recently purchased laptops are fully operational. The numerous enrichment opportunities are taken up by a sizeable number of pupils, who say that they

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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enjoy the experience. The school's Activemark award is a testament to the school's commitment to improving its provision for sports and physical education.

Excellent attention is given to all aspects of care and support. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive concentrated support and make good progress as a result. Others who are considered to be potentially vulnerable are quickly identified and provided with carefully worked out support, both internally and with the support of external agencies. At the heart of the school's success in this aspect are its regular links with the parents and families of these pupils. The induction and transition arrangements effectively ensure a smooth transfer.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
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?

The headteacher and staff are committed to maintaining high academic standards as well as pupils' strong personal development, and the school continues to perform well on both counts. Arrangements for monitoring are firmly established and focus particularly on measuring and tracking pupils' progress through data. As a result, senior leaders have a good understanding of the areas of strength and relative weaknesses in this high-achieving school. They recognise the good work of staff and are always alert to reassessing their development needs to sustain or to secure improvement. Realistic, but challenging, targets are set in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Years 2 and 4. In most years, the school achieves them. The governing body is very supportive of the school, understands well its strengths and weaknesses and makes a good contribution to the drive for improvement.

The school enjoys good relationships with parents and keeps them well informed about their children's progress. It seeks their views and responds to their concerns. Partnerships with its own parish church, local services, the linked middle schools and high school and sports organisations are effective and some of these provide timely support that the school cannot provide for itself. The commitment to equal opportunities is well founded and is reflected in the strong performance of all pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the gifted and talented pupils. Safeguarding arrangements are good. The quality of training the staff has received has brought about consistency in the application of all policies. The school has audited its current provision to evaluate how well it promotes community cohesion and a comprehensive action plan is in place. The school is a community where pupils of

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different backgrounds get on well with each other. The provision of cultural events, such as Chinese and India days which celebrate different parts of the world, extends pupils' horizons beyond their locality.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
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	2
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

Children's attainment on entry to Nursery is broadly at the level expected for their age. Most of them make at least good progress as they move through the Early Years Foundation Stage and by the time they leave Reception, their attainment is slightly above average. Children achieve well in all areas of learning and their personal skills, such as relating to their peers and adults and working independently, are developing very securely. Planning is imaginatively put together and takes children's own ideas into account. It routinely offers them a broad choice, which they exercise responsibly. Activities are engaging and provide many practical opportunities for children to learn and apply their knowledge of sounds and letters, and to develop their early literacy and numeracy skills. Occasionally, activities provide insufficient challenge for the more capable. Children enjoy working with computers, and their creative work, with clay, painting and drawing, cutting and sticking, is of good quality. They show extreme interest and excitement when exploring the natural environment. For example, a group of Nursery children located snails and observed them very intensely. Most children are articulate and are keen to express themselves. Regular assessments are made and used well to plan the next steps in their learning. Adults take very good care of children and ensure their welfare and safety. Links with parents are highly valued and they appreciate the help given to them to support their children's learning. The Early Years

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Foundation Stage is led and managed well by two highly motivated teachers. They have successfully engendered a strong team spirit, which is at the heart of the good provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

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

An overwhelming majority of parents and carers who returned the questionnaire are highly appreciative of the school's provision. All of them agree that their children enjoy being at school and that the school is well led and managed. Almost all are pleased with the progress their children are making and believe that teaching is good. The inspector found clear evidence to support these views. A very few concerns were raised by a small number of parents. One of these related to the school's management of unacceptable behaviour, but the inspector found substantial evidence of good behaviour and was convinced that when challenging behaviour occurs, it is dealt with effectively. The other concern related to the waiting arrangements for parents before school starts and at the end of the day. The inspector found evidence to suggest that the current system is working. Even so, a few parents are still seeking reassurance that their concerns are listened to.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Chad's CofE (C) 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 40 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 131 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	28	70	12	30	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	26	65	13	33	1	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	16	40	23	58	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	16	40	23	58	1	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	21	53	18	45	1	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	18	45	22	55	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	19	48	21	53	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	19	48	20	50	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	15	38	24	60	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	14	35	19	48	2	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	35	20	50	3	8	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	18	45	22	55	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	21	53	19	48	0	0	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.



23 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Chad's CofE (C) Primary School, Wolverhampton, WV6 7AQ

Thank you very much for all the help you gave me with the inspection of your school. I enjoyed looking at your work and talking to you about it. I judged your school to be good. Here are some of the positive things that I found out about your school:

Most of you make good progress in lessons and reach well above average standards by the end of Year 2 and by the time you leave your school at the end of Year 4.

Your teachers and others give you excellent care, guidance and support.

You say that you feel safe at school.

You enjoy being at school and attend regularly.

You make excellent choices to keep healthy.

Your behaviour was good during the inspection, although I noted some of you were concerned about the behaviour of some pupils. You assured me that adults in the school deal with it promptly.

You work hard in lessons and are keen to learn.

To improve your school further, I have asked the people in charge to work on two important things:

- to make sure that staff check more carefully how well you and your school are doing
- to make sure that you are all taught how to assess your own work, so that you know yourself how well you are doing before your teachers tell you.

I send you my best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Krishan Sharma

Lead inspector

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