

St Augustine's Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124322
Local Authority	Stoke-On-Trent
Inspection number	340543
Inspection dates	12–13 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Judith Tolley

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	228
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Steve Woodward
Headteacher	Mr Edward Byrne
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Sandon Road Meir Stoke-on-Trent ST3 7DF
Telephone number	01782 319504
Fax number	01782 319580
Email address	ebyrne@sgfl.org.uk

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	12–13 May 2010
Inspection number	340543

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 17 lessons; 8 teachers were seen; meetings were held with groups of pupils, governors and staff. They observed the school's work and looked at the school's analysis of pupils' progress, improvement plans, 27 pupil questionnaires and 85 parental questionnaires.

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

- the achievement of pupils in Key Stage 1, particularly boys, to determine whether teaching is sufficiently challenging
- the progress children make in the Early Years Foundation Stage to determine how effective the school has been in eliminating weaknesses in the outdoor provision
- the impact of recent improvements in the use of assessment upon pupils' progress and the consistency of teaching.

Information about the school

St Augustine's is slightly smaller than most primary schools. It has a Nursery and most children who attend the Nursery go on into the Reception class. Pupils are of predominantly White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for a free school meal is twice the national average. The proportion of pupils in the early stages of learning to speak English is low but is closer to the national average in the Nursery. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than average but fluctuates from year to year. The school has recently undergone major building work and there have been significant changes in staff since the last inspection. The school has recently achieved Healthy School 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

3

Main findings

St Augustine's is a satisfactory school which is improving rapidly. It has some good features, such as the quality of care, guidance and support it provides and most aspects of pupils' personal development. Parents recognise this and value the support their children receive.

Many children join the school with skills that are well below those expected for their age, particularly in communication and language and personal and social skills. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. As a result most begin Year 1 as confident learners, with skills that are broadly in line with those expected for their age. Pupils make satisfactory progress through Key Stages 1 and 2. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is broadly average in English, mathematics and science.

Accurate self-evaluation has enabled the headteacher to identify what needs to be done to improve standards and to accelerate the progress pupils make. He has acted swiftly to implement effective procedures to secure tangible improvements. As a result, a previous decline in standards has been reversed and pupils' outcomes are improving rapidly. The headteacher is strongly supported by his senior leadership team, and indeed by all staff, who have a clear understanding of their role in improving standards and provision. Governors are very well informed, supportive and fulfill their role as critical friends well. All this provides clear evidence of the school's satisfactory capacity to improve further.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory but is too variable between classes so that the progress pupils make is uneven across the school. Although marking is regular, pupils are not always given sufficiently detailed guidance about how to improve their work. The curriculum is satisfactory and is having a positive impact upon pupils' strong personal development and good behaviour. Pupils appreciate the wide range of extra-curricular clubs and activities available and these are well supported. However, opportunities for them to practise their writing and mathematics in other subjects across the curriculum are too limited.

Safeguarding procedures are robust and pupils feel safe. Behaviour is good, pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning and enjoy coming to school. This is also evident in the improvement over the last year in attendance rates, which are now broadly average. Pupils take their responsibilities seriously and contribute well to the school and wider community, for example in the school council or as playground leaders.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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

- Raise attainment further by:
 - improving the quality and consistency of teaching and learning to that of the best
 - ensuring pupils always get good guidance about how to improve their work
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to practise their skills in writing and mathematics across the curriculum.
- About 40% of the 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**

In lessons pupils make satisfactory progress. They are eager to participate in class discussions, listen carefully to adults and to each other and are keen to share their ideas. Pupils make the best progress when activities capture their imagination, learning is fun and they are given the opportunity to explore ideas with a partner. In an English lesson, for instance, Year 2 pupils worked very effectively in pairs to explain what they felt about different characters for a book review. They persevered and all pupils refined their writing and completed the task with confidence and enthusiasm.

A decline in attainment by the end of Year 2 in reading and mathematics over the last three years from average to well below average has been arrested and the progress pupils make is now satisfactory. Following a similar decline in Key Stage 2, particularly in mathematics, attainment has improved and is now broadly average by Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. As a result of the effective action taken by the school, assessment information indicates that the majority of Year 6 pupils are now on track to achieve their targets. Pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities make the same satisfactory progress as their classmates as a result of the effective support they receive in class.

Pupils know who they can go to with problems. They are confident that issues, such as rare cases of bullying or poor behaviour, are addressed promptly and effectively. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle and this reflects the school's work in achieving the Healthy Schools status. As a result they make healthy eating choices and enjoy regular exercise. Pupils display respect for one another and their teachers and have a good sense of right and wrong. They take time to reflect on their own actions and regularly help one another in class and around the school. They have a good understanding of their own culture and the cultural diversity of the United Kingdom and have an increasing understanding of other cultures. Pupils' basic skills and their ability to work collaboratively with others are developing satisfactorily. As a result, they are adequately prepared for their secondary education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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	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	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers usually present new ideas clearly and use interactive whiteboards effectively to engage pupils' interest. They use questioning to good effect to support and challenge pupils both in whole-class discussions and during class work. When pupils are given the opportunity to discuss ideas with a partner, their confidence increases. In a minority of lessons teachers are too ready to accept brief answers and give explanations themselves, so that opportunities are missed to challenge and extend pupils' own thinking. Occasionally, the pace of learning slows when teacher-led activities are too lengthy, pupils are not sure how to tackle tasks set, or when they are not directly involved in activities. Assessment information is usually used effectively to meet the needs of pupils and teaching assistants are skilful in supporting individuals and small groups in lessons. Marking is regular and encouraging but does not always give clear enough guidance, so that pupils are not always sure about how to improve their work. The curriculum adequately meets pupils' needs and interests. The school's emphasis on the development of core skills in literacy and numeracy is raising standards across the school. Pupils benefit from specialist teaching in, for example, sports, music and modern languages. Pupils' experience is enriched by a variety of visitors and visits. The school is working towards a more creative curriculum to provide better opportunities for pupils to practise their skills across a range of subjects and to engage their interest more effectively. This is at a very early stage of development and it is too early to see its

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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

impact.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for those who speak English as an additional language is often good, particularly during lessons. Links with high schools enhance pupils' learning in business enterprise and mathematics and ensure that pupils make a smooth transition to the next stage in their education. Well thought out induction procedures ensure that children settle quickly when they begin school. The school works effectively with a range of external agencies, such as speech therapists, as well as parents and carers to remove barriers to learning. Clearly targeted support for potentially vulnerable pupils has resulted in significant improvement in their attitudes, behaviour, achievement and attendance.

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's accurate analysis of the school's performance and the very clear direction for development that he has set is proving effective. He has established effective procedures to improve achievement and staff work well as a team to plan and to evaluate the school's work, whilst maintaining a calm atmosphere where achievement is valued and celebrated. All this has taken place during a period of significant disruption due to major building work and staff changes. Because all staff play a full part in school self-evaluation activities, they know exactly what has to be done to improve the school and they understand their role in the process. Equality of opportunity is promoted well and gaps between different groups, such as boys and girls, are closing. The school's focus for the past year has rightly been on tracking individual progress and eliminating underachievement and in this the school has been successful. Although there has been considerable improvement in the provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage, the school has yet to focus its efforts on improving the quality of teaching and learning in Key Stages 1 and 2, so that there remains variation across the school. The school works hard to inform parents and carers and to involve them in their children's learning, for example through the fortnightly newsletters and parents' evenings. Safeguarding procedures are good. The school integrates issues about safety into the curriculum and pupils have a good understanding about how to stay safe, with for instance, Year 6 pupils acting as mentors for younger pupils and supervising them on their visits to the church. The school's work with parents and carers, partner institutions and the local community is satisfactorily promoting community cohesion, although this is currently

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

restricted to the immediate community.

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	3
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Nursery and Reception classes with skills, knowledge and understanding that are often much lower than those expected for their age, particularly in language and communication and social skills. As a result of recent improvements in the Early Years Foundation Stage, all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress overall in their learning. By the end of the Reception Year, attainment is broadly in line with national averages in most areas of learning. Teachers regularly engage children in conversation about their work and their play. As a result, language and communication skills, and personal and social development are particularly well developed. Behaviour is good and children respond positively to adults and to their classmates.

Recent initiatives to increase the use of the outdoor area have added to a stimulating and well-equipped learning environment. Because the outdoor facilities are very new, planning to make the best use of this area is at the early stages of development and currently opportunities are missed to enable children to make the most of outdoor play. High importance is placed on caring for children and they enjoy learning in a safe environment. The systematic teaching of phonics has led to a demonstrable improvement in literacy. Assessments and observations are thorough and accurate and inform day-to-day planning and the next steps in learning. Although there is good liaison

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

between teachers, transition between the Reception and Year 1 classes is made more difficult because these areas are not adjacent to one other so that facilities are not easily shared. Relationships with parents and carers are very strong. The 'stay and play' sessions, where parents are encouraged to stay and work alongside their children, are proving very successful and are very popular with parents.

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 responded to the questionnaire are very positive about the work of the school, recent improvements and their impact on their children's learning. They commented positively upon their children's enjoyment of school, the approachability of teachers, the care their children receive and the leadership and management of the school. A very small minority of parents and carers expressed concerns about how effectively the school deals with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors found no evidence to support these concerns. Pupils are confident that poor behaviour is handled effectively. Overall, parents' and carers' views reflect the inspection findings.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Augustine'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 85 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 228 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	60	71	21	25	4	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	65	76	17	20	3	4	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	48	56	34	40	3	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	55	65	27	32	3	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	60	71	25	29	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	50	59	32	38	3	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	50	59	34	40	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)	47	55	32	38	1	1	2	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	51	60	30	35	3	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	52	61	21	25	7	8	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	41	48	37	44	4	5	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	55	65	23	27	5	6	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	65	76	18	21	0	0	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.



14 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Augustine's Catholic Primary School, Stoke-on-Trent,
ST3 7DF

On behalf of all the inspectors, I would like to thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. The inspection team really enjoyed reading your comments and talking to you all. They listened very carefully to what you had to say.

Yours is a satisfactory school which is improving rapidly. Some things are good. Teachers and adults in your school look after you well. We were impressed by how good your behaviour is. You play an important role in improving your school through, for instance, the school council, your work as playground leaders and buddies for younger pupils as well as the ideas you have had for decorating the new building. You told us that you enjoy coming to school and particularly like the range of clubs and other activities on offer. You feel safe at school and know that if you have a problem, there is always an adult to talk to.

Teaching is satisfactory and it is helping you to catch up and to achieve as you should. We noticed that in some lessons you made better progress than in others. We have asked the school to make sure all the lessons are as good as the best and to give you more opportunities to practise your skills, especially writing and mathematics. We have also asked the school to make sure you know how to improve your work. The headteacher and staff are working very hard to make your school better. You can help the school by continuing to work hard and by coming to school regularly. Once again, thank you for answering our questions. We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Judith Tolley

Lead Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.