

# St Saviours Catholic Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	135505
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cheshire West and Chester
<b>Inspection number</b>	341657
<b>Inspection dates</b>	6–7 July 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Linda McLarty HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	323
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Chirs Hulse
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr David Harvey
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Seacombe Drive Great Sutton Ellesmere Port CH66 2BD
<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 338 2440
<b>Fax number</b>	0151 339 3488
<b>Email address</b>	head@stsaviours.org

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. Inspectors observed 14 lessons and 14 teachers were seen. Discussions were held with parents and carers, pupils, members of the governing body, staff, the School Improvement Partner and a representative of the diocese.

Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised documentation including the school development plan, minutes of governing body meetings, safeguarding policies and procedures, and the work in pupils' exercise books. Inspectors evaluated information from questionnaires returned by 32 staff, 51 pupils and 82 parents and carers.

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

- the extent to which staff are using the school's assessment procedures to raise standards and accelerate pupils' progress
- how well leaders and managers at all levels are working with the new leadership team in the drive to improve standards and achievement
- the impact of leaders and managers on improving standards in writing across the school
- the quality and accuracy of the school's self-evaluation.

## Information about the school

This primary school is larger than average. It opened in September 2008 following the amalgamation of St Saviour's RC Infant and St Saviour's RC Junior schools. All the pupils transferred to the new primary school, which remains in the original buildings on the same site. A temporary headteacher led the school from September 2008. The permanent headteacher took up post in September 2009 and a new deputy headteacher joined the school in January 2010.

Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs is below average.

The school has Activemark status, the Basic Skills Quality Mark and Healthy Schools status. The school provides a breakfast club, an after-school club and a pre-school on site. These are not managed by the governing body and were not included as part of this inspection. Separate inspection reports for this provision can be found on Ofsted's website.

**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?**

**4**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**4**

## Main findings

In accordance with section 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

The quality of education provided at St Saviour's Primary School is inadequate. Pupils start the school with skills and abilities broadly in line with those expected for their age. They get off to a good start in the Reception class and achieve well. However, this good progress is not sustained as pupils move through the school and too many do not achieve as well as they should in Key Stages 1 and 2. Attainment at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics is broadly average, but declining sharply and not high enough given pupils' starting points in Year 1. The school's data show the standards reached by 11-year-olds in English and mathematics have fallen significantly in 2010. Teaching is inadequate. Frequently, all pupils tackle the same work in lessons, whatever their level of skill and ability. This means that some pupils fail to grasp and understand concepts in the basic skills. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive appropriate additional support and this enables them to make satisfactory progress.

Pupils who spoke with inspectors were articulate and able to express their views about the school clearly. Pupils adhere well to the school's strong behaviour code and are keen to learn. They appreciate the extra-curricular activities and enjoy the opportunities to be play leaders and classroom monitors. They have a good understanding of healthy eating and play enthusiastically at break times. Most parents and carers report that their children enjoy school and pupils say they feel safe on the premises. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They make friends easily and are considerate to visitors. Pupils contribute well to the school and local community.

Provision for sport, art and personal, social, health and emotional well-being is a strength of the satisfactory curriculum. Care and support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are effectively managed and appropriate. However, the quality of guidance and support for transition between classes is weak.

The amalgamation of the two schools has not gone smoothly. This was exacerbated by the unavoidable absence of the headteacher during the autumn term. Since his return, he has been effective in raising the morale of staff from a very low level.

However, weaknesses in the quality of teaching and learning have not been tackled. Staff's expectations for pupils' progress remain too low and whole-school strategies,

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such as for improving the quality of writing, have not been implemented consistently. This has contributed to pupils' inadequate progress. Some parents and carers described the information they receive on their children's progress and communication between home and school as poor. This is evident in the lack of assessment information provided in the school's annual report to parents and carers. Leaders and managers at all levels do not have a clear picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Self-evaluation lacks rigour and, as a result, the school has an overly generous view of its effectiveness. Improvement planning is weak; priorities for improvement are not shared effectively with all staff and agreed milestones are not specified. Consequently, leaders and managers are not demonstrating sufficient capacity to drive improvement and secure better academic outcomes for all groups of pupils.

The governing body is supportive of the school. However, it does not use all the information available to set challenging targets for pupils or to hold staff sufficiently to account for pupils' outcomes.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Raise pupils' attainment and achievement in English, particularly writing, and mathematics in Key Stages 1 and 2, by ensuring that:
  - - the quality of teaching, including teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve, is at least consistently good throughout the school
  - - staff make accurate assessments of pupils' attainment and progress throughout the year and use this information to support transition between classes
  - - teachers use assessment information to ensure that tasks match the learning needs of all pupils in lessons
  - - marking provides clear guidance to pupils so that they can improve their work
  - - agreed policies are implemented and adhered to by all staff.
- Improve the quality and use of self-evaluation by ensuring that:
  - - leaders and managers, including the governing body, use all the data available to them to set challenging targets for pupils
  - - the senior leadership team monitors and evaluates the quality of teaching with sufficient rigour to secure improvement
  - - staff evaluate the impact of their actions on the outcomes for pupils
  - - the views of all stakeholders are taken into account routinely in setting the priorities for school improvement
- - the governing body holds the school to account for the outcomes for all groups of pupils
- Improve partnerships with parents and carers by ensuring that:
  - - parents and carers receive sufficient information about their children's progress to be able to support them in their learning
  - - the school's priorities are communicated clearly to all stakeholders.

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The disappointing academic outcomes for pupils relate directly to the quality of teaching they receive. Staff do not use assessment information to set appropriate work for individuals or groups of pupils. This means that from their starting points at the start of Year 1 to the end of Year 6 some pupils do not make sufficient progress in lessons and over time to reach their potential. Conversely, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress because they receive individual support appropriate to their needs. For example, in a history lesson, a teaching assistant provided good support to a group of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Consequently, they were able to make a good oral contribution to the lesson. The work in pupils' exercise books demonstrates that attainment is generally average, but is well below average in writing. There is little evidence of pupils developing key skills in subjects such as science, history and geography.

In the few good lessons observed, pupils were enthusiastic about their learning. For example, in one lesson pupils gave computer presentations about roller-coasters. They worked effectively in small groups and listened to each other respectfully. They made clear and helpful comments on the strengths and weaknesses of each group's work. However, where pupils made inadequate progress, they did not have sufficient support to tackle the task set. For example, in one mathematics lesson some pupils struggled to multiply numbers. They did not have number lines or counters to help them and, consequently, were unable to work out the multiplications. These pupils quickly became inattentive and failed to complete the task successfully.

Pupils say they enjoy school, particularly the sporting activities and the good-quality school lunches. Their attendance is average. They are active in the community and appreciate the work of the school council, whose members are elected by a democratic process. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong which they demonstrate in their interactions with each other. This reflects the school's strong Christian ethos. Inspectors observed good behaviour in and around the school. Pupils show respect towards one another during playground games. On the occasions where pupils work together in small groups or independently, their good social skills are making a satisfactory contribution to their future workplace skills. Good-quality art work, which uses other cultures as a stimulus, is enabling pupils to develop their strong cultural awareness.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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<sup>1</sup> 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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<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective is the provision?**

The quality of teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2 is not good enough to raise attainment and accelerate progress for all pupils. Teachers manage behaviour well and relationships in most lessons are positive. However, they do not use information about pupils' attainment and progress to match activities to the range of learning needs in classes. Frequently, all pupils tackle the same work regardless of their skill level and ability. An over-reliance on text books and worksheets restricts the opportunities for pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding, particularly in mathematics and science. For example, in a mathematics lesson the worksheet limited the scope for pupils to use their reasoning skills efficiently and solve the problem. In a minority of lessons, teachers' weak subject knowledge resulted in pupils undertaking activities which did not develop their knowledge and skills of the subject they were studying. For example, in a geography lesson pupils designed a coat of arms in an activity which required no geographical knowledge. In lessons where the pace was too slow, pupils became inattentive which limited their learning.

There is an appropriate focus in the curriculum on developing the core skills of literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology. Pupils enjoy learning French and there are strengths in provision for art and personal, social, health and emotional well-being that contribute effectively to pupils' good personal development. However, reliance on mundane worksheets in subjects such as science and history limits opportunities for pupils to develop investigative skills and to practise their writing in different subjects.

The quality of care, guidance and support is satisfactory overall. Some aspects of care

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are good, particularly for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Systems for securing the health, safety and well-being of pupils are effective. The support provided for pupils at points of transition is poor, particularly between Key Stages 1 and 2. Some parents and carers report a lack of responsiveness from the school in supporting them to help their children master the basic skills in English and mathematics. There is inconsistency in the setting of homework and in communicating expectations to parents and carers.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>3</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher has faced significant barriers to improvement. Unresolved problems regarding communication between the two buildings and two separate staff groups, both with low morale, take up much of his time. The senior leadership team is supportive, but it is inexperienced and lacks ambition for pupils' high achievement. Development planning is weak. Staff do not adhere to agreed policies and actions. Consequently, key strategies, such as those to improve the quality of writing, are unsuccessful. The monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning are infrequent and lack rigour. In addition, the analysis of data on pupils' progress is weak. As a result, the school does not have a clear understanding of why the outcomes for different groups of pupils are in decline. It also means that the school is not successful in ensuring that pupils have equality of opportunity to succeed.

The governing body has steered and supported the amalgamation of the two schools. It has successfully secured a substantive headteacher. However, it does not take account of all the available information to set challenging targets for pupils. Neither does it hold the school to account sufficiently for pupils' outcomes.

Parents' and carers' responses to questionnaires and informal meetings with inspectors indicate that a minority do not feel equal partners in their children's education. They are unhappy with some of the recent changes. The headteacher is taking positive steps to tackle this by holding consultation meetings with parents and carers. Arrangements to safeguard pupils' health, safety and well-being meet statutory requirements.

Partnerships with external agencies that support pupils and families in need are satisfactory. The school understands its religious context well and promotes community cohesion adequately.



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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>4</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children start Reception with skills, knowledge and abilities in line with those expected for their age nationally. They make good progress overall and by the time they start Year 1 many have reached or exceeded the early learning goals expected for their age. Children enjoy the activities provided for them. They are confident in using all the areas inside and outdoors to develop their skills. They concentrate well on the tasks set by staff and during their independent learning through play. During the inspection, children used digital cameras and microphones well to record their thoughts. Staff provide well-planned opportunities for children to practise their early reading and writing skills. For example, several children were recording appointments for an imaginary visit to the vet as part of their role-play work. Children are proud of their writing displayed around the classroom.

Staff know the children exceptionally well. Thorough assessments of children's skills and abilities enable them to plan the next steps in children's learning effectively. Reception is well led and managed. Relationships are good. Staff, parents and carers work well in partnership and, as a result, children are prepared well for the next stage in their education.

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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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**

Some parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire added additional comments explaining their concerns, some at great length. These included comments about the inappropriateness of the new fence, the introduction of mixed-age classes, comments on lack of communication and the difficulties faced in trying to contact the school. Some parents and carers were unhappy with the information they received about their children's progress and also expressed concerns about the quality of leadership and management. Five parents and carers wrote additional positive comments. They indicated that their children enjoyed school and that they were happy with their progress. They appreciated the commitment of the teachers and were positive about the new senior leadership team. Inspectors found much that endorsed the views expressed by parents and carers, this appears in the main body of the report.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Saviours 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 82 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 323 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	42	51	39	48	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	38	46	38	46	5	6	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	24	29	46	56	11	13	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	28	34	41	50	9	11	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	29	35	43	52	7	9	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	26	32	40	49	12	15	3	4
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	25	30	49	60	3	4	3	4
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)	23	28	40	49	11	13	2	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	28	34	45	55	6	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	26	49	60	8	10	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	15	18	45	55	10	12	6	7
The school is led and managed effectively	16	20	43	52	16	20	3	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	29	35	42	51	5	6	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](http://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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



08 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Saviours Catholic Primary School, Ellesmere Port, CH66 2BD

You may remember that I visited your school recently with two other inspectors. Thank you for talking to us about your school. This letter is to explain to you what we found.

We judged your school to be in need of 'special measures'. This means it must improve the quality of education you receive. The youngest children get a really good start to their education. However, we found that leaders and managers do not know how well you are doing in the rest of the school and do not have a clear view of how to improve. We have asked the staff to do the following things:

- improve the quality of teaching so that you make better progress in English, particularly writing, and mathematics
- ensure that leaders and managers check how well you are doing in your lessons so that they make good plans to improve the quality of education at St Saviour's
- improve communication between school and home so that parents and carers can support you in your learning.

We were impressed by your behaviour. You are polite and friendly. We found your conversations interesting. You clearly have a good understanding of how to keep safe, and of the difference between right and wrong. You understand healthy lifestyles and we hope that you keep making healthy choices and working hard. Another inspector will visit your school soon to check how well it is doing. In the meantime, I wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Linda McLarty

Her Majesty's Inspector

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