

# St Benedict's Catholic Primary School Hindley

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106494
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wigan
<b>Inspection number</b>	355963
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 December 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Geoff Yates

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>	205
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Jane Dawes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Janice Taberner
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 December 2007
<b>School address</b>	Abbott Street Hindley, Wigan Lancashire WN2 3DG
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Eleven lessons were observed taught by seven teachers. The inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at the tracking of pupils' progress and the school's monitoring, self-evaluation and planning for improvement. The inspectors also analysed 88 questionnaire returns from parents and carers.

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

- The consistency with which pupils make progress
- Whether teachers make effective use of the school's new marking system.
- The effectiveness of the school's strategy to raise standards in writing.
- Whether the school's revised curriculum provides pupils with sufficient opportunities to use their writing, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills well in subjects across the curriculum.

## Information about the school

This is a small primary school in which the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The proportion of pupils from minority-ethnic groups is very low, with no pupils at an early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The school is situated in an urban area just outside the town centre. The school has gained awards including the Healthy Schools awards.

**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

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education. There are many features of pupils' personal development that are good. Pupils' behaviour and the care and personal support provided by the school are outstanding. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils' learning and progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 has been variable in recent years and is now satisfactory. Attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 is broadly average and is on an upward trend, which is evident in the most recent Key Stage 2 national test results and in evidence gathered during inspection. Progress in developing pupils' writing skills is limited because pupils are not given sufficiently challenging opportunities to use and develop their writing skills in all subjects. In Key Stage 1 pupils have satisfactory numeracy skills but are not always challenged in lessons to apply them well.

Pupils say they feel very safe in school. They work and play in a harmonious and happy school community of which they are proud. All pupils, regardless of ability or background are fully included and valued highly as individuals. Parents and carers think highly of the school.

The school provides a good curriculum and a wide range of interesting extra-curricular activities for pupils which contribute to their considerable enjoyment of school. Pupils have a good understanding of the school community and local community. Pupils demonstrate a good commitment to adopting healthy and safe lifestyles. They have a good understanding of the importance of taking exercise. Teaching is satisfactory overall.

During the inspection there were examples of good and sometimes outstanding teaching. In the good lessons, pupils are totally involved in learning and are challenged to use their skills well. While no teaching is inadequate there is some variation in quality. For example, in lessons where teaching is not as strong teachers do not ensure that work is challenging for all groups of pupils and pupils are not given enough guidance on how to improve their own work. This slows the pace of learning. Where teaching is sometimes outstanding, high expectations lead to high-quality learning. The school has satisfactory assessment systems in place to track pupils' progress. There is, however, too little evidence to show that pupils have an awareness of what they need to do to improve their own work and the new marking policy has yet to have a full impact on helping them to improve. Children in the Early Years Foundation stage make good progress but do not have enough opportunities to develop their independence through self-chosen activities.

The headteacher has a good understanding of what needs to be done to improve the school and has made good use of local authority support. The leadership team has a clear focus on school improvement although the school's evaluation of its performance is sometimes over-generous. Together with the governing body, the leadership team fully support the headteacher in her efforts to improve pupils' achievements. There are clear signs in Key Stage 2 of improvements in mathematics as a result of a successful

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leadership and management initiative. This, together with the steps taken to tackle and successfully halt the falling standards of previous years and improved involvement of staff in monitoring and self-evaluation indicates that the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve. It provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Accelerate the rate of progress pupils make by:
  - ensuring teaching is consistently good or better, with work set that is more closely matched to pupils' needs
  - ensuring the new marking policy is used effectively so that all pupils know how well they are doing and understand what they need to do to improve.
- Raise standards of attainment in writing by providing pupils with more challenging opportunities to use and develop their writing skills in subjects across the curriculum.
- Ensure Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress in developing their
- mathematical skills by providing them with more opportunities to use and
- develop their numeracy skills in solving challenging mathematical problems.
- Provide children in the Early Years Foundation Stage with more well-focused opportunities to follow self-chosen activities in order to develop their independence.
- Up to 40% of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged to be satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit from an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive and they enjoy their work. In lessons, they work well with a partner or in a group, listen carefully to teachers' instructions, behave outstandingly well and are keen to make a positive response. They are beginning to respond to the newly-introduced marking policy by taking more active steps to improve their own work. Pupils take pride in the presentation of their work, including the creative use of ICT to enhance its impact and quality. For example, in Year 4 they have individual net-books and demonstrate a high level of concentration when asked to research safe websites. They are able to articulate exceedingly well the reasons for being careful when using the internet. For example, 'if you are not sure, tell your teacher.' one pupil confidently replied to the inspector's question.

Children usually enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills below those expected for their age, but there is some variation from year-to-year. By the time they enter Year 1 they are working at broadly average levels and have made good progress during their time in the Reception. In the rest of the school the progress of all groups, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, has been variable in recent years but is now satisfactory, as is their overall achievement.

Pupils' personal development is good overall. This is seen in the high level of respect they show towards adults and each other. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles: numbers participating in sporting enrichment activities are above average. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is of a good quality; it is

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underpinned by the school's strong Christian ethos and a wide range of visits and visitors to broaden their horizons. Pupils greatly enjoy the many opportunities they are given to take on responsibilities, including acting as prefects or school-council members.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</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>

<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

## How effective is the provision?

The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers manage calm and well-organised classrooms and get on very well with their pupils. Good and sometimes outstanding teaching was seen during the inspection but teaching is not consistently of a high quality throughout the school. In good or better lessons teachers use a range of strategies to ensure pupils take an active part and planning is matched well to pupils' needs. Where teaching is less successful pupils are not given enough opportunities to express their views and some of the work set is not challenging enough including, on occasions, for the more-able pupils. The school has recognised that marking needs to improve but it is too early to judge the impact of the new policy. Where it is having less impact there is an over-use of marking that leaves the learner unclear about what they need to do to improve. Teaching assistants are deployed well and provide good support.

The school has a good focus on developing a curriculum that places an emphasis on promoting pupils' personal development, firmly based on the school's Christian ethos, and on developing links between subjects. A major curriculum strength is the very good provision for ICT with pupils using their computer skills well in different subjects. There is

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also good sporting and creative arts provision. Good improvements have been made to the provision for mathematics in Key Stage 2. Opportunities are missed to develop pupils' writing skills across the curriculum and for pupils in Key Stage 1 to use and apply their numeracy skills effectively. There are examples of pupils using their writing skills well. For example, older pupils' interest in a Second World War topic led to high-quality poetry being produced, but there are too few opportunities to develop writing skills in different subjects. The good range of extra-curricular activities adds hugely to pupils' enjoyment. Pupils say that extra activities are one of the best things about school.

Strong aspects of the care, guidance and support the school provides include the systems to support better attendance and pupils' outstanding behaviour. Partnerships with outside agencies to help pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are very well embedded. Highly-effective transition arrangements ensure pupils settle outstandingly well when they join the school and when they move on to secondary school. In this very inclusive school caring for children and their families is a top priority and results in pupils feeling very safe. The very recently established toddlers' group is much appreciated by both parents and carers.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The school has a very strong commitment to inclusion and promotes equality very well. Through its Christian ethos it teaches the importance of valuing each individual. As a result the school is a happy and harmonious place in which to work. The headteacher, senior staff and governors are committed to the drive to accelerate pupils' progress but their self-evaluation of the school is sometimes overly generous. Some good work has been done in improving standards of attainment in mathematics in Key Stage 2 and help from the local authority has improved other aspects of provision. The governing body discharges its statutory duties satisfactorily and holds the school to account for its performance.

There is a good range of partnerships which contribute well to the school's good curriculum provision. Leaders and managers at all levels, including the governing body ensure safeguarding procedures meet requirements well, with clear policies and guidelines for ensuring pupils' welfare that are monitored on a regular basis. Meticulous attention is paid to risk assessment. Staff training in safeguarding and child protection is regular and of good quality. The school is strongly committed to community cohesion. Pupils are encouraged at every opportunity to be involved in the local community. For example, Year 2 pupils joined with children from a neighbouring school to sing carols for a group of

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adults from the local area. Pupils learn about other religions and cultures through visits, visitors and the links with other schools.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children usually start school with skills and knowledge below those typical for their age but this varies from year-to-year. They settle quickly and start to become confident learners. They are cared for very well and enjoy their learning experiences. The staff team work closely together to interest children in their learning. For example, a 'letter received from Father Christmas' was used as a good stimulus for children to work together with the teacher in preparing a reply. Children's outstanding behaviour and good relationships with others are strong features of their developing social skills and contribute strongly to the good progress they make. Teaching has some strengths in its purposeful approach to more formal learning but it is satisfactory overall because at times there is over-direction by adults of activities provided to help children develop their skills of independent learning, and staff are not always sufficiently clear about what it is they want children to gain from such activities. Children have some opportunities to follow their interests in self-chosen activities, which they set about with enthusiasm. For example, learning was clearly fun for those children working outside in using twigs to write numbers and their names in the ice. However, such well-focused opportunities to develop early reading and writing skills through independent activities are not provided consistently enough. Increasingly good use is being made of the recently-extended outside area to promote learning. There are good links with parents and carers. By the time children enter Year 1 most reach expected levels in all areas of learning.

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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>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

There was an average return rate of questionnaires from parents and carers. Almost all questionnaires indicate support for all aspects of the school's work. Inspectors did not find any evidence to suggest that the school does not take account the views of parents and carers or that the school does not keep parents and carers informed about their children's progress. It is to be hoped that, given time, the new marking policy will provide clear pointers to help pupils improve their work that could be shared with parents.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Benedict's Catholic Primary School Hindley 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 88 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 205 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	57	65	30	34	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	55	63	32	36	0	0	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	41	47	41	47	4	5	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	47	53	36	41	3	3	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	50	57	35	40	2	2	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	45	51	36	41	6	7	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	41	47	38	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)	40	45	42	48	1	1	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	44	50	42	48	1	1	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	41	47	44	50	2	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	37	42	42	48	5	6	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	46	52	39	44	2	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	56	64	31	35	0	0	1	1

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 all 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are 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 and spring terms 2009/10 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 pupils' 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.**



12 December 2010

Dear Children

**Inspection of St Benedict's Catholic Primary School Hindley, Wigan**

WN2 3DG

Thank you for your warm and very friendly welcome during the recent inspection of your school. It was a real pleasure to meet you and see you at work and play. It was an absolute delight listening to Year 2 pupils' singing one of the Christmas songs they had performed at a concert the day before. We were so pleased that you have very good access to net-books and other computers and use your information and communication technology skills well. You will be pleased to hear we felt that your behaviour is outstanding and the care, guidance and support your school provides for you are also outstanding. This high level of care helps you feel very safe and valued. You all get on together really well and this helps to make your school such a happy place to be.

We think that at the moment your school, while having lots of good features, is satisfactory overall. There are a few things we would like your school to do to make it better. We would like the school's leaders to:

- make sure that you are given plenty of challenging opportunities to use and develop your writing skills in other subjects not just in literacy lessons
- find more ways of ensuring that pupils in Years 1 and 2 are given more opportunities to use their numeracy skills
- ensure that all teaching is of a good quality or better and that when your work is marked, you are told how to improve it
- give younger children more opportunities to learn by finding things out for themselves.

I am confident that you will all work hard to play your part in making sure your school becomes even better.

Yours sincerely

Mr Geoff Yates

Lead inspector

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