

St. Benedict's Catholic Primary School, Hindley

Abbott Street, Hindley, Wigan , Lancashire, WN2 3DG

Inspection dates 9–10 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Most pupils make good progress and learn well in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils say they enjoy their reading. They read fluently and with understanding. Those who have fallen behind are given effective help to catch up.
- Since the previous inspection, attainment in English and mathematics has improved significantly and is now high compared to the national average.
- Teaching and learning are good across the school and some teaching is outstanding. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and deliver lessons that capture pupils' interest and help them to learn well.
- Pupils enjoy being in school. They feel very safe, well looked after and have excellent relationships with each other and with adults in the school. Their behaviour is exemplary. They take on responsibilities with enthusiasm, are keen to learn and are very proud of their achievements.
- The headteacher, strongly supported by the senior leadership team and the governing body, provides very clear direction, focused on improving teaching and learning and based upon a rigorous and accurate analysis of the school's work.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Opportunities are missed for pupils to work independently of the teacher and to use their initiative to solve problems.
- In some lessons, less-able pupils are not always given the resources they need to be able to complete tasks independently and opportunities are occasionally missed to provide further challenge for the more-able.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage children's learning is not always effectively promoted through play in activities children choose themselves.
- Although pupils are given very effective written guidance about how to improve their work in English, this is not consistent across other subjects.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher. They also made a number of short visits to lessons and other activities conducted by teachers and trained assistants.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils. Inspectors also held discussions with the Chair and a Foundation Governor of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority and school staff, including middle and senior managers.
- Inspectors took account of responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and responses to a parental questionnaire recently carried out by the school.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Judith Tolley, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Clarice Nelson-Rowe

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Benedict's is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- Pupils are predominantly of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is lower than average as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational need is below average, although this varies from year to year.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expected for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has a number of awards including Healthy School Award, Active Schools' Award and the BECTA ICT Award.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and accelerate progress further by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to work independently of the teacher to solve problems
 - providing pupils with the resources they need to complete tasks independently, particularly to support the less -able
 - ensuring pupils are given the same good guidance about how to improve their work in all subjects as they are in English
 - planning and organising child-initiated activities in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that children are able to extend their learning more effectively through play.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Standards in English and mathematics are well above the national average. Since the previous inspection, standards have risen year on year and continue to rise. The proportion of pupils who make more than expected progress from their starting points compares very favourably with national figures.
- Although less-able pupils make expected progress from their starting points, the pace of their learning sometimes slows because the resources provided for them do not always give them the support they need to complete tasks without extra help.
- Many pupils join the school with skill levels that are below those expected for their age. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, particularly in developing their communication, reading and personal and social skills. They enter Year 1 confident and enthusiastic learners, ready to access the Key Stage 1 curriculum.
- Most pupils make good, and some outstanding, progress as they move through the school. By the end of Year 6, their attainment is well above the national average in writing, reading and mathematics. They read a variety of texts fluently and write accurately for a variety of purposes and audiences.
- The school's actions to raise standards and accelerate progress in reading, writing and mathematics have proved successful. Attainment by the end of Year 2 has risen and is now broadly in line with the national average. Attainment in mathematics has risen significantly and now matches that in English. The pupil premium funding is used effectively and gaps between the performances of different groups have closed. Pupils who have fallen behind or who have special educational needs are helped through a range of well-tailored intervention strategies and extra support in class. As a result, these pupils successfully take part in activities alongside their classmates and also make good progress from their starting points.

The quality of teaching is good

- The overall quality of teaching over time is good and leads to pupils' good progress.
- Teachers present new ideas clearly and activities are well designed to engage pupils' interest. Information and communication technology is used effectively by teachers and pupils, even the youngest, to clarify ideas and to enable pupils to consolidate and extend their learning. For example, Year 4 pupils used tablets to record their progress in making cakes and then decide how best to illustrate their written instructions. In a Year 3 literacy lesson, pupils listened closely to a story to spot the different ways the author had started sentences and then used these ideas in their own writing.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work very effectively together to plan lessons so that no time is lost in organising groups and activities are usually well matched to pupils' needs and capabilities. They use questioning very effectively to support and extend pupils' thinking. However, less-able pupils sometimes lack the resources they need to complete tasks themselves in the time available or rely too heavily on adults to help them so that the pace of their learning slows.
- Pupils often make the best progress when they are given the opportunity to work with a partner or in small groups to explore ideas and solve problems. In a Year 5 mathematics lesson, for instance, more-able pupils worked together enthusiastically to investigate the relationship between vertices, faces and edges of 3D shapes and to decide whether a 16th century mathematician's proposition was correct. Similarly, pupils from all years thoroughly enjoyed a series of problem-solving activities which tested their social and personal skills as well as applying their mathematical skills in practical situations. However, opportunities are sometimes missed in other classes to promote pupils' enjoyment and independence as learners in this way.

- The teaching of reading is systematic and consistent across the school. Pupils are excited about reading and say how much they enjoy it.
- Teachers check understanding closely and adapt their lessons effectively to correct misapprehensions.
- Marking is thorough but the very good guidance pupils receive in their English books about how to improve their writing is not always reinforced in other subjects or linked closely enough to their targets.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Scrutiny of behavioural records and discussions show this is also the case over time. Pupils are kind and considerate to each other and work and play very well together. They take responsibility very seriously and are proud of their contribution to the school through, for example, the school council, the ECO Group and as playground leaders and prefects.
- There no disruption to lessons and pupils seize opportunities to work responsibly and with enthusiasm when given the opportunity to work independently or collaboratively. They listen attentively to others and respect each other's views.
- They have excellent relationships with adults, feel very safe and both pupils and parents are confident that any poor behaviour is dealt with promptly and effectively. They are aware of the different forms of bullying that can take place and know how to deal with it, prefects and play leaders actively helping their peers at break and lunchtimes. They know how to stay safe and have a good understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. They speak with enthusiasm about their success in developing the garden and improving the play facilities. Extra-curricular activities, including gardening, sport, judo and yoga are very popular.
- The school has worked well with outside agencies and with parents to improve punctuality and attendance. Attendance rates have risen to average and persistent absence has decreased.

The leadership and management are good

- The leadership and management of the headteacher are outstanding. She provides very clear direction based on an accurate evaluation of the school's work. Strategies to improve teaching and learning, raise standards and to accelerate progress across the school have proved successful and have led to significant improvements in these areas since the previous inspection.
- She is strongly supported by the senior leadership team and subject leaders who have an accurate view of the school's performance and how to improve further. Subject leaders are fully involved in procedures for monitoring and driving improvement in teaching and learning in their subjects and in developing their subjects through the topic-based curriculum. This, and the detailed analysis of pupils' progress, triggers appropriate interventions for pupils and training for staff.
- Issues identified in the previous report have been tackled successfully. Teachers work well as a team and regularly share good practice. This results in a good degree of consistency across the school. The school is well-placed to improve further.
- Safeguarding meets government requirements. The school does all it can to keep its pupils safe.
- There are good links with the local high school as well as with the Children's Centre and the local network of schools.
- The curriculum meets the needs and interests of the pupils well and pupils talk enthusiastically about the topics they are studying. It is effectively adapted for pupils with special educational needs and those with behavioural difficulties. It is enriched by a variety of activities such as problem-solving workshops, art, theatre and music as well as a wide range of clubs and sporting activities, visits and visitors. Pupils also benefit from specialist teaching in music and physical

education.

- Pupils have frequent opportunities to reflect and appreciate their own skills and the skills of others, for example, through weekly assemblies, and to examine their own emotions and empathise with others through personal and social education lessons. This is successful in increasing pupils' confidence and promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively.
 - Since the previous inspection the local authority has worked effectively with the school to improve teaching and learning in English and mathematics. It now provides light touch support for this good school.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has a very good understanding of the strengths and areas which need to be improved.
 - Governors are fully involved in monitoring the performance of the school. They are very supportive and well equipped to hold leaders to account.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	106494
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	405040

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Dawes
Headteacher	Janice Taberner
Date of previous school inspection	9 December 2010
Telephone number	01942 253522
Fax number	01942 253522
Email address	enquiries@admin.saintbenedicts.wigan.sch.uk

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