

St Hilda's Church of England Primary School

Warwick Road South, Firswood, Stretford, Manchester, M16 0EX

Inspection dates 6–7 March 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Standards overall in Key Stages 1 and 2 over the past two years show a declining trend and in 2012 not enough pupils made the nationally expected progress in mathematics.
- A significant number of teachers have left or joined the school over the past two years. This has interrupted the learning of many pupils, resulting in gaps in some key skills. This is limiting the progress they are currently making, particularly in mathematics.
- The school does not have a consistently applied marking policy.
- The teaching of mathematics in lower Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 1 is not good enough and so pupils in these classes are not making enough progress.
- In some classes, including the Early Years Foundation Stage, the pace of learning is too slow or the work is too easy.
- There have been so many changes in staffing over the past two years, the responsibilities of senior and middle leaders and governors are not clear and some overlap and so teamwork is poor. Leaders' views of the school's performance are too generous and the school is not improving fast enough.
- The skills of middle leaders need to be used more fully to give them more opportunities to improve their areas of responsibility.

The school has the following strengths

- Standards in reading have remained consistently high.
- Standards overall in Key Stage 1 are showing a rising trend.
- There is some outstanding teaching.
- Behaviour is good and pupils enjoy school and feel safe.
- The newly appointed headteacher has rapidly introduced a number of improvements, including higher expectations and effective systems for checking on pupils' progress and identifying and helping those who are not doing well enough.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.
- Inspectors observed 14 lessons or parts of lessons, including two joint observations, one with the headteacher and one with the mathematics subject leader. Short visits were also made to classrooms and the inspectors listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with pupils and other opportunities were taken to talk with pupils on the playground. Meetings were also held with two members of the governing body, one representative from the local authority and members of staff including senior leaders.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents including; data on pupils' progress, school development plans, documentation relating to teachers' performance over time and records relating to pupils' behaviour and safety.
- Inspectors took account of the 54 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the results of the school's own questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

John Dunne, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sheila Loughlin

Additional Inspector

Prydwen Elfed-Owens

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Hilda's is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for children from service families, those in the care of the local authority or those known to be eligible for free school meals) is below average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups who attend the school is above average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The school meets the government's floor standard, which is the minimum expected for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- BOSH4 is a before- and after-school club which operates in the school building, but is not managed by the governing body and is inspected separately.
- During the past two years, a significant number of staff, at all levels, have left or joined the school. The school had a temporary, acting headteacher in post during the 2011 to 2012 academic year. The current headteacher is relatively new, having been appointed in September 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the amount of good and outstanding teaching by:
 - making sure that in all lessons, tasks are always challenging enough and that they are more closely matched to pupils' needs and abilities
 - ensuring that in all lessons, pupils do not spend too long listening to teachers, so that they can improve their learning by having more time to work on their own or in groups
 - ensuring that all marking of work makes it clear to pupils what they need to do to improve it and allows them time in lessons to act on this advice, so that they can learn from their mistakes.
- Improve the proportion of pupils making good progress in mathematics by:
 - Successfully using the outstanding practice from upper Key Stage 2 teachers to provide training to improve all teachers' subject knowledge and understanding of how to teach mathematics to the highest levels
 - identifying and filling the gaps in pupils' mathematical skills and understanding.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management, including the governing body, in raising standards and creating a shared vision of how improvements are going to be made, by:
 - ensuring senior leaders and governors have a more accurate view of what needs to be improved and the plans to do so are better prioritised and more manageable
 - ensuring that roles and responsibilities of governors, and senior and middle leaders are much more clearly understood, so that everyone can work together as a team
 - developing the role of middle and subject leaders by giving them more opportunities to check on their areas of responsibility and so enable them to play a much fuller role in helping the school to improve.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and abilities that are typical of those expected for their age overall, but with some weaknesses in their communication, literacy and number skills.
- In the Nursery and Reception sessions led by the teachers, children learn well because the activities are well chosen and planned based on the teachers' good understanding of the next steps children need to make. In the sessions which are less structured, children's progress is not as good, because time is not always used well.
- By the end of Reception, children make the progress expected of them to reach standards which are broadly average; above average in English skills but below average in number skills.
- Following a rise to well-above national average standards in Key Stage 1 in 2011, attainment dipped sharply, particularly in writing, to below average in 2012. In addition, not enough pupils reached the higher levels in reading, writing or mathematics. However, the school's current progress data and work in pupils' books in Years 1 and 2 show that progress is increasing and attainment is rising in reading and writing, but progress in mathematics is still below expectation.
- In Key Stage 2, well-above average standards in reading and writing in 2011 were maintained in 2012, but in mathematics not enough pupils made the nationally expected progress. Progress data, lessons and work seen show that pupils currently in Key Stage 2 are still underachieving in mathematics in too many classes, mostly due to gaps in their understanding from previous years.
- Phonics (the regular practising of linking letters and sounds) is taught well and this is enabling all pupils to read well. It is particularly successful in helping pupils with weaker reading skills to catch up.
- The school ensures that pupils who are falling behind or with additional needs are very quickly identified and provides excellent support to help them succeed.
- Pupils from minority ethnic groups learn at the same rate as their peers.
- Scores from tests clearly show that the attainment of pupils supported by the pupil premium is improving, indicating that the gap between these pupils and others is closing.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Standards over the past two years have shown a declining trend. This is because too many lessons, particularly in mathematics, are not enabling pupils to do as well as they should.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage there is good teaching but some activities that children choose for themselves are unproductive and time is wasted, for example, when equipment is not ready for them and they have to wait.
- There is good and outstanding teaching of mathematics, particularly in upper Key Stage 2 classes. In one such lesson, skilfully planned activities enabled pupils to make outstanding progress, successfully completing work on number patterns which was at least a year ahead of expected levels for their age. The pupils found the tasks so interesting, it inspired them to work for long periods, trying out different ways to solve the highly challenging practical tasks. The work was skilfully adapted for pupils working at different levels and so pupils of all abilities were being 'stretched'. The teacher used sharply focused questioning which made pupils think deeply about how to solve the complex problems they were working on.
- In less successful lessons, teachers do not always plan work that stretches pupils of all abilities, especially the more able or they spend too long explaining things at the start and so pupils do not have enough time to get on with tasks and activities.
- Pupils' books are marked regularly and although some marking is exemplary, some is not. Some

comments use words that pupils do not understand and others do not always give enough information about how to improve their work. Pupils are not always given the chance to have another attempt at work they have misunderstood and so they are not able to learn from their mistakes.

- Teachers and support staff know their pupils well and build extremely positive and caring relationships.
- The teaching of music is particularly good.
- Many lessons encourage pupils to explore a wide range of cultures and faiths. Teachers also put on a wide range of out-of-school activities covering an extensive range of musical, artistic, sporting and skill-based events. These exploit pupils' curiosity, build their self-confidence and strongly promote their spiritual and cultural development.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils say that behaviour is good in lessons and that disruption to learning very rarely happens.
- School records relating to behaviour and safety show that very few incidents have occurred over the past two years.
- Pupils also say that bullying of any kind is almost never a problem and that, if it happens, adults deal with it sensitively and well. They are particularly appreciative of the way the learning mentor helps them if they have problems.
- Observations in lessons and around school show that pupils treat each other and the adults working with them with high levels of respect. They are extremely polite and well-mannered and move sensibly around the school.
- Pupils with disabilities are treated with respect, tolerance and understanding. The way in which pupils from many different cultures and faiths get on well together is an impressive feature of the school and creates a very harmonious atmosphere.
- In lessons where teaching is good, pupils are able to work extremely well in groups as well as on their own for long periods and this helps them to make good gains in their learning. However, when teaching is not good, some pupils lose concentration and this hinders the progress they make.
- Pupils are punctual to lessons and their attendance has been consistently above average for the past three years.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the possible dangers when using computers, social media sites and the internet. They are well informed about dangers they may come across and how to avoid or react to them.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Over the past two and a half years, there have been many staffing changes including: a temporary, acting headteacher during the 2011 to 2012 academic year, a significant number of staff joining or leaving the school at all levels and many changes in roles and responsibilities.
- These have slowed the improvements that the local authority, school members and governors have strived for.
- As a consequence, results that were well above average in 2011, declined in Key Stage 2, especially in mathematics and fell below national levels overall in Key Stage 1 in 2012.
- The recently appointed headteacher has introduced systems to check up on the progress that individuals, classes and groups of pupils are making and to successfully address any identified as not doing well enough. He is also observing teachers regularly as part of their performance management and giving good guidance as to how to improve. These measures are beginning to reverse the declining trend, but have not been in place long enough to significantly improve

standards.

- Leaders and managers do not always check that teachers effectively plan work that is accurately matched to pupils' needs or ensure that marking is helping pupils improve their work.
 - Leaders and managers at all levels, including governors, are committed to improving the school. They have introduced a number of changes to achieve this. However, because their view of the school's performance is overgenerous, and because not everyone is clear about their roles and responsibilities for making these changes work, leaders and managers are not working well as a team.
 - The school has a number of skilled and knowledgeable middle leaders, including the subject leader for mathematics. However, they are not given sufficient opportunities to improve the areas they are responsible for.
 - The curriculum covers the full range of subjects and is enriched by the many extra activities teachers put on for them.
 - The high quality teaching of music and the many opportunities for pupils to join in a wide range of out-of-school activities contribute well to their spiritual, social and cultural development.
 - The school is committed to promoting equality and tackling discrimination and this is evident in the way all pupils including disabled pupils and pupils from many cultures and backgrounds join in all that the school offers and get on so well together.
 - The school has used additional funding well to employ extra support to boost learning for those pupils eligible for the pupil premium.
 - Procedures to ensure the safeguarding of pupils meet statutory requirements.
 - The local authority has supported the school well during the period of high staff turnover and is currently implementing a number of further support strategies to help the school in its mission to improve
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body includes highly committed members who work hard and have a strong ambition for the school to improve. Members have the necessary skills needed to check up on the progress of pupils, classes and groups. However, they have been slow to ensure that the school has proper systems for checking up on pupils' progress as these have only recently been introduced. They ensure that pupil premium funding is used wisely by employing additional staff in areas of most need. Members do not check the records of teachers' performance well enough and so they do not have a full understanding of how teachers' performance is managed and how this is linked to improved standards and subsequent progression along the pay scale.
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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	106351
Local authority	Trafford
Inspection number	400843

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	349
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ross Malkin
Headteacher	Tim Coleman
Date of previous school inspection	20 July 2010
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