

# St Hugh's Catholic Primary School

Park Road, Timperley, Altrincham, Cheshire, WA15 6TQ

**Inspection dates** 14–15 May 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- Teaching is outstanding and this makes a significant contribution to pupils' rapid progress. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and use a wide range of strategies to engage and motivate them. Work is matched very well to the needs of the pupils and expectations for learning are clear. As a result pupils make consistently rapid progress in lessons. Opportunities are occasionally missed to provide further challenge for middle-attaining pupils so that they can achieve the highest levels in mathematics. The advice given for improvement is strongest in English.
- Achievement is good. By the end of Year 6, attainment in reading and writing is significantly above national averages and above average in mathematics. Pupils' progress from their various starting points is outstanding in English and good in mathematics. High standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
- Children make outstanding progress from their starting points in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Most begin Year 1 with skills that are above those expected for their age and are confident and enthusiastic learners.
- Behaviour is exemplary. Pupils are keen to do well. They have excellent relationships with each other and adults in the school. The school is a safe, very calm and orderly community. Pupils are keen to learn and, when given the opportunity, work exceptionally well in pairs and small groups to solve problems. They value the opportunities they have to take responsibility and to participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. The school has very effective systems for managing behaviour and for encouraging pupils to take care of each other and their surroundings.
- The school is focused very sharply on a constant drive for improvement and a willingness to take immediate action to eradicate any weaknesses. Despite significant changes in staffing and the rapid expansion of the school since the last inspection, high standards have been maintained. Through rigorous analysis of performance, leaders identify any potential underachievement at an early stage and their careful monitoring ensures that interventions have a positive impact on pupils' outcomes. Excellent promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development enables them to thrive in a supportive, cohesive learning community.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 26 lessons. These included a number of short visits to lessons and other activities conducted by teachers and trained assistants.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, with the Chair of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority and school staff, including middle and senior managers.
- The inspectors took account of responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) letters and phone calls from parents and questionnaires completed by staff.
- 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
Anthony Buckley	Additional Inspector
Prydwen Elfed-Owens	Additional Inspector
Elaine Maloney	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- St Hugh's is a much larger than average primary school.
- Pupils are predominantly of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is much lower than average as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational need is lower than average, although this varies from year to year.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. (Pupil premium funding is provided by the government to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children looked after by the local authority and the children of military personnel.)
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which is the minimum expected for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the last inspection there have been significant changes in staff and the school has increased in size.
- The school has a number of awards including the Dyslexia-Friendly School Award.

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

- Raise attainment in mathematics to the same high standards as those in English by:
  - ensuring that pupils, particularly those of middle ability, are always given the means to achieve the highest levels in lessons.
- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
  - increasing opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively and independently of the teacher to solve problems
  - ensuring that pupils are always given precise guidance about how to improve their work, especially their writing, in subjects other than English.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Achievement is good. Pupils make outstanding progress in writing and reading. Achievement in mathematics is good. Fewer pupils achieve the higher grades in mathematics than in English.
- Children enter the Nursery with skills and understanding that are generally in line with those expected for their age. They make outstanding progress, especially in areas of language and communication, reading, writing and mathematics, in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Most begin Year 1 with skills above those expected for their age across all areas of learning. As a result of the frequent opportunities they have to take the initiative in activities, children are confident, articulate, work exceptionally well together and are keen to learn.
- By the end of Year 2 pupils achieve standards that are consistently above average in all subjects and well above average in reading and writing.
- By the end of Year 6 pupils make exceptional progress in reading and writing. Their writing is of a high standard. They write accurately and with panache for a variety of purposes and audiences, using a wide range of vocabulary and literary devices. Their handwriting is of a high standard. Pupils say they enjoy reading and they read a wide variety of texts fluently and with understanding. They are able to talk in detail about what they have read and compare and contrast the styles of different authors. The progress pupils make in mathematics, although good, is not as strong as it is in reading and writing. Nonetheless, their attainment in mathematics is above average.
- High standards have been maintained overall since the last inspection. There was a dip in 2012 but analysis of the progress for current pupils shows that achievement has improved. The proportion of pupils making and exceeding the progress expected of them from their starting points compares very favourably with national figures.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make excellent progress as a result of the very well-tailored support they are given.
- The pupil premium funding is used effectively and gaps between the performances of different groups have closed. Pupils who have fallen behind, or who are on the special educational needs register, and those who are at the early stages of learning English make good progress. They 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 make good headway from their starting points.

### The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teaching is consistently of high quality across the school with much that is outstanding.
- Teachers present new ideas clearly and activities are well-designed to engage pupils' interest. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used effectively by both teachers and their pupils, even the youngest, to clarify ideas and to enable pupils to consolidate and extend their learning. For example, children in the Reception classes regularly use computer programmes to practise their mathematics and their reading skills.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work very effectively together to plan lessons so that no time is lost in organising groups. Activities are matched very well to pupils' needs and capabilities. For instance, in a Year 5 mathematics lesson pupils' progress in completing long multiplication calculations was closely monitored and those who completed tasks confidently were encouraged to try more complex ones. As a result they made outstanding progress. On occasions, opportunities are missed to provide this high level of challenge for pupils of middle ability, or pupils' progress is slowed because teacher-led activities are too lengthy.
- Teachers and teaching assistants ask pupils very searching questions to get them thinking and to see how much they have understood.
- 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 the Nursery children worked

effectively together to investigate whether the size of boats affects how easily they go down a water slide. In a Year 3 philosophy lesson pupils participated enthusiastically in discussion about *The Rainbow Fish* story with their partners to decide what makes something beautiful. However, opportunities are sometimes missed to promote pupils' enjoyment and independence as learners in this way.

- Teachers skilfully adapt their lessons so that any misunderstandings are corrected. The teaching of reading is systematic and consistent across the school. The teaching of phonics (the sounds letters make) in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 is having a positive impact upon the quality of pupils' writing and upon their reading skills. Younger pupils are eager to show off their writing and all pupils are excited about reading and say how much they enjoy it.
- Marking is thorough and pupils are increasingly involved in tracking their own progress against their targets, especially in English and mathematics, as they move through the school. Pupils are beginning to enter into a dialogue with their teachers about how best to improve their work. However, opportunities are sometimes missed to provide pupils with the precise guidance they need to write accurately, particularly in subjects other than English.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**

- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. 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, as playground buddies and prefects.
- There is no disruption to lessons and pupils work responsibly and with enthusiasm, especially when given the opportunity to work independently or collaboratively. They listen attentively to others and respect each other's views. Even the youngest children in the Early Years Foundation Stage relish the opportunities they have to take responsibility, for example to take photographs of their own and each other's work or to decide the pieces of work they want the teacher to photocopy. They do this with enthusiasm and without fuss, needing very little supervision.
- Pupils 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, such as name-calling and cyber-bullying, that can take place and know how to deal with it. Prefects and play leaders actively help their peers at break and lunchtimes.
- Their knowledge about how to stay safe is impressive. Older pupils have carried out a speed check on traffic outside the school and taken motorists to task about the consequences of driving too fast. They have a very good understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. They are enthusiastic about the range of extra-curricular activities, including sport, that are provided.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. Attendance rates are above average.
- Pupils who may have challenging behaviour are supported effectively to make good choices and, as a result, incidences of poor behaviour are very rare.

### **The leadership and management are outstanding**

- The headteacher, deputy and senior staff provide outstanding leadership in all areas of school life. Their unwavering commitment to continuous improvement is clearly communicated to the wider school community. They have a very clear understanding of the strengths of the school and what could be improved further and work cohesively as a team to achieve excellence. There are detailed action plans focused on raising attainment and on improving teaching and learning. Leaders and managers at all levels are fully involved in checking the school's performance and in holding teachers to account. Teaching and learning are closely monitored and teachers new to the school are very effectively supported. As a result, despite significant changes in staff and increasing numbers of pupils, there is a high level of consistency across the school. Issues identified in the previous report have been tackled successfully. The school is well-placed to improve further.
- Subject leaders are fully involved in procedures for checking how well the school is doing and

driving improvement in teaching and learning in their subjects.

- This, and the detailed analysis of pupils' progress, triggers appropriate interventions for pupils and training for staff. A comprehensive system of appraisal and performance management has been adopted, which is linked to the pay scales. Teachers are positive about how they are helped to improve and provided with ample training.
- Safeguarding meets government requirements. The school promotes equal opportunities very effectively and all pupils do well.
- Good links have been established with local high schools and with pre-school settings. The school works effectively with local agencies and with parents to ensure that all pupils settle well to learning.
- The curriculum meets the needs and interests of the pupils very well. It is effectively adapted for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. It is enriched by a wide variety of activities such as art, theatre and music, as well as a wide range of clubs and sporting activities, visits, including residential visits, and visitors. Pupils also benefit from specialist teaching in Italian and have the opportunity to learn to play an instrument.
- Pupils have frequent opportunities to reflect and appreciate their own skills and the skills of others, for example, through assemblies. This is successful in increasing pupils' confidence and promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very effectively.
- Since the previous inspection the local authority has worked effectively with the school to improve achievement in English and mathematics, following the dip in 2012. It now provides light-touch support for this outstanding school.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body has an excellent understanding of the school's strengths and areas which need to be improved. Some governors are fully involved in checking the school's performance, including data that show pupils' attainment and progress and by observing lessons. As a result, they have a clear understanding of the quality of teaching and the performance of staff. The efficiency of spending is scrutinised, for instance the effectiveness of the use of pupil premium funding and the recent building work. Governors ensure that safeguarding requirements are met. They are actively involved in the life of the school and effectively hold leaders to account.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	106340
<b>Local authority</b>	Trafford
<b>Inspection number</b>	412520

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	648
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Paul Hanley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Aengus McMorrow
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 July 2007
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 9621852
<b>Fax number</b>	0161 9052380
<b>Email address</b>	sthughs.admin@trafford.gov.uk



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