

St Stephen's RC Primary School

Chappell Road, Droylsden, Manchester, M43 7NA

Inspection dates 14–15 May 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide clear and purposeful leadership. They are well supported by senior leaders and an effective governing body. As a result, pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching have improved since the previous inspection.
- Pupils of all abilities achieve well. Overall standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above average by Year 6.
- Children make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, especially in their reading and writing skills. They are well prepared for Year 1 and eager to learn.
- Pupils who receive support from pupil premium funding achieve well and often reach standards which are similar to those of other pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress.
- The quality of teaching is good overall. It is sometimes outstanding. All groups of pupils are ambitious to succeed and respond well to the increasingly high expectations placed upon them.
- Pupils are well behaved. They are polite and thoughtful. They feel safe and well cared for. Pupils take responsibilities such as school councillors and prefects seriously.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils regularly participate in a range of visits, including residential ones, musical, sporting and other activities.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, work set does not provide the most appropriate challenge to help pupils make the best progress.
- Pupils' reading, writing and mathematical skills are not always developed well through other subjects.
- Some subject leaders do not have sufficient knowledge of strengths and weaknesses in their areas of responsibility.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 18 teaching sessions, including several observed jointly with members of the senior leadership team. The inspectors also made a number of shorter visits to classrooms, looked at a wide range of pupils' work and listened to them read.
- Discussions were held with several groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and other members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and members of staff, including senior leaders and other leaders with particular responsibilities.
- Inspectors took account of the 44 responses to Ofsted's on-line questionnaire (Parent View), the results from the school's own consultations with parents and spoke to several parents. The responses from staff to the inspection questionnaires were also considered.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including information on pupils' current progress, the school's plans for improvement, the management of teachers' performance, the use of pupil premium funding, and documentation and records relating to pupils' behaviour and safety.

Inspection team

Andrew Clark, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jennifer Lawrence

Additional Inspector

Geoffrey Yates

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The proportion of pupils who receive support through the pupil premium funding is broadly average and increasing. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children that are looked after by the local authority.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average.
- A small number of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Several teachers are new to the school since the previous inspection, including some new to the profession.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching to accelerate pupils' progress further by:
 - ensuring that all work provides appropriate challenge to learners
 - making certain that pupils use their reading, writing and mathematical skills to the highest standards in other subjects
 - improving subject leaders' first-hand knowledge of the quality of teaching and pupils' progress in their areas of responsibility, in order to have a maximum impact on school improvement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills which are generally in line with those typical for their age. They make good progress in all areas of learning. In particular, the early stages of reading and numeracy are well established and provide a strong basis for later learning. Children cooperate well with each other and work with sustained concentration on all their activities.
- All groups of pupils now make good progress through the rest of the school, which is a positive improvement in the short time since the last inspection. This is a direct result of sustained development to the quality of teaching based on good use of rigorous procedures to measure pupils' achievement.
- There is a generally upward trend in National Curriculum test results at Year 2 and Year 6. However, a number of pupils did not make the best progress they could at Year 6 in 2013, especially in writing. This largely related to specific past issues which the school has since addressed. The current Year 6 pupils are working at above expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Throughout school pupils supported by the pupil premium achieve well. They work at standards which are close to those of other pupils and any gaps are narrowing. In 2013 Year 6 pupils supported by the pupil premium attained standards above those of other pupils in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve well. The school takes careful account of their achievement in planning the support they need and encouraging them to make decisions and take a pride in their work.
- Most-able pupils make good progress. They think logically and work with imagination. They use their knowledge and skills increasingly well to solve mathematical problems and to write imaginative diaries and biographies.
- Pupils' reading skills are well developed and they make good progress. Early readers understand the link between letters and their sounds and pupils of all abilities read with expression and fluency. This is reflected in the scores they achieve in the national check for these skills at Year 1 and reading tests at Year 2. By Year 6, pupils make good use of a variety of skills in reading non-fiction, understand different genres and talk knowledgeably of the writing styles of a range of authors.
- Pupils make good progress in writing. They develop a good understanding of grammatical structure and spell accurately. This is reflected in the above average results in the 2013 tests for these skills in Year 6. Their handwriting is increasingly neat and fluid in response to the school's improved handwriting policy.
- Pupils achieve well in mathematics. Pupils' calculation skills are developed well and applied to solving 'real-life' problems.
- Occasionally, pupils do not show the same accuracy and care when applying reading, writing and mathematical skills in subjects other than English and mathematics.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is now consistently good or better throughout school. This is an improvement from the last inspection and is based on the development and effective use of thorough procedures to measure and analyse pupils' progress to boost learning.
- Children are eager to learn in the Early Years Foundation Stage because they are engaged through well-planned activities and attractive resources which interest all groups of learners. For example, children use their knowledge of letters, sounds and numbers to make shopping lists in their role-play supermarket and to describe their newly hatched chickens and ducks.
- Throughout school, pupils are encouraged to be ambitious and increasingly aim high. They

respond well to clearly stated high expectations for all groups and abilities of pupils. This is an improvement from the last inspection, as a result of effective use of robust procedures to measure pupils' achievement and set challenging targets for them.

- Pupils are helped to develop good learning skills, such as resilience and attentiveness. This boosts the achievement of all groups of pupils, including the most able and those who find learning difficult.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs learn well because of regular measures of their academic, physical, emotional and social development and sharply focused activities to develop the skills they need to improve. Timely and well-planned additional English and mathematics sessions increase achievement for pupils who are falling behind or who find it difficult to learn new skills and concepts.
- The small, but increasing number of pupils who are new to speaking English often learn well in response to speedy checks on their needs and with skilled support.
- The most-able pupils often make good progress because they are given work which challenges them right from the start of sessions. Pupils respond well to thoughtful questions which allow them to think deeply and recall earlier information.
- Pupils increasingly improve their own work because of the clear guidance they receive in regular marking and feedback. They generally have a good understanding of the next steps they need to take and often assess their own achievement in reading and writing.
- Occasionally, pupils do not make the best progress of which they are capable because the work does not challenge them appropriately. For example, some of the worksheets pupils are given do not allow them to write in enough detail or show imagination. Occasionally, pupils are not given enough time to think things out for themselves before being told what to do.
- Sometimes, pupils do not use their reading, writing and mathematical skills in other subjects to the standards of which they are capable and this is not always addressed.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Relationships between pupils and with adults are very positive. Pupils are polite and considerate towards each other because of the good example all adults set for them. As a result, pupils' behaviour is sometimes exemplary.
- Pupils' pride in their school is evident in their smart appearance, the generally careful presentation of their work and tidy and well-ordered books. They value the care staff take in ensuring that they work in attractive and orderly classrooms.
- Pupils take their roles as prefects and school councillors seriously and this contributes to the positive attitudes and good behaviour.
- Pupils are keen to come to school and are punctual and well prepared for the day's learning. Attendance is average and increasing. The school uses pupil premium funding well to reduce the proportion of pupils who regularly take too much time off.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils feel very safe and well looked after. Parents are fully confident that their children receive the highest levels of care.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how their behaviour affects others and that they should be kind and considerate. Pupils have a good knowledge of potential bullying situations, including racial and homophobic concerns through personal and social development education and assemblies. They are certain that little bullying takes place and any incidents are successfully managed by the staff. This is confirmed by the school's good record-keeping procedures and parents also agree. There have been no recent exclusions.
- Pupils learn to take appropriate risks and to keep themselves safe. They enjoy adventure on residential and other visits, but know the dangers and how to stay safe. They take care of others as well as looking after the school's chickens and ducks and follow strict hygiene procedures.
- On a few occasions, pupils are not as enthusiastic and engaged in their learning as they could be and this limits the progress that they make.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher's and deputy headteacher's determination and sense of purpose are central to school's improvement since the last inspection. They have responded speedily to issues raised at the last inspection and to the subsequent advice they have received. They have developed an effective senior leadership team and staff morale is high.
- The improved procedures to measure and review the progress made by all groups of pupils are now key factors in the drive for school development. These now provide a precise framework for the governing body to hold leaders to account and ensure that the school's view of its own success is accurate.
- Senior leaders act as good role models for other staff through their own teaching and skills in improving the work of others. The school has developed effective procedures since the last inspection to ensure that staff are held accountable for the progress their pupils make. They have to meet stringent criteria in order to achieve the next salary level.
- Some subject leaders, several of whom are new to their role, do not yet have sufficient consistent knowledge of strengths and weaknesses in their areas of responsibility in order to be fully accountable for pupils' achievement and to make a full contribution to school improvement.
- The school closely analyses the use of pupil premium funding which is narrowing gaps in pupils' attainment and progress at both key stages. The use of the funding is carefully matched to the specific needs of the pupils who are eligible for this support, for example, through specific projects to develop reading and writing as well as ensuring access to a broad range of learning activities, such as musical tuition.
- The impact of the leaders' approach to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils is reflected in the good progress made by everyone. There is no evidence of discrimination in the school.
- The school receives good support from the local authority and independent education consultants. They have provided training and support which have contributed well to improvements to the quality of teaching and the leadership skills of staff.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. There are well-planned themes built around visits or visitors which form the background to much of pupils' learning. Close partnerships with the church and other schools contribute to the depth of pupils' achievements in several subjects including art, history, science and music.
- The school makes an effective contribution to pupils' health and well-being. Pupils are successful in a range of team and individual sports. This work is complemented by good use of the primary school sport funding to improve teachers' knowledge of how to teach physical education skills and introduce new sporting experiences. This has already contributed to the development of staff skills in teaching physical education and further participation by pupils in clubs and team activities.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is led and managed well. It is informed effectively through detailed reports from the headteacher, the local authority and other external consultants. The governing body now receives regular and detailed analyses of data on pupils' achievement and other aspects of the school's work such as attendance. The governing body was re-structured following the last inspection and established an interim strategic management committee. This committee ensures that the governing body is well placed to ask challenging questions of the leadership. As a result, governors are fully involved in making decisions as to whether teachers and staff should be rewarded with salary increases and reviewing targets for the headteacher.
 - Governors take advantage of a good range of training opportunities to improve their effectiveness. They ensure that safeguarding requirements are met in full. They manage the school's finances well by, for example, carefully scrutinising the use made of pupil premium funding and its impact on learning.

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	106253
Local authority	Tameside
Inspection number	432137

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	422
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bernadette Mattison
Headteacher	Brendan Marley
Date of previous school inspection	13 November 2012
Telephone number	0161 370 2071
Fax number	0161 301 4259
Email address	admin@st-stephens-droylsden.tameside.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2014

