

# St Hilda's CofE Primary School

Warwick Road South, Firswood, Manchester, M16 0EX

**Inspection dates** 14–15 May 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- Pupils achieve well. They make good progress from their starting points and reach above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Those pupils who start school with little or no English achieve well because of the very effective support provided for them.
- Teaching is mostly good and some teaching is outstanding.
- Pupils behave very well and have extremely positive attitudes to learning. They feel very safe, happy and secure and so they are ready and able to learn and progress. Parents are confident that the school looks after their children extremely well.
- Senior leaders have brought about considerable improvements in teaching since the last inspection. There is an ongoing and relentless drive for continuous improvement in all aspects of the school's work. Middle leaders' confidence has grown and they now contribute well to the improvement drive.
- Governors are well informed and are increasingly actively involved in helping to drive the school forward.
- Leaders make regular checks on teaching and teachers work together well to share the best practice.
- Pupils' progress is checked regularly to ensure that everyone is given the levels of support or challenge they need.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not yet enough outstanding teaching to lead to outstanding overall achievement by pupils.
- Teachers' explanations in lessons are not always clear and pupils do not always know what to do next at the end of each activity in lessons.
- The rate of pupils' progress shows some variations between the classes in Key Stage 2; this means that pupils' overall achievement is good rather than outstanding.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 20 parts of lessons; two lesson observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher. They listened to pupils read in Years 2 and 6 and discussed with them the books they have enjoyed and those they are currently reading.
- The inspectors met with six members of the governing body, with senior and middle leaders, with pastoral staff, with two groups of pupils, with a representative of the local authority and with the diocesan educational adviser for the school.
- The inspectors took into account 37 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View). An inspector had conversations with some parents at the beginning and end of the school day and heard their views about the school. An inspector heard an individual parent's views in a telephone conversation during the inspection.
- The inspectors took into account the views that staff expressed in the questionnaires they returned.
- The inspectors observed the school's work. They looked at the work in pupils' books and also reviewed a wide range of documentation, including safeguarding documents, the school improvement plan, records of pupils' attainment and progress and documents related to pupils' behaviour and attendance.

## Inspection team

Diane Auton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Fiona Gowers

Additional Inspector

Mark Williams

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is larger than most other primary schools.
- Over a third of the pupils in school are from British Asian backgrounds and around a quarter are White British. A wide range of other ethnic backgrounds and cultural traditions are also represented among the pupils and families the school serves. About two thirds of pupils speak English at home, with fourteen other home languages represented.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through pupil-premium funding is below average. This additional government funding is provided for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school is currently working with support from Elmridge Primary School, which is a National Teaching School.
- The last inspection report noted that there had been an extended period when significant numbers of staff, at all levels, joined or left the school. Further changes in the teaching staff took place during the last school year. All of the resulting staffing vacancies are now filled, including the appointment of a new senior teacher in Key Stage 2.

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

- Improve teaching further by:
  - continuing to make thorough and regular checks on the quality and effect of teaching
  - ensuring that teachers' explanations in lessons are always clear so that they are fully understood by pupils
  - ensuring that pupils know what to do next at the end of each activity in lessons, so that learning time is used as well as possible.
- Improve consistency in pupils' progress across the classes in Key Stage 2, by continuing to support improvements in teaching and keeping regular checks on pupils' progress so that any underachievement is spotted and addressed promptly and effectively.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children start school in the Nursery class with typical skills and knowledge for their age group in most of the areas of learning. A small, but increasing, minority of children from all backgrounds start with immature speech and language skills and some children are unfamiliar with English.
- All of the children thrive in the Early Years Foundation Stage; they make good progress from their starting points and become enthusiastic learners. By the time they leave the Reception class they are well-prepared and ready for Year 1. Those with English as their additional language do well in developing their communication skills.
- Standards in Key Stage 1 were above average in 2013 and are continuing to rise in the current year. Pupils in the current Years 1 and 2 are on track for above average standards by the end of Year 2, with an increasing number due to reach the higher level 3 in all subjects. The school's records show rapid progress in both year groups, in response to effective teaching.
- Pupils' overall achievement is good in Key Stage 2. At the end of Year 6 in 2013, standards were above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils did exceptionally well in the new test of grammar, punctuation and spelling skills, reaching standards that were significantly above average. In this year group, the proportion of pupils who made more than expected progress during Key Stage 2 was greater than the national proportion in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In the current year, pupils in all of the year groups in Key Stage 2 are making good overall progress; in Year 6 they are making outstanding progress in all three subjects. The school has already identified these variations, which result in part from teaching that is usually good rather than outstanding but are also a legacy of some weaker teaching in the school in previous years. Appropriate actions are under way to address any remaining gaps in pupils' learning and to achieve better consistency in pupils' progress across Key Stage 2, but these are still at a relatively early stage and their full intended impact has not yet been achieved.
- The most able pupils are doing increasingly well as a result of the good provision the school makes for them, with the number on track for higher level achievement by the end of Year 6 continuing to rise this year.
- The school provides very effective support for pupils with special educational needs; these pupils learn well and make good and sometimes outstanding progress from their starting points.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make the same good progress as all of the other pupils in school and achieve well.
- Letters and sounds are taught successfully in the younger classes and most pupils reached the required standard in the Year 1 screening check of their reading skills in 2012 and 2013. The very small number who had not done so in Year 1 in 2012 all caught up in the Year 2 re-tests in 2013. A 'reading recovery' programme supports pupils who may have fallen behind and helps them re-build confidence and skills very successfully. Pupils of all ages show a genuine interest in books and enjoy reading. By the end of Year 6, their reading skills are above average for their age.
- In Year 6 in 2013, the attainment of the small number of pupils supported by the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, was about four terms behind that of the other pupils in writing, about three terms behind in mathematics and about two terms behind in reading. The school has addressed this deficit. In the current year, in all of the year groups, gaps between the attainment of those supported by the pupil premium and that of other pupils are either small and closing rapidly or non-existent, because all of the pupils are making good progress. This improvement is the result of effective actions rooted in the school's firm commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity for all of its pupils.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good overall, with some outstanding teaching. Literacy and numeracy skills are now taught well across the school and, because of this, pupils' learning has speeded up.
- Experienced middle and senior leaders are supporting new or less experienced colleagues well; several teachers have taken full advantage of additional training opportunities through the link with the teaching school and through external consultants' input. All of this has helped to raise the overall quality of teaching across the school.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is now good, with a curriculum that interests and challenges the children. Children are eager to talk and write about the things they are doing, such as 'making turnip soup' in the 'mud kitchen', a messy activity that everyone loved. Because adults encourage them to discuss and record their ideas, fun activities like this are helping the children to practise and develop their basic skills.
- Staff are skilful in supporting children who are learning English, ensuring that they become involved in all of the activities and that their communication skills develop speedily.
- Teaching in Key Stage 1 is consistently good; sometimes it is outstanding, leading to excellent progress by pupils. This was seen in Year 1, for example, where pupils were busily writing instructions about how to draw an accurate picture of a mini-beast. Searching questions from their teacher helped them to produce useful lists and they responded positively to her high expectations of what they could achieve. They then tested out the success of their instructions by following them to see if they worked; this was a one-minute activity, they knew they had to beat the timer and they all rose to the challenge in a highly enjoyable and productive lesson.
- Good teaching in Key Stage 2 is helping pupils to progress. In Year 6, pupils are making rapid progress across the subject areas; in the other Key Stage 2 year groups the rate of progress is good, but not quite as brisk. This reflects the fact that teaching quality is sometimes outstanding but more usually good.
- Where teaching is good rather than outstanding, teachers' explanations to pupils are sometimes not sufficiently clear and so some pupils' understanding of their work is not quite as secure as it might otherwise be. Occasionally, there are short, but unnecessary, delays in lessons where pupils have to wait to find out what to do next.
- Positive relationships between pupils and adults in the classroom contribute very well to pupils' good learning and progress.
- Teaching assistants support the quality of teaching well and help pupils of all abilities to make good progress. The school uses a wide range of effective additional strategies, including teaching pupils in small groups and providing individual support, for those pupils who need extra help.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils behave extremely well in lessons, around the school and at playtimes. They greatly enjoy coming to school and they show care and consideration for others. They are proud of their school and of their achievements.
- Pupils' very positive attitudes in lessons contribute strongly to their good learning and progress. They know and understand the routines and they respond to teachers' high expectations of their behaviour; because of this, they need only minimal direction in organising themselves in class. They are alert and responsive in lessons, listen well to instructions and work productively with a partner or in a group.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils describe very trusting relationships with the adults in school, saying 'Teachers have faith in us and are always ready to help us.' Parents express confidence in the care the school provides for their children.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying and prejudice-based bullying. They say that bullying is very rare and that when pupils fall out with

each other staff 'get to the bottom of matters and help to sort them out quickly'.

- There are many opportunities for pupils to play their part in making the school a happy place, including acting as play leaders or as influential school councillors. Older pupils regularly support younger ones as reading buddies.
- The school makes excellent arrangements to ensure that pupils who are at an early stage of learning English are very well supported and that their language, personal, social and emotional needs are taken into full account. Bi-lingual support is provided in a wide range of languages and strong links with families are quickly established.
- Pupils with additional learning, health, social, emotional or medical needs are included in everything on offer and are supported extremely well. The school provides very sensitive and caring support for pupils and families whose circumstances might make them vulnerable. Staff work very well with a range of agencies to ensure that support is targeted appropriately.
- Attendance is above average, reflecting the school's partnership with parents and its effective work to support families at risk of poor attendance.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- The headteacher wants the best for the pupils and is providing a clear direction for taking the school forward. He is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and by the other senior and middle leaders, all of whom are positive role models, leading by example.
- The school has made good progress in addressing the areas for improvement that were identified at the last inspection and in the visit by Her Majesty's Inspector that followed it. Successful actions have been taken to improve teaching and to ensure a sharp focus on pupils' learning and there is an upward trend in pupils' achievement. The leadership team has been strengthened by restructuring in the current year. The school is now well placed to continue to improve.
- The school has an accurate view of its performance, based on detailed and regular examination of its work. Systems for tracking and recording pupils' progress have been strengthened and improved so that they now give a clearer picture of how everyone is doing.
- Senior and middle leaders regularly check the quality of teaching and learning. However, leaders are aware that this good leadership practice needs further implementation to increase the proportion of outstanding teaching across the school and in order to continue the upward trend in pupils' achievement.
- Staff are very well supported by an effective programme of ongoing training. A period of intensive support from the teaching school's specialists and other consultants has supported ongoing improvement. Staff at all levels have worked hard to take full advantage of these training opportunities to help them make sure that the needs of all pupils are met effectively.
- The subjects taught support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Visiting experts and visits to places of interest, including residential trips, enrich their development well. The school celebrates pupils' cultural diversity through regular themed events such as African Caribbean evenings and Indian Mela celebrations of dance and drumming.
- Provision for pupils with English as their additional language is a key strength of the school and is very well led and managed.
- The school uses its primary school sports funding effectively to provide specialist coaching in a range of additional sporting activities; this also provides ongoing training for staff. Pupils of all ages enjoy good quality sport and physical education activities in lessons and after school.
- The local authority and Diocese has worked very closely with the school since the last inspection and this good level of support has contributed well to improving teaching and learning across the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors now have good, regular information about how the school is doing because they receive accurate and comprehensive reports from senior and middle leaders. They are able to

hold the school to account. Roles and responsibilities have been re-defined and clarified and this has strengthened governors' working partnership with senior leaders.

- Governors make sure that the checks of staff performance are thorough and that leaders and staff are set challenging targets linked to pupils' progress and school priorities.
- Governors make sure that safeguarding policy and procedures are fully in place. They are fully informed on how the pupil-premium funding is spent and the difference it is making to this group of pupils.

## 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>	106351
<b>Local authority</b>	Trafford
<b>Inspection number</b>	445969

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>	351
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ross Malkin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tim Coleman
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 March 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 881 5466
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