

# St Winefride's Catholic Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	111313
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cheshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	310562
<b>Inspection date</b>	19 November 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Paul Bamber

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	157
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Bernard Phelan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Dawn Ormes
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 June 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Mellock Lane Little Neston Neston Cheshire CH64 9RW

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date</b>	19 November 2008
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**Telephone number**  
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: quality and standards in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS); pupils' achievement throughout the school; the reasons why the pupils do so well in English in Key Stage 2 and the effectiveness of governance.

Evidence was gathered from the school's judgements about attainment on entry to Reception, test results and the self-evaluation form, nationally published assessment data, the school's own assessment records, relevant policies, and observations of the school at work, including visits to lessons and analysis of parents' questionnaires. Discussions were also held with the headteacher, staff, governors and pupils. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

## Description of the school

Pupils who attend this school come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. There are smaller than average proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds or who are entitled to free school meals. Since its last inspection in 2005, the school roll has grown and the number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities has increased. While this group of pupils represents a slightly lower than average proportion than normally found in most schools, there is a higher percentage than average with a statement of special educational needs. Most children who enter Reception class, which represents the EYFS, do so from a privately run Nursery which is sited in the school. The organisation that runs the Nursery also provides before- and after-school care for pupils. The Nursery and the before- and after-school provision are inspected and reported on separately.

The school has an Activemark Gold award.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school. It enables pupils to achieve well academically and personally, to attain above average academic standards and to develop as concerned and well behaved young citizens. The headteacher leads the school strongly and is supported well by staff and governors. Parents praise the school's work highly, especially in how well it cares for their children. The school is very welcoming, which reflects its positive ethos.

Children enter Reception with skills that are broadly expected. From entry, pupils make consistently good progress through Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and leave with above average standards overall. They attain the highest standards in English. This is because English is well taught. The staff give pupils many opportunities to write at length, in many different styles, in literacy lessons and in other subjects. In science, standards, although broadly average, are lower than in other subjects because pupils have too few opportunities to plan and carry out investigations. In Reception, there are some limitations to the outside provision which restrict the school's ability to provide children with as wide a range of experiences outdoors as they enjoy indoors. Pupils have very positive attitudes to their learning. They are attentive in lessons, are extremely keen to succeed and talk enthusiastically and knowledgeably about their work. Pupils are aware of their challenging literacy and numeracy targets and strive hard to reach them as quickly as possible because they receive good academic guidance.

The very positive relationships between pupils of all ages are a key element of the family atmosphere, characteristic of the school. Pupils care for each other very well. Older pupils have training in organising playground games and this enables them to help younger pupils to understand team games and to take regular exercise. Pupils also take responsibility as school councillors, playing an important role in promoting healthy lifestyles and in making suggestions about fundraising and road safety, which school managers act upon. Pupils' intense enjoyment of, and involvement in, sport and other physical education activities is reflected in their success in competitions and in the school's award of the Activemark Gold. The good basic skills that pupils develop, together with their above average attendance, consistent punctuality and their ability to work both cooperatively and independently, equips them well for their future life.

The school provides many enriching activities as part of its good curriculum. Year 6 pupils write and talk enthusiastically about their residential visit to Conway and a recent trip to Manchester Museum. The former considerably enhanced their personal and social development and the latter brought to life their study of Egypt. Music has a high profile in the school, with an orchestra and popular choir reflecting good specialist teaching. French is taught from Reception to Year 6, which lays a good foundation for modern foreign language teaching higher up in the school. Assemblies promote pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development extremely well. On the day of the inspection, a particularly effective session about different 'festivals of light' highlighted the similarities and differences between faiths. Pupils are aware that teaching is good. They praise their teachers 'for being ever so friendly and helping them to learn a lot'. Most teachers plan lessons rigorously, ensuring that pupils are effectively challenged. They manage pupils' behaviour very well and provide them with lots of encouragement. As a result, pupils work conscientiously in a positive atmosphere. Where pupils find learning more taxing or have difficulty conforming to class codes of conduct, they are sensitively and effectively supported by experienced teaching assistants. This means that these pupils achieve as well as their peers or that any disruption to other pupils' learning is minimised.

The school cares for its pupils well. It meets all requirements as regards pupils' welfare, child protection, ensuring equality of opportunity and vetting adults who work in the school. There are effective links with outside agencies which facilitate specialist support for any pupil with a particular need. The effective management of the provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities results in these pupils achieving well.

The school's robust systems to evaluate its own effectiveness and to track pupils' achievements reflect good leadership and management. This means that it is able to identify accurately its strengths and areas that need improvement and to intervene to support pupils who may not be making sufficient progress. Governors are supportive and challenge the school when needed. For example, the governing body has ensured that the extra challenges faced by the school, as a result of its recent expansion, have been supported by extra funding. However, they have not been afraid to reject other suggestions about staffing in what they perceive to be in the interests of pupils. The school's very inclusive nature and its strong commitment to community cohesion are evidenced by it having increased the proportion of pupils who do not come from Catholic families. The school has improved well since its last inspection, particularly in its provision for, and use of, information and communication technology. Its continued effectiveness indicates a good capacity to improve even further and to provide good value for money.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Over the last three years, there has been a decline in the skills with which children enter the Reception class. Children enter the Reception class with expected skills in most areas of their learning, but in aspects of their communication, language and literacy their skills are below those expected for their age. They make good progress in Reception and enter Year 1 with their personal, social, emotional and physical development clearly above that expected, but in reading and writing they tend to be as broadly expected.

The close liaison between Reception staff and personnel from the privately run Nursery means that children's start in the EYFS is smooth and as stress free as possible. When children are in the Nursery, they join those in Reception regularly for a range of activities. As a result, they are comfortable with the staff and their surroundings. Good relationships with parents also ensure that children are well cared for and supported throughout their time in Reception. This comment from a parent sums up the feelings of many: 'It's not only a place for my child to learn but somewhere we have all made friends.' A key element that promotes children's good achievements is the careful way in which staff assess learning and use these records and observations to plan activities that interest and motivate children, whatever their ability. This practice is more effective for the tasks children do indoors than outdoors. The layout of the building and siting of the outdoor areas restrict children's free movement from indoors to outdoors. In addition, while the outside area set aside specifically for Reception children is ideal for encouraging their physical, personal and social development, it is less suitable for promoting other areas of their learning.

All aspects of children's welfare are well provided for. They feel safe and well cared for. The EYFS is well led and managed, which ensures that children have a good start to their schooling at St Winefride's and that they thoroughly enjoy all their activities. Staff ensure that children develop both independent and cooperative skills. They also promote children's good knowledge and understanding of the world around them by, for example, arranging a visit to Liverpool to an underwater centre.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Provide more opportunities throughout the school for pupils to plan and carry out investigations in order to help raise standards in science.
- Improve the provision for outdoor learning for children in Reception.

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## Annex A

**Inspection judgements**

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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**Overall effectiveness**

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

**Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?</b>	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

**Achievement and standards**

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

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<sup>1</sup>Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Inspection of St Winefride's Catholic Primary School, Neston, CH64 9RW

May I thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave us when we inspected your school recently. You were very well behaved and polite, and we were extremely impressed by your willingness to chat with us about what you thought of your school and about your work.

We agree with you and your parents that you go to a good school. It is particularly good at teaching you to read and write and your standards in these subjects are often much higher than in most schools. You are taught well and many of you commented on how friendly your teachers are and how well you all get on together. The older pupils help with this a lot by, for example, organising playground games for the younger ones to join in. The school council has some good ideas and speaks up for you well. The school has followed up quite a few of its ideas. The many clubs and sports competitions you are involved in certainly help you to be fit and to understand how to be comfortable winning and sometimes losing.

Your headteacher and the other adults who run the school have a clear understanding of how well you are doing and what needs improving. Part of my job is to point out things that the school could be doing better.

Although you do very well in English and well in mathematics, it is not quite the same in science. I have, therefore, asked the school to give you more opportunities to plan and carry out scientific investigations to help you do as well in science as you do in English and mathematics. The other thing I have asked the school to do is to make sure that children in Reception learn a wider range of skills when they work and play outside.

You can play your part by trying really hard in all your work.