

St Kentigern's RC Primary

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105584
Local Authority	Manchester
Inspection number	336526
Inspection dates	20–21 April 2010
Reporting inspector	Colin Smith

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	481
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Fr Tom Connolly
Headteacher	Mr P Jackson
Date of previous school inspection	21 March 2007
School address	Bethnall Drive Fallowfield Manchester M14 7ED
Telephone number	0161 2246842
Fax number	0161 2564946
Email address	admin@st-kentigerns.manchester.sch.uk

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	20–21 April 2010
Inspection number	336526

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 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 rates 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 08456 404045, 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 documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 17 lessons, involving 15 teachers, and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils, and parents and carers. They observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books, school assessments, planning and policies and examined 130 parents' and carers' questionnaires and also questionnaires from pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- learning and progress, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, and in Key Stage 2 in mathematics
- teachers' use of assessment information in providing challenging and well-matched activities for all pupils, particularly more-able pupils
- the effectiveness of the school's monitoring systems in establishing accurate self-evaluation and identifying and remedying areas for improvement.

Information about the school

The school is larger than average in size. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average and the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. There are 15 minority ethnic groups in the school but only a small number of these pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. Early Years Foundation Stage provision is made for children aged three to five in the Nursery and in two Reception classes. The school is undergoing staff changes. Three newly qualified teachers are working in Years 4 and 5, along with a supply teacher in Reception and a recently qualified teacher in Year 6. The school has gained Healthy Schools, Activemark, Basic Skills, Sports and Leading Aspect awards and is a lead school in the Greater Manchester Challenge and Partnership. The school provides childcare in the form of a breakfast and after-school club, which was evaluated in the inspection.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

St Kentigern's is a good school. It has a number of outstanding features. Outstanding care, guidance and support lie at the heart of pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, their exemplary behaviour and extremely good contribution to the school and wider community. The rich and enjoyable curriculum provided promotes good attendance and ensures that pupils acquire a clear understanding of the importance of safe and healthy lifestyles. Parents and carers, and pupils, are highly appreciative of what the school provides.

Children enter the school with knowledge and skills below the levels expected for their age. Pupils make good progress overall and, by the end of Year 6, attainment is broadly average. Children get off to a good start in the Nursery. Learning in lessons across the school is mainly good, though not consistently so. Pupils make good progress in English and science. Progress in mathematics is satisfactory overall. Weaknesses in problem solving, inconsistent challenges for more-able pupils and feedback on how to improve are factors that hold achievement in mathematics back.

Most of the teaching is good. However, the brisker pace, clarity of purpose and higher challenge in Key Stage 2 lessons promotes quicker learning and stronger progress than in Key Stage 1. The targets set are much more challenging in Key Stage 2 and the bridge between the Early Years Foundation Stage and National Curriculum in Year 1 is not sufficiently fine-tuned to guarantee continuous learning.

The key aspects of leadership and management are good. Excellent partnerships have been forged with parents and carers, and outside agencies, which ensure that pupils are safeguarded and barriers to learning are greatly reduced. The school's self-evaluation is mostly accurate. Monitoring is successful in identifying inconsistencies, though not all have been addressed. Nevertheless, many of the strengths identified during the previous inspection have been carried forward and built upon, which reflects the school's good capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the rate of progress in mathematics by:
 - improving pupils' problem-solving skills
 - ensuring a consistently high level of challenge for more-able pupils
 - providing clearer feedback on how pupils can improve
 - checking to ensure that these improvements take place.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

- Raise progress from satisfactory to good in Key Stage 1 by:
 - improving the clarity, pace and challenge of teaching
 - setting more demanding targets
 - adjusting the curriculum to make for smooth transition into Year 1
 - monitoring provision and outcomes to ensure improvement.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils enjoy learning and achieve well. In most lessons pupils are very eager to learn. They listen attentively, answer questions enthusiastically and work with good concentration. Learning is often enhanced by working together, sharing ideas and gathering information. This is starkly illustrated in the 'Brain Zone', an impressively designed learning environment, where freedom to explore and learn is helping to produce highly motivated and independent learners. Using books and computers to search for information strengthens pupils' reading skills. Their interest and proficiency in writing are surging forward in response to more dynamic teaching. As a result, attainment in English in Year 6 rose to above average levels in 2009. Effective learning and good progress in science are attributable to valuable opportunities to engage in practical investigations. Although pupils develop secure calculation skills, their limited experience of solving mathematical problems hampers their learning. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with language difficulties make good progress across the school because of the effective support provided by teaching assistants. More-able pupils make better progress in English and science than in mathematics. Learning and progress are stronger in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1 because pupils have a clearer understanding of what is expected of them and respond enthusiastically to the greater level of demand.

The school's vibrant and supportive atmosphere and excellent personal, social and health education make a profound difference to pupils' lives. Their self-esteem and social skills flourish. Pupils show unwavering courtesy towards visitors. They relish the excellent opportunities to seize responsibility and take initiative and have a powerful voice in the life of the school. Pupils have an acute awareness of how to stay healthy and keep safe; pupils engage well in activity and have a clear understanding of a healthy diet. Priceless experiences, such as those involving astronomy and philosophy, foster a love of learning and a sense of purpose. Pupils' strong spiritual values and their mature understanding and respect for cultural diversity ensure that the school is a place of social harmony. Pupils' secure overall progress in literacy and numeracy ensures that they achieve competency in the basic skills, use computers as a tool for learning and develop a strong work ethic. These factors ensure that pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Lessons are exceptionally well managed. There are no distractions and pupils give their best. Stimulating approaches, involving drama, discussion, games and practical work, appeal to pupils' different learning styles and keep them fully engaged. This was very evident in Year 5 studies of the Second World War and a lesson investigating three-dimensional shapes in Year 6. Throughout school, particularly good support is provided for pupils at an early stage of learning English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Tasks are simplified and sensitive support enables them to gain confidence and learn successfully. Lessons are carefully planned and resourced and sufficient time is provided for pupils to practise and improve their skills. Good assessment, pace, challenge and clarity of learning objectives are good features of Key Stage 2 lessons. There are occasions in mathematics, however, when teachers' over-reliance on textbooks results in more-able pupils working through easier examples before tackling demanding work. Teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory with good elements. However, pupils are not always clear about the purpose of the lesson, the pace of learning sometimes slows and the level of challenge is not always sufficient to ensure quick progress. One of the key factors in improving pupils' writing is setting targets and informative marking of their work which clearly explains the next steps. This is not a consistent feature in mathematics.

Outstanding enrichment of pupils' learning, through numerous events in and out of

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

school, nurtures their talents and promotes lifelong interest in learning. The curriculum is at the forefront of innovative design in guiding pupils to develop study skills, creativity and collaborative learning. A highly successful 'social and emotional programme' has a pronounced impact on pupils' understanding of citizenship and safe and healthy lifestyles. The curriculum is adapted very effectively for pupils who require additional language and learning support. However, the needs of more-able pupils are not sufficiently met in mathematics and pupils do not have enough opportunities to investigate and solve problems. Transition from Reception into Year 1 is receiving attention but continuity of learning for all pupils is not yet fully established.

Pastoral care is excellent. The needs of the most vulnerable pupils are paramount and everything possible is done to unite teachers, parents and carers, and health professionals in dismantling barriers to learning. A highly effective home–school liaison partnership has been established to support families facing challenging circumstances. Good induction and transition procedures enable children to move happily from home through school and on to secondary school. Childcare provision, before and after school, is of good quality. Children are safe and secure, well managed and thoughtfully provided for. Valuable records are kept on their medical and learning needs and this supplements their school experiences effectively.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's exceptional drive, commitment and vision has attracted national recognition, particularly in the field of independent learning. The school is highly regarded by parents and carers, and the local authority. Leaders have very high expectations of pupils' personal development and learning. Challenging targets are set and often exceeded, particularly in Key Stage 2. There are well-established systems to check the work of the school. Lessons are observed and pupils' work is examined. Some inconsistencies in marking, challenge and progress have been accurately identified and staff informed, though not all have been remedied to date. Governors provide good support and play a vital part in decision making. They rightly see the next step as securing greater involvement in evaluating outcomes. Links with parents and carers are outstanding. Completing questionnaires, sharing records and home–school visits enable them to play a full and active part in their children's achievement. The school has initiated excellent partnerships with a host of institutions, in areas such as sport, the arts

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

and health, which have a huge impact on pupils' achievement and well-being. Equality is strongly promoted, which is why pupils from all of the minority ethnic groups achieve well. The school identifies pupils at risk of underachieving and intervenes to accelerate their progress, which is why more than the expected numbers of these pupils reach the academic levels expected of 11-year-olds. Good safeguarding procedures have been established to protect pupils and ensure that they know how to keep safe. The school makes a strong contribution to community cohesion by analysing the social make-up of the school and reaching out into the community, locally and globally. The impact is evident in the degree of social harmony in school and the involvement of the wider community in the school's work.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

From low starting points, children make good progress and, by the end of Reception, attainment is broadly average in all six areas of learning. Children's welfare is strongly promoted. As a result, they settle quickly, behave well and begin to understand the importance of good health and hygiene. The quality of provision, including teaching, is good overall, though stronger in Nursery than Reception, where the use of workbooks sometimes restricts children's learning in numeracy and literacy. Teaching space is well organised in all areas of learning, indoors and outside. However, the deployment of staff does not always ensure that children receive support to extend their learning. A good balance is maintained between activities led by adults and those chosen by children. For example, enjoyable and purposeful role play takes place in the pretend health clinic,

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

alongside learning to read and write by labelling a model rocket. Leadership and management are good. The new leader plans improvements and discusses them with the team. Assessment is much improved. Children's records are developing well and often include contributions from parents and carers. Monitoring of provision and outcomes, although informal, has rightly identified the need for smoother transition into Year 1.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents' and carers' views of all aspects of the school's work are extremely positive. Almost all parents and carers appreciate the school's high regard for the care and safety of their children, the quality of teaching, pupils' enjoyment of school and the extent to which they are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. The vast majority recognise how seriously the school responds to their ideas, concerns and suggestions. In all other areas the very large majority of parents and carers feel the school meets their children's needs, ensures their good progress and manages their behaviour effectively. The quality of leadership and management and pupils' preparation for the future are highly valued. Inspectors agree with parents' and carers' views in most respects. Almost all aspects of the school are judged good and some outstanding, apart from attainment which is average overall and progress in mathematics which is satisfactory. Teaching and pupils' progress are stronger in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1 overall.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Kentigern's RC Primary to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 130 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 481 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	100	77	25	19	3	2	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	103	79	25	19	1	1	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	67	52	57	44	5	4	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	79	61	45	35	3	2	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	90	69	36	28	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	73	56	48	37	5	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	82	63	45	35	2	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	71	55	45	35	3	2	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	71	55	50	38	5	4	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	78	60	43	33	4	3	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	67	52	52	40	2	2	4	3
The school is led and managed effectively	78	60	46	35	1	1	3	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	91	70	34	26	1	1	4	3

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



22 April 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Kentigern's RC Primary, Manchester, M14 7ED

I greatly enjoyed my visit to your school. You were so friendly and interesting to talk to, courteous and helpful to all of the inspectors. Thank you for making us so welcome. I would like to share the inspection findings with you.

St Kentigern's is a good school with some outstanding features. School leaders, teachers and assistants take great care of you, guide you and keep you very safe. This helps you to know all about safe and healthy lifestyles. Much of your behaviour is excellent. The way you join in with school activities, take responsibility and help your teachers makes the school such a happy place to be.

Teaching is good. This helps you to make good progress, in English and science particularly, and reach the standards expected before you move on to secondary school. Some of you make good progress in mathematics, though the more able ones among you should reach higher levels, as you do in English and science. Young children get off to a good start in the Nursery and make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2. Leaders and teachers work very hard to provide an interesting curriculum with lots of extra activities. This is why many of you enjoy school.

School leaders do a good job. They are constantly finding ways to make the school better to increase your enjoyment of learning. They check teaching and how well you are learning regularly to help the school to continue to improve.

To help your school to improve even further I have asked staff and governors to:

- improve progress in mathematics, particularly for more-able pupils, to match the good progress in English and science
- increase the rate of learning of pupils in Years 1 and 2 to match the good learning everywhere else in school.

Yours sincerely

Mr Colin Smith

Lead Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', 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 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.