

St Hilda's CofE Primary School

Tilbury Street, Oldham, Lancashire, OL1 2HJ

Inspection dates 12–13 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- Pupils' achievement is good and they make good progress during their time in school.
- All groups of pupils achieve well including those who speak English as an additional language, disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, and those supported by the pupil premium funding.
- Teaching is good and sometimes outstanding. Pupils show high levels of enjoyment and willingly participate in all activities. Relationships in lessons are good.
- Teaching assistants provide good quality support.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. They listen well and no time is wasted due to inappropriate behaviour.
- Pupils say they feel safe at school and have confidence in adults to take care of them.
- Attendance is above average.
- The headteacher is a strong leader; there are clear systems to check how well the school is doing and to bring about further improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- The governing body is extremely well led and provides a very good level of support and challenge for the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although teaching is consistently good, not enough is outstanding.
- In some lessons work does not present enough of a challenge for pupils as teachers' expectations of what can be achieved are not high enough.
- There are some inconsistencies in the quality of the marking across the school and in different subjects. It does not always give pupils enough information to help them improve their work.
- New members of the curriculum leadership team are not yet fully involved in checking the quality of teaching and learning.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 20 lessons or parts of lessons including joint lesson observations with the headteacher and an assistant headteacher.
- A range of pupils' work was reviewed and inspectors heard pupils of different ages read.
- Meetings took place with the headteacher and senior leaders, staff, groups of pupils, three members of the governing body and the school improvement partner. A telephone conversation took place with the school's local authority school performance officer.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including the school's data on pupil progress, and records relating to pupil behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- There were no comments registered on the online questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors took into account 185 responses to the school's own survey of parents' views. The views of staff were also considered.

Inspection team

Christine Millett, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Peter Allen

Additional Inspector

Pauline Pitman

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Hilda's is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The overwhelming majority of pupils are of Bangladeshi heritage who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above the national average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after.)
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the current floor standards, which set the government's minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- Since the previous inspection, the senior leadership team has been restructured and additional teaching assistants have been employed.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by:
 - increasing teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve in lessons
 - ensuring there is always an appropriate level of challenge for all pupils, particularly the more able
 - developing consistency in the quality of marking across all subjects so that all pupils understand the next steps in their learning
 - sharing current outstanding practice across the school.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - building on the good work the headteacher has already undertaken to further develop the skills of newly appointed senior leaders

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- From their individual starting points, pupils make good progress. Children start Nursery with skills and knowledge that are much lower than those typically expected for their age. Almost all children are at very early stages of learning English as an additional language. Children's personal, social and emotional development is also exceptionally low.
- Children make good progress during their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, they are still below national expectations on entry to Year 1. The results of the 2012 Year 1 national reading check on pupils' knowledge and understanding of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) were below national averages.
- Pupils continue to achieve well in Key Stage 1. Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is improving year-on-year. In 2012 the results of national tests at the end of Year 2 were the best for three years. The proportion of pupils reaching expected standards in reading was in line with the national average. A number of pupils reached higher standards in mathematics.
- In Key Stage 2, the proportion of pupils making expected levels of progress is in line with that found nationally. The number exceeding expected levels is increasing.
- By the end of Year 6 pupils reach average standards in reading and writing. In 2012, attainment in mathematics was slightly below that in English. However, teacher assessment for 2013 indicates an improvement and pupils are now also working at expected levels in mathematics.
- Pupils do well whatever their ability. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs do as well as other pupils because of the good quality support they receive. These actions ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils.
- In the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2012, pupils eligible for free school meals attained standards in English which were similar to their class mates; however, in mathematics, their attainment was almost two terms behind that of their peers.
- School data for the current Year 6 show that standards in mathematics are better than in previous years and the gaps between how well pupils eligible for free school meals are doing and other pupils, are closing.
- Those pupils who speak English as an additional language reach nationally expected standards. All pupils are very well-prepared for the next stages in their education.
- Pupils enjoy reading and have many opportunities to read in class throughout the school day. Teachers keep up-to-date records of reading books. Many pupils have regular opportunities to read with adults in school, which contributes to the good progress they are making.
- In the Early Years foundation Stage, routines are well-established and activities carefully organised to develop children's social skills as well as those in speaking and listening. In spite of the difficulties caused by the layout of the building, staff provide a stimulating learning environment where children enjoy their learning.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching across the school, and in all subjects, is good and sometimes outstanding.
- Pupils enjoy their learning and describe lessons as 'fun'. Older pupils spoke enthusiastically of 'great teachers who push you to be your best'. However, they did suggest that work could sometimes be harder.
- Most lessons are planned to get the best out of all pupils. In the best lessons teachers expect the most from pupils and ensure the work set helps pupils to learn well, particularly the more able. This is not the case in all lessons. For example, some lessons move too slowly and do not hold the pupils' interest or the work set is not hard enough.
- Teachers have good information about pupil achievement and use this to ensure support is in place for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and those supported by the pupil-premium funding.

- There is a strong sense of teamwork throughout the school. Teaching assistants are highly skilled and knowledgeable. They have received good quality specialist training and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.
- Discussion in small groups or in pairs is a well-established teaching method. Pupils show a willingness to join in lessons as they are confident that their views and opinions are valued by adults and other pupils.
- Teachers know their subjects well, including how to develop pupils' literacy skills. For example, teachers take every opportunity to reinforce correct pronunciation and check understanding of new words.
- Teachers mark pupils' work frequently. However, there are inconsistencies in the way in which work is marked in different subjects and classes and it is not always clear to pupils how they can improve their work. In the best examples pupils are encouraged to respond to teachers' comments. Pupils regularly mark their own work and that of their partners. Care is taken with handwriting and pupils take pride in the presentation of their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are polite and friendly and are immensely proud of their school. They are eager to learn. They cooperate well with each other in group work and listen carefully to what each has to say. They quickly follow advice given by staff.
- Older pupils provide excellent role models for the youngest children in school.
- Behaviour in lessons and around school is never less than good. Due to the size of the school, movement from the playground to classrooms can take some time and occasionally the start to lessons is delayed. In lessons pupils move from one activity to another without fuss.
- Pupils are respectful of each other's views and those of others. Pupils get on well together. They have a good understanding of the different forms bullying can take. They have confidence in adults to help them sort out any problems they may have quickly and fairly.
- Pupils feel safe in school. They have a good understanding of how to stay safe and look after themselves and others. Playground buddies and junior sports leaders, from Year 2 as well as Year 6, have been trained to support playtime activities. They play an important part in making sure playtime is a happy time for everyone.
- Residential visits to an outdoor centre allow pupils to take managed risks in safe, well supervised surroundings as well as developing important life skills. Pupils are very aware of the possible dangers of the internet.
- Pupils are included in all aspects of school life and are encouraged to take on responsibilities. The pupil voice is very strong across the school through, for example, the school council, junior management team and national ambassadors. Pupils take on these roles with great enthusiasm and dedication.
- Staff express the view that behaviour in school is good and this is supported by most parents.
- The school has effective systems in place to reward and encourage good attendance, which is consistently above average.
- Homework is set weekly and strengthens the learning that has taken place. Pupils enjoy their homework, which is presented in the very popular Learning Logs. They each find their own innovative and creative ways of presenting their work.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides outstanding leadership for the school. She is supported by an excellent governing body that has equally high expectations.
- The headteacher has recently put together teams of senior leaders and middle managers who share her drive and ambition to be the best they can for the school, its pupils and local community. Some of these leaders and managers are new to their roles and do not yet have the

skills required to fully contribute to driving further improvement in the quality of teaching in their area of responsibility. Staff are proud to work in the school and several spoke appreciatively of the support they have received and the opportunities they have been given to take on extra responsibilities and improve their skills.

- Leaders make checks on teaching and the quality of learning, and tackle weaknesses in order to develop teachers' skills. They set targets for teachers to improve their performance, which are linked to pupils' achievement. This informs staff development and training.
- The school's systems for gaining an accurate view of its performance are effective. Governors and senior staff know the school well and are very clear about its strengths and areas for improvement. The school has the ability to carry on making improvements.
- The local authority recognises the strengths of the school and offers support, through visits, to check particular aspects and make recommendations for future developments.
- The rich and varied range of subjects taught meets the needs of all pupils. The curriculum has been developed to ensure that there are exciting links in learning from one subject or topic to another. The topics studied often include a visit or visitor which helps pupils to learn. Following a recent visit one pupil wrote, 'It was the most wonderful time of my life.'
- Themed weeks, such as religious education week, Spanish week and technology week are enjoyed by the pupils. These, in addition to Forest Schools and the Golden Promise Shop, where pupils can spend the awards they have earned, make a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity well. It uses an effective tracking system which helps staff see clearly how well all groups of pupils are progressing.
- The use of pupil-premium funding to reduce class sizes, widen the range of opportunities offered and employ a parent support advisor has helped accelerate learning.
- Extremely good links have been established with parents. They are pleased with the school. Events, such as the Families and Schools Together project, are organised for them. Teachers are always available to discuss any concerns.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is extremely well informed and play an important part in school development. They have been extremely effective in supporting the school and asking important questions about future developments. They are willing to take part in any additional training that will help them carry out their duties. The governing body has a clear understanding of the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement compared with pupils nationally. They use this knowledge to make decisions about staffing and to make sure that pay is linked to teachers' performance and that any underperformance is tackled. Governors make sure finances are used in a way that supports pupils' learning effectively. For example, they know how the pupil-premium funding is spent and how well the eligible pupils are doing as a result. They ensure that statutory duties are met and arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet current requirements.

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	105702
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	411823

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	375
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alan Armitage
Headteacher	Gillian Pursey
Date of previous school inspection	9 February 2010
Telephone number	0161 6243592
Fax number	0161 2871351
Email address	info@sthildas.oldham.sch.uk

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