

St Mary's RC Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102529
Local Authority	Hounslow
Inspection number	376731
Inspection dates	19–20 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Joanna Toulson

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	229
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Jessica Uyttenhove
Headteacher	Ms Theresa McManus
Date of previous school inspection	16 May 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 12 lessons taught by nine teachers, observed assemblies and held meetings with pupils, members of the governing body and staff. They observed the school's work and looked at the school improvement plan, minutes of governing body meetings, a range of policies and risk assessments, data relating to pupils' progress and attainment, documentation relating to safeguarding, lesson plans and pupils' work. The questionnaires returned by 118 pupils, 101 parents and carers and 18 staff were also scrutinised. Inspectors looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- What has been the impact of the development of middle leaders?
- How well the school is ensuring that the most able make the progress they should in writing.
- How consistent the teaching and assessment practices are in each class.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school with Early Years Foundation Stage provision for children in a morning Nursery and one Reception class. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is higher than average, although the largest group of pupils is White British, with the next largest group being Irish. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much lower than the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, almost all of whom have moderate learning difficulties, is also much lower than average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is lower than the national average. There is on-site provision for after-school care, which is not managed by the governing body and is subject to a separate 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 Mary's is a good school. It has significant strengths in several areas. Attainment by the end of Year 6 is consistently high, and pupils make good progress from Year 1 onwards. This represents outstanding achievement. During their time in school, pupils are cared for, guided and supported exceptionally well. As a result, they leave as confident pupils who are ready for the next stage in their education. Their behaviour is exemplary. The strong Catholic ethos underpins the school's work in all areas. Pupils say they feel very safe. Adults are good role models and as a result, pupils are kind to each other and have good attitudes to learning. Pupils make an excellent contribution to life in school as well as in the community. Excellent engagement with parents and carers ensures highly positive relationships with the school. Parents and carers speak highly of the work that the school does to support their children. Almost all parents and carers feel they are kept informed about the progress their child is making and how they can support their child's learning. As a parent said, 'Excellent leadership. A great school with a real family feel. I have been given excellent information about my son's learning.' Pupils' kindness towards one another, their strong teamwork skills, generous charity fundraising, frequent reflection through prayer and assemblies and respect for other cultures illustrate their excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Teaching is good. Teachers make accurate assessments about how well pupils are doing and take account of these to meet the needs of all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities learn exceptionally well because of the excellent support they get, both from the teacher and from additional adults. In well-taught lessons, the pace of learning is lively and teachers demonstrate the task carefully. In the few lessons which are less successful, there is too much revision of prior learning, opportunities are lost to explain new learning clearly and as a result, the pace of learning slows.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. Staffing is now stable after a period of staff changes. This instability has resulted in a decline in the quality of provision for the school's youngest children. The environment has a good range of resources but opportunities are lost to make play and learning purposeful, both indoors and out. Recently introduced systems of assessment are being embedded but adults are not using the information consistently well enough to ensure that every child is suitably challenged.

The headteacher has a clear ambition for improvement which is shared by all staff.

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Self-evaluation is based on rigorous monitoring which informs good plans for continuous improvement. The school makes an outstanding contribution to promoting a cohesive community, both within the school and beyond. The school has a good capacity for further improvement. The school has successfully consolidated outstanding outcomes for pupils, for example their high attendance and their high standard of attainment at the end of Year 6. At the same time the school recognises that aspects of provision, notably the Early Years Foundation Stage, have not progressed at the same rate.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate the progress that children make in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - planning play to make it even more purposeful and exciting
 - using assessment information well so that every child is suitably challenged by the learning experiences provided.

- Further improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that in every lesson:
 - the pace of learning is good
 - teachers demonstrate the task clearly so that it supports pupils in being successful when working independently.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

Children enter school with levels of skills which are in line with those typical for their age. They make satisfactory progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage and enter Year 1 with broadly average standards of attainment. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils reach standards of attainment which are high. This is good progress overall and outstanding achievement. Teachers take good opportunities to promote speaking and listening skills in lessons and this, together with good additional support, means that pupils who speak English as an additional language also make good progress. For example, in an outstanding Year 5 English lesson, all pupils, including those new to learning English, made good progress because pupils had learning and vocabulary prompts to support their story starters. Pupils say that they enjoy school. They concentrate well in lessons and willingly discuss their learning with each other. This was illustrated well in a successful poetry lesson in Year 3 where pupils were given good opportunities to work in pairs to prepare their poem for a performance. Pupils have a good understanding about healthy eating and the importance of exercise, although their understanding about their mental and emotional health is less well developed. They have an excellent understanding about how to keep safe, including in relation to being safe on the internet and how to deal with bullying. Pupils are extremely confident that adults will help them should any problems occur. All parents and carers who returned the questionnaire felt that the school kept their child safe. Pupils are keen to talk about their exceptional contribution to school life. As well as contributing through the school council, pupils support each other, for example by being playground, recycling, or gardening

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monitors, helping younger children to weed and care for the school gardens. Pupils also contribute extremely well to the local community. They sing for Chiswick town council and local day care centres, sell produce from the school garden in the local community, and display their art work in local businesses. They have also taken part in the Olympic torch celebrations at Westminster Cathedral and raised money for local charities and for those further afield, for example women in Nigeria. Pupils' personal development is fostered extremely well. For example, during a recent visit by Muslim pupils from a neighbouring school, pupils thought deeply about their own lives and those of others. Pupils apply their literacy, oracy and numeracy skills to a broad range of purposes but their information and communication technology (ICT) skills are less well developed.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	1
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	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Teachers have created classrooms which are bright with high quality displays of pupils' work and prompts on the walls which support learning. Marking of pupils' literacy work is of very high quality and gives clear guidance about how pupils can improve their work. Teachers' marking of other subjects is less effective. Teachers have good subject knowledge which they use to engage the interest of the pupils. For example, in a good Year 4 science lesson, pupils were eager to demonstrate how pairs of muscles work, using elastic bands. Teachers make it very clear to pupils what the intended learning is and how they will know whether they have been successful. The school has identified the need to ensure that more-able pupils do even better in their writing and has appropriate strategies to support this. All pupils

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

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are given guidance about how to improve their writing and frequent opportunities to assess their own work and that of others against clear criteria. This is supporting good progress for all pupils, including the more-able.

The good curriculum provides imaginative opportunities for learning. Enrichment opportunities, including sport and music, help to make learning meaningful and fun. During the inspection, pupils were captivated by a drumming workshop during Black History Week. A good range of visits, including three residential trips, provide a broad range of experiences. The school recognises that provision for ICT is less strong and this is hindering pupils' progress in this area.

Care, guidance and support are outstanding and support pupils' outstanding outcomes. Transition arrangements are very well organised, both within the school and when pupils transfer to secondary school. Very well-targeted support ensures that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities have very precise individual learning plans and effective adult support to ensure they make excellent progress. A parent support advisor provides additional support to families where pupils are potentially vulnerable. Very effective steps taken by the school support the very high attendance of its pupils.

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 determined leadership of the headteacher ensures that there is an ambitious vision for the school. Targets for school improvement are realistic and challenging. Much has been done to develop the skills of middle leaders, including paired lesson observations with senior leaders, coaching and training, and this is beginning to enable these teachers to monitor standards in their subjects. The system for monitoring how well pupils are doing provides good information for school leaders as well as teachers. The good governing body shows determination in challenging and supporting the school and is committed to becoming increasingly effective. Safeguarding procedures are good, with appropriate risk assessments and policies in place. The school has a very good understanding of its context. It promotes community cohesion extremely well and participates actively in the local community. It also promotes community cohesion well further afield, for example through its work with a school in Ghana and by links with children in Thailand and Burma. The school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination well by enabling pupils to value each other's differences and by ensuring that there are no gaps

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between how well different groups of pupils do, for example gender groups or those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. The school recognises that because numbers are very small, it needs to track even more closely the progress of minority ethnic groups other than White British and Irish pupils over a longer period of time to ensure they do not underperform.

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	2
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	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

As a parent said, 'I am very happy with the way the Early Years Team have helped him settle in. I get regular feedback which is pertinent to my child's progress.' This is because there are well-organised arrangements, including home visits, to help children settle into school life quickly and safely. Children play happily and respond well to adults. Teaching is satisfactory as a result of good relationships. Planning is beginning to take account of children's interests. There is an effective system for recording information about how well children are doing but this is not being used well enough to ensure that each child's next steps in learning are sharply identified so that appropriate experiences can be offered. There are good resources for both inside and outside play but some areas are rather dull. For example, opportunities are lost to ensure that children are excited by writing by linking it to their play. Reception children only have access to the outside area in the afternoons and this limits their ability to develop their independence. Other opportunities to develop independence are also lost, for example by not allowing children to choose for themselves when they have their fruit and drink and whether they play outside or inside.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

The proportion of questionnaires received during the inspection was higher than is typical of primary schools. Almost all of those who returned questionnaires agreed that their child enjoys school and is kept safe, and inspection evidence supports this view. A few parents and carers who responded were concerned about how well their child is prepared for the next stage of their education, how the school helps to keep their child healthy and how the school meets their child’s particular needs. The inspection found that transition arrangements within the school and on moving to secondary school are very effective. The inspection found that pupils had a good understanding of how to keep healthy and that pupils’ needs are well catered for.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Mary’s RC Primary School 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 101 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 229 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	86	85	14	14	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	84	83	17	17	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	53	52	46	46	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	52	51	41	41	7	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	57	56	40	40	3	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	59	58	39	39	2	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	67	66	34	34	0	0	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)	49	49	39	39	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	61	60	36	36	4	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	49	49	37	37	8	8	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	40	40	48	48	2	2	3	3
The school is led and managed effectively	50	50	43	43	5	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	74	73	26	26	0	0	0	0

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 all 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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



21 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Mary's RC Primary School, London W4 2DF

Thank you for welcoming us so warmly when we visited your school recently. Your school is a good school and we were delighted to see that you make good progress in your learning and that results at the end of Year 6 are high. Well done for this excellent achievement! The other inspectors and I really enjoyed meeting you. You told us that you enjoyed school. We thought that your behaviour was excellent and it was lovely to see how kind and respectful you are to each other, and how you are encouraged to think about the lives of other people. All the staff care about how well you are doing and how happy you are. You have an excellent understanding about how to keep safe and you know how to keep healthy. We know that you especially enjoy the opportunities that you have to help around the school and in the local community. Your parents are also very pleased with all the information they get about your schoolwork. To make St Mary's even better, we have asked your headteacher to:

- help the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to make even better progress by making sure that their play is even more purposeful and exciting and challenges their thinking
- make sure that new learning is introduced quickly in all your lessons so that you don't spend too long recapping on what you already know and that teachers always demonstrate the task clearly.

You can help by continuing to work hard. We wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Joanna Toulson
Lead inspector

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