

St Martin's Church of England Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	125141
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	381055
Inspection dates	23–24 January 2012
Lead inspector	Mike Capper

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	371
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	James Masters
Executive Headteacher	Jane Gorecka
Date of previous school inspection	3 July 2009
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Mike Capper	Additional inspector
Charlotte Robertson	Additional inspector
Denise Morris	Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 24 lessons taught by 13 teachers. Eight of these observations were joint observations with senior leaders. Discussions were held with parents and carers at the start of the school day, and with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. The inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work and looked at school documentation, including teachers' planning, assessment information, safeguarding policies and samples of pupils' work. Inspectors analysed 207 questionnaires from parents and carers, 30 from staff and 58 from pupils in Key Stage 2.

Information about the school

Most pupils come to this larger-than-average-sized primary school from the local community. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is broadly average. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two Reception classes. The school admits around 15 pupils from a local infant school at the start of Year 3. The school meets the current government floor standard for primary schools, which sets the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

The school has been federated with another primary school since September 2010. The executive headteacher leads both schools.

Since the previous inspection, the school has moved from two sites to one and extensive building work has just been completed.

The before-and after-school clubs that operate from a building on the school site are not managed by the governing body and were not part of this 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	4
Achievement of pupils	4
Quality of teaching	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	4

Key findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

- Leaders have not been successful in tackling the declining attainment at the end of Year 6. A focus on improving teaching in Key Stage 2 has had limited success and not all leaders have a realistic picture of where development is needed and how it is to be achieved. School leaders have much data about pupils' progress but this is not used sharply enough to identify and then tackle underachievement as soon as it arises.
- Pupils' achievement is inadequate. Pupils make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1, where teaching is good, but pupils' progress in Key Stage 2 is too slow, especially in writing and mathematics.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, topics are linked together well and this helps to make learning purposeful. Phonics (letter sounds) and early reading skills are taught extremely well.
- Teaching in Key Stage 2 does not meet pupils' differing needs and there are too few opportunities for them to practise and improve basic skills by using them in different subjects.
- Pupils' behaviour and safety are good. They behave well and are keen to learn, even when teaching does not engage them fully. The school provides an exciting variety of activities outside of lessons and this contributes greatly to pupils' good enjoyment of school.
- The curriculum successfully promotes pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. Pupils develop good social skills and keenly take responsibility. Newly arrived pupils in Year 3 settle quickly because of the welcome they are given and the kindness shown by their new friends.
- The school engages very well with parents and carers, and they contribute significantly to their children's learning, especially in reading.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - developing the role of leaders at all levels in monitoring the work of the school so that there is a shared understanding of what needs improving and how improvement is to be achieved
 - making sharper use of the information from the monitoring of lessons to identify key development points for teachers and to set and follow up clear actions for improvement
 - sharpening the use of data so that underachievement is identified and tackled more quickly.

- Improve teaching in Key Stage 2 so that all pupils make at least the expected progress in English and mathematics by:
 - raising teachers' expectations and ensuring that they pitch work at the right level for all pupils
 - improving the marking of pupils' work so that they are clear about the next steps in their learning
 - ensuring that all staff have good subject knowledge.

- Improve the curriculum in Key Stage 2 by:
 - ensuring that planning identifies clearly how skills are to be developed systematically and differing needs are to be met
 - giving pupils more opportunities to write and use literacy and numeracy skills in different subjects
 - ensuring that lessons always do enough to engage pupils fully in their learning.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils' achievement is inadequate and attainment is broadly average overall by the end of Year 6. The vast majority of parents and carers feel that their children make good progress. However, national test data, the school's own analysis of current performance, observations of learning in lessons and sampling of pupils' work confirm that pupils' progress while good in the Reception classes and Key Stage 1 is too variable across Key Stage 2 and is not accelerating.

Learning is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1. Children and pupils in these year groups typically show interest and engagement, and are keen to investigate. For example, in a Reception class, children worked with great enthusiasm and showed great curiosity as they wrote about dinosaurs. In another good lesson in Year 2, pupils were fully engaged in their learning and made rapid

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progress in improving their counting skills as they explored different strategies for adding two-digit numbers.

In Key Stage 2, pupils do not acquire new skills quickly enough in lessons. In a numeracy lesson, inspectors observed work that was too hard for some pupils because their limited knowledge of multiplication tables meant that they could not carry out calculations quickly or accurately. Although they tried hard, some pupils lost confidence and their enthusiasm waned. In a literacy lesson, where pupils were learning how to describe the personality of a character, they stayed on task, but there were missed opportunities to move learning on quickly by, for example, talking in more detail about how to use adjectives. There is an overreliance on providing additional support outside lessons for older pupils in Key Stage 2 in order to help them catch up. While progress at these times is satisfactory, this is not enough to compensate for previous underachievement or to narrow the gap on national performance.

Pupils make good progress in reading in Key Stage 1 and attainment is above average by the end of Year 2. This above-average attainment in reading is maintained through to the end of Year 6. Most pupils read regularly at home and in 'guided reading' sessions in groups, but in Key Stage 2 not all read frequently and individually with their teachers. This makes it difficult for teachers to monitor pupils' progress or to intervene when additional support is needed.

There are no variations between the attainment and progress of different groups, including pupils who start school in Year 3 when they transfer from a local infant school. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make the best progress when being supported in small groups outside lessons. At these times, their progress is satisfactory because work is more closely matched to their particular needs. In lessons, they make good progress in Key Stage 1 but in Key Stage 2 work does not always build well enough on prior learning.

Quality of teaching

Most parents and carers feel that the quality of teaching is good. Inspection evidence found that teaching is usually good in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, and this is the reason why pupils' attainment improves so quickly. However, teaching is inadequate in Key Stage 2. This means that in Key Stage 2 pupils are making progress that is much slower than that made by those nationally with similar starting points.

In the Reception classes and Years 1 and 2, teachers and adults work together extremely effectively to plan exciting activities that are well matched to differing needs. All adults are involved in planning work and assessing learning, and this means that they are confident about intervening at just the right time to move learning on. For example, Reception children explored with great enthusiasm the properties of puddles after a particularly wet morning, with a teaching assistant astutely asking questions to encourage deeper thinking. In phonics lessons in Years 1 and 2, skills are taught systematically. The effective use of small groups taken by

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teachers and skilled teaching assistants ensures that work is well matched to pupils' needs.

While there is much satisfactory teaching in Key Stage 2, too much is inadequate and very little is good. Teaching does not always meet pupils' differing needs well because insufficient account is taken of what they already know. Teachers' expectations are often too low and some too readily accept work that is not neat enough or does not reflect pupils' ability. In some subjects, such as mathematics, teachers' subject knowledge is patchy and new concepts are not always introduced accurately. There are wide variations in the quality of teachers' marking across Key Stage 2. In Year 6, marking gives helpful guidance but in some other year groups work is not always marked and there is too little support or feedback to help pupils understand how they can improve.

Curriculum planning does not ensure that basic skills develop systematically in Key Stage 2 and next steps in learning are not mapped out accurately enough. In the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, subjects are linked together well, but this is not as strong in Key Stage 2. For older pupils, there are too few opportunities to apply their literacy and numeracy skills in different subjects. This is a key reason why writing and numeracy skills do not improve quickly enough.

Throughout the school, teaching successfully promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Teachers encourage pupils to cooperate through group work and ensure that pupils develop a strong knowledge of different faiths and traditions through the good use of music and stories from different countries.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' behave well both in and out of lessons and are polite and courteous. Pupils are sociable and articulate, and they talk confidently to visitors. They thoroughly enjoy school, especially work that involves practical activities such as science and history, saying that 'these are great fun'. There is a very happy atmosphere in lessons and pupils work hard most of the time, although they occasionally lose concentration when lessons in Key Stage 2 are dull and do not engage them well enough.

Parents and carers are rightly pleased with pupils' behaviour. Pupils also feel that behaviour is 'nearly always good'. This reflects the school's successful systems for promoting good behaviour. There is good support for pupils with identified behavioural difficulties and this helps them to improve their social skills and interactions with others.

Pupils correctly feel that the school keeps them safe. Pupils are very confident that bullying very rarely occurs in school and they say that if it does happen, it is tackled very quickly. Pupils know that bullying can take many forms and they explain clearly about the dangers of cyber-bullying.

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Leadership and management

Leaders at all levels, including the governing body, have not been successful at improving weaknesses in provision in Key Stage 2 so that the many strengths in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 can be built on. The decline in attainment at the end of Year 6 over the last two years has not been tackled with sufficient rigour to ensure improvement. The information gained from monitoring lessons is not used sharply enough to identify key development points for teachers and then to follow them up with rigour. Many middle managers are new to their roles and they do not have a clear picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Consequently, self-evaluation is overgenerous and there is too little understanding of what needs to be improved and how it is to be achieved. There have been some helpful recent initiatives, such as increasing the amount of support outside lessons for older pupils. However, this is not enough to demonstrate that the school has the capacity to improve and too many pupils continue to underachieve.

Leaders acknowledge that the time spent establishing the federation with another school has slowed the pace of change in St Martin's. Leaders established a clear management structure when the executive headteacher began to share her time between the two schools. However, they know that, until recently, accountability for pupils' underachievement has not been fully understood or shared well enough. Some well-targeted opportunities for professional development, especially for new middle leaders, have had limited impact on improving provision.

Leaders ensure that there is no discrimination. They focus strongly on promoting equality of opportunity and different groups are included well in all activities. However, the wealth of data on pupils' progress are not analysed rigorously enough to ensure that any dips in learning by individuals or groups are identified and tackled immediately. Consequently, progress is too uneven across the school.

The curriculum is enriched well by an exciting range of activities outside lessons and it is successful at promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, activities such as 'Green' and 'International' weeks have a good effect on pupils' understanding of their responsibilities to society and their knowledge of life in other parts of the world. However, although the curriculum is broad and balanced, it does not always meet pupils' needs in Key Stage 2.

Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements and there is a strong focus on keeping pupils safe. For example, pupils talk very confidently about how they were taught to avoid danger when the superb new accommodation for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage was being built.

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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Martin's Church of England Controlled Primary School, Dorking RH4 1HW

Thank you for being so welcoming and talking to us when we recently visited your school. We found some good things about your school but there are some big things that the school needs to improve. We judged that the school needs help so it can improve quickly and inspectors will come back to check that this is happening. We call this 'special measures'.

Here are some of the things we liked most

- You make good progress in the Reception classes and in Years 1 and 2, where teachers make learning fun and meet your needs well.
- You said in discussions and in the inspection questionnaire that you enjoy school, and this was confirmed by your happy faces in lessons.
- You rightly feel that behaviour is good most of the time and you keenly take responsibility. We found you to be very polite and courteous.
- You feel you are kept safe and we could see that you take good care of each other.

The school's leaders know that you are not making enough progress in Years 3 to 6 and that they have not been successful in improving teaching in these classes. All of you can help your teachers by continuing to work hard and keeping up your concentration in lessons.

These are the main things that we have asked the governors, headteacher and staff to do.

- Make sure that all staff are clear about what needs improving, including how to achieve this, by using all the information they have about your learning so that they can help you more quickly if you are falling behind.
- Make sure that the teachers in Years 3 to 6 expect enough of you and plan work that always meets your differing needs. We have also asked the school to improve the help they give you through marking and to improve some teachers' understanding of what to teach.
- Make sure you get more opportunities in Years 3 to 6 to use your literacy and numeracy skills in different subjects, ensure that lessons are always interesting and help you to learn new skills systematically.

Yours sincerely
Mike Capper
Lead inspector

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