

St Mary's CofE Controlled Primary School, Byfleet

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125150
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	359849
Inspection dates	1–2 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Paul Canham

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	389
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rachel Rutter
Headteacher	Helen Austin
Date of previous school inspection	3 March 2008
School address	Hart Road Byfleet, West Byfleet West Byfleet KT14 7NJ
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 11 lessons, observed 11 teachers and held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and a group of pupils, and talked with pupils in lessons. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including assessment and attendance information, lesson plans, safeguarding arrangements, school development planning, minutes of governing body meetings and pupils' work. Inspectors also scrutinised the 149 questionnaires received from parents and carers, as well as those from staff and a sample of pupils.

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

- The extent to which higher expectations are increasing the level of challenge.
- How well improvements to assessment procedures have strengthened monitoring and extended the accountability of staff and governors.
- The extent to which the recently formed senior leadership team, and the governing body, are influencing the school's direction and performance. The extent to which the recently formed senior leadership team, and the governing body, are influencing the school's direction and performance.

Information about the school

St Mary's is larger than most other primary schools. The very large majority of pupils are from families of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is above average. In some year groups it is as high as 36%.

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage into the Nursery. Since the last inspection, there have been a substantial number of changes to staffing, including the appointment of a new headteacher and deputy headteacher. Facilities have also been developed to accommodate all pupils on one site. Until recently, the proportion of pupils who arrive or leave part-way through their primary school education was above that found in most other schools owing to local authority arrangements. The school was closed to pupils during the second of this two-day inspection owing to the poor weather and icy conditions.

The school has achieved the Artsmark award, National Healthy Schools status and the Eco-bronze award. There is pre-and after-school care provision within the school, but this is not managed by the governors and was not inspected.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. It has a number of strengths ♦ which include the care and support it provides within a community underpinned by Christian values. The school is successful in enhancing pupils' self-esteem, developing their confidence and strengthening their personal qualities. Pupils have an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles. They also have a good understanding of keeping safe and have a keen interest in learning about others. Their enjoyment of learning is reflected in their enthusiastic response to stimulating activities and sporting opportunities. This picture is reflected in the questionnaires completed by pupils, and in discussions, when they indicated that they really enjoy school. Parents and carers are very supportive of the school. One parent's comment sums up the views of others: 'We are very pleased with the school, its ethos and staff.'

Now that the school has reached a more settled stage, it is soundly placed to focus on raising attainment levels. Monitoring and tracking systems have been introduced and, as a consequence, school leaders have a clear understanding of where the school is now and what needs improving. This has already had a positive impact on improving standards, especially in English. However, the governing body recognises that its monitoring procedures are not sufficiently rigorous and detailed assessment information is not used consistently to check on academic progress. Nevertheless, the school's awareness and vision are informed by an increasingly accurate self-evaluation and the school's capacity for sustained improvement is satisfactory.

Progress is satisfactory throughout the school. Attainment is rising and the push for consistently good teaching is evident in the review of classroom practice. However, the quality of teaching, which is satisfactory, varies and is reflected in pupils' progress. Pupils are progressing well in lessons that grab their attention and where good relationships between teachers and pupils are used to lift academic expectations. However, information from assessment is not always used as well as it could be to help match activities to pupils' differing needs and to ensure that the pace of learning is always rapid enough, particularly for those who learn quickly. Intervention work is appropriately supporting individual and/or different groups of pupils.

Popular clubs and after-school activities provide pupils with many opportunities to develop their creative and performance skills, including gardening and singing. Pupils are respectful and value the views of others, but have a limited knowledge of communities in other countries. Opportunities for developing this aspect of community cohesion are missed when linking learning together across different parts of the curriculum.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that at least 80% is good, or better, by July 2011 by ♦ ensuring staff always:
 - use assessment information to adapt lesson content in response to pupils' differing needs.
 - provide challenging tasks that are well paced and pitched at the right level, especially for the more able. provide challenging tasks that are well paced and pitched at the right level, especially for the more able.
- Improve the effectiveness of the governing body by ensuring that it:
 - systematically monitors the work of the school .
 - checks on pupils' academic outcomes more frequently. checks on pupils' academic outcomes more frequently.
- Extend the strategy for promoting community cohesion by:
 - creating more opportunities for pupils to appreciate and value people from communities around the world .
 - ensuring that these are included in planning when linking subjects.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils' enjoyment of learning, as seen in their eagerness to become involved in engaging and well-paced activities in English and mathematics, is a characteristic of most lessons. They work well in small groups and readily share information, showing a resolve to complete the tasks and get them right. Often pupils work well independently of the teachers, for example, when working in pairs and small groups in preparation for portraying the feelings of a mouse in their creative writing. Pupils were also fully engaged when looking at eye-catching slogans on packaging in preparation for their designs. They showed great satisfaction in completing three-dimensional shapes, for example, during mathematics.

Children enter the Nursery with skills and abilities that are typical for their age. . Attainment is broadly average throughout the school and all groups of pupils achieve satisfactorily. School data show that levels of attainment and the rate of progress are improving securely, especially in reading and writing, and to a lesser extent in mathematics. Pupils who attend throughout their primary school education make better progress than those who join part-way through. There are no significant variations in the rates of progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, or by the very small number of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. ♦

Pupils say they like coming to school because they enjoy making friends, learn lots of things and enjoy participating in the sporting activities. ♦ Pupils show much interest and respect for different people's feelings, in their involvement in community projects, and choir singing at day centres and church services, for example. Pupils' excellent understanding of living healthily is reflected in the school's nationally recognised qualification. It is also evident in the way they talk confidently about the importance of

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eating different kinds of food and drinking fluids, the need for regular exercise and its impact on the heart. The majority of pupils take part in regular exercise and participate in sports events. The eco-council and school council provide good opportunities for pupils to represent the views of others and to make decisions regarding the school's Christian values, for example.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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

How effective is the provision?

Good relationships and questioning that probes pupils' understanding are particular strengths of teaching and learning. Topics, such as those that encourage creative writing and make links between different subjects such as English and history, successfully capture pupils' interest and hold their attention. Consequently, pupils willingly become interested in their learning and want to discover more for themselves. However, the pace of learning is not always as rapid as it could be and some activities do not expect enough from pupils, especially the more able. Assessment is not used consistently to guide planning which means that tasks are not always matched well enough to the needs of different abilities. As a result, the pupils do not always learn as well as they should.

Informative classroom displays give an insight into the range of pupils' learning experiences. The school is developing a curriculum that provides an appropriate balance between basic skills in English and mathematics and the enhancement of pupils' performance and creative skills, especially art. The school has rightly identified the need

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to improve pupils' skills in mathematics, building on the improvements already made in reading and writing. Planning links different subjects and pupils are given opportunities to reinforce their learning and develop their skills through topics. Skills, including the ability to work collaboratively, are encouraged. The teaching of French adds an additional positive dimension. The curriculum is well supported by a programme for personal, social and health education. Pupils' learning experiences are further enriched by a number of popular clubs, including gardening, residential trips, visits to places of local interest, and the use of subject specialists from within the learning partnership of seven local schools.

The good care, guidance and support have a positive impact on improving outcomes for pupils. The quality of pastoral care is recognised and valued by parents and carers. One parent's comment sums up the views of others: 'There is a great sense of community at St Mary's. All the children are part of the community...they feel valued and are encouraged to respect and care for others.' The close attention to pupils' health and well-being is reflected in the many opportunities for physical activity and the provision of healthy school meals. Individualised programmes of support are successfully compiled for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable, covering a wide range of personal and learning needs. Individual achievement is managed through improved tracking of pupils' progress. Close liaison with parents and outside agencies and tailored individual attention enable those with the greatest needs, including some of those who join part-way through their primary education, to gain confidence and self-esteem.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The leaders and managers of the school are satisfactorily embedding ambition and driving improvement. Following an unsettled period which included changes to staffing and disruptions owing to extensive building work, the focus on key priorities for sustained improvement has sharpened. The new leadership team, well supported by staff, is creating a culture that is committed not only to strengthening each pupil's self-esteem, but also to raising their achievement. Changes within the school are matched by a planned approach to monitoring and a greater awareness of the path the school needs to follow to increase the pace of learning. Secure systems have been established to ensure that this ethos is maintained even through staff changes. The promotion of equality and approaches to tackling any form of discrimination are satisfactory. As a result, groups of pupils make similar progress, although some pupils, especially the higher-attaining pupils, could make faster progress in some classes.

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The governing body is supportive and members are highly visible in the school. The work of the governors, several of whom are new to the role, shows that they starting to hold the school to account for its work. The governing body is fully involved in the strategic management of the school, although it is not checking systematically the school's progress with regard to improving achievement and raising attainment. Detailed and well-organised procedures ensure that safeguarding arrangements are carefully followed. The school uses embedded and reliable quality assurance and risk assessment systems. Local services and agencies are used well to enhance the well-being of pupils experiencing difficult circumstances and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The school demonstrates a good understanding of local needs and challenges. It makes effective use of resources that are available within the learning partnership. The school provides a number of opportunities for pupils to gain a good understanding about people's backgrounds and communities in this country, with the help of the learning partnership. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to develop community cohesion at the international level. Parents and carers are very supportive of the school and play an active part in school events, including fund-raising projects and workshops to help them understand their children's different learning experiences. ♦

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle quickly, are eager to learn and make satisfactory progress. Effective links have been established with parents, and caring staff have successfully established a welcoming environment in which children are nurtured from the start. Assessment procedures are beginning to ensure that staff have accurate and reliable information about children's progress. However, the school recognises that it still has more to do to ensure this information is used consistently to guide planning and ensure that all the activities are

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both stimulating and sufficiently challenging. Support for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and for those who are more vulnerable, is appropriately focused.

Children listen attentively and chatter about their work. The school makes effective use of both the indoor and outside areas. Children happily move from one activity to another. Questioning is often used well to probe their understanding and capture their interest. Themed topics ensure all areas of learning are covered, with a particular focus on early reading, writing and number skills. However, planning does not always help children to achieve appropriate learning objectives.

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

An average proportion of the school's parents and carers returned the questionnaires. The very large majority of the responses were positive. A number of parents and carers made written comments and many of these expressed considerable satisfaction with the school. These included positive remarks about the caring and supportive community and the quality of the staff. However, some questionnaires recorded reservations over a number of issues. These included the amount of progress their children are making and communication. The inspection found evidence to indicate that pupils are making more rapid progress than they did before, although those who learn quickly could be challenged more. The school sends out regular newsletters, but is aware of the urgent need to improve its website and the effectiveness of electronic mail.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Mary's C of E Controlled 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 149 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 389 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	91	61	54	36	0	0	3	2
The school keeps my child safe	77	52	69	46	1	1	2	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	51	34	75	50	18	12	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	51	34	78	52	13	9	6	4
The teaching is good at this school	56	38	84	56	5	3	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	50	34	81	54	11	7	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	62	42	79	53	2	1	2	1
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)	51	34	81	54	4	3	2	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	51	34	81	54	11	7	3	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	48	32	80	54	12	8	5	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	41	28	89	60	9	6	4	3
The school is led and managed effectively	59	40	72	48	10	7	4	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	73	49	66	44	5	3	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 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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.



3 December 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Mary's C of E Controlled Primary School, Byfleet KT14 7NJ

We very much enjoyed our visit to your school. Thank you for making us feel so welcome. This letter is to tell you about some of the things we found while we were with you. Your school has now reached a more settled stage after a great deal of change to the accommodation and staff that look after you. St Mary's is a satisfactory school, where you behave well, feel safe and benefit from good care and support. You told us it is also a place where you want to be, make friends, and enjoy taking part in the many exciting activities, stimulating trips and interesting clubs. The very large majority of your parents expressed considerable satisfaction with the school.

Here are some other important things about your school.

- You make satisfactory progress in lessons.
- You respond enthusiastically to activities that encourage you to work creatively.
- You make a positive contribution to the smooth running of the school and contribute successfully to local events.
- You have an outstanding understanding of what makes for a healthy lifestyle.

To make things even better for you, your school has been asked to:

- help you to make faster progress, especially those of you who learn quickly, by giving you more challenging activities throughout the lessons
- ensure that those in charge of the school keep an even closer eye on how you are doing
- help you to understand more about people's backgrounds and communities in other countries.

We wish each one of you every success in your future education and hope that you continue to enjoy learning as much as you do now. You can all help the school by continuing to work hard.

Yours sincerely

Paul Canham

Lead inspector

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