

St Martin's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104369
Local Authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	355567
Inspection dates	17–18 January 2011
Reporting inspector	David Speakman

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	222
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Wendy Collymore
Headteacher	Lynne Law (Executive Headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	2 October 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors saw 15 lessons or parts of lessons and observed eight teachers. Meetings were held with senior leaders, governors and groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation, including monitoring, evaluation and assessment records, policy documents, the school improvement plan, minutes of governors' meetings, teachers' planning and samples of pupils' work. A wide range of documents and records was scrutinised in relation to the safeguarding of pupils, including case studies of vulnerable pupils. Inspectors took into account the results of 41 parents', 75 pupils' and 17 staff questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How well pupils in Years 5 and 6 are doing in terms of standards, achievement and in using core skills across the curriculum.
- Whether the improvement seen at Key Stage 1 is being sustained.
- The effectiveness of leadership and management in leading, managing and governing this school and children's centre, given that they are also responsible for another school.
- If pupils in the main school are properly safeguarded against adults using the children's centre, especially as the Nursery class is located in the centre.

Information about the school

St Martin's Church of England Primary School is similar in size to most other primary schools. A very high proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The number of pupils from minority ethnic groups is lower than in many other schools and most come from a White British background. Very few speak English as an additional language and none are at the early stages of learning English. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs and there is a higher than average proportion identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The main additional needs are related to pupils' speech and language. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in the Nursery part-time and full-time in a Reception class. The school has achieved Healthy School status and has been awarded an Activemark.

The school entered into a federation with Field View Primary School, Bilston in September 2010. Field View has recently been inspected under Section 5. There is an executive headteacher who, with the governing body, leads and manages both schools. There is a head of school for each of the federated schools. Four out of seven teachers at St Martin's are new to the school, with three being newly qualified. There is a designated children's centre situated within the school, offering family services and childcare from 0-5. This operates under the leadership, management and governance of the school's executive leadership team and the governing body. A breakfast club also operates under the direction of the governing body.

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 Martin's C of E Primary School is a good school in which pupils achieve well and attain standards that are broadly in line with the national average. Children attending childcare in the children's centre get a good start to their education. They benefit from early provision to support their education and development through opportunities to learn and play alongside other children, occasionally those from the school's Nursery class. Inspection findings can be briefly summed up in the comments from one parent who wrote, 'My child has attended since Nursery and has always looked forward to attending, enjoying time spent there. I believe that I have made the right choice to have my child at St. Martins and expect my child to leave school well equipped for later life, due to the dedication of the staff for wanting the best for their pupils.'

This is a quickly improving school and this is clearly reflected in rising attainment at the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2. Improving standards, including those for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are a result of an improved quality of education. Teaching and the curriculum are now good and have improved since the previous inspection. As a result of the effective use of an exceptionally robust monitoring and evaluation system and improvements in key areas of provision and outcomes, the school is judged to have a good capacity to improve even further.

The school's strong Christian ethos is reflected well in pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the strong care and support they receive. Behaviour is good so pupils feel safe in school and enjoy being there. They display mature attitudes to learning for their age and readily embrace opportunity. They have target books and are aware of the levels at which they are working in English and mathematics. However, not all fully understand what these levels represent or what they have achieved once their target is attained. There are opportunities for pupils to say how effective they think their learning has been, but as yet there are few occasions for them to assess the quality of their own and others' work and to form a view on how they think they might improve its quality.

Standards are now above average by the end of Key Stage 1 and there is a similar improving trend at Key Stage 2. Current standards in Year 6 in reading and mathematics are above age related expectations and in writing are in line. There is a similar attainment profile in Year 5. This represents further improvement on standards at the end of Key Stage 2, which, although in the past were below average, have been rising in recent years. However, pupils still have weak speaking skills. They have limited vocabulary, which often impacts negatively on their ability to verbalise their thoughts accurately. Additionally, pupils do not sufficiently appreciate the need for more formal spoken English on occasion, for example, when answering questions in lessons or taking part in class discussions.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' speaking skills by:
 - widening their vocabulary
 - enabling them to differentiate between situations where standard English is spoken and those where informal speech is acceptable
 - providing pupils with opportunities to articulate their thoughts clearly and accurately with a particular emphasis on reasoning, deduction and problem solving.
- Further improve learning outcomes by:
 - giving pupils opportunities to assess the quality of their own and others' work and identify for themselves how they can improve
 - ensure that pupils understand what their targets mean and when they have achieved them.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with attainment that is well below that expected for children of their age. They make good progress at all stages of the school. By the end of their Reception Year most have reached broadly average standards. Good progress through Key Stage 1 leads to attainment that is above average in reading and mathematics and broadly average in writing. Improvement seen at Key Stage 1 now impacts on standards at the end of Key Stage 2, which are broadly average and rising. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the few who speak English as an additional language or who come from minority ethnic backgrounds also make good progress in developing their skills in literacy and numeracy. Through careful monitoring of progress, any pupils needing extra help are identified and intervention to support them is quickly put in place.

Pupils enjoy learning and find activities interesting. They settle quickly in class and fully engage in learning opportunities. They enjoy being active and 'doing rather than listening all the time', as one pupil said. They like opportunities to discuss, such as in a Year 5 lesson where pupils talked about the keeping of exotic pets and the morality of using them to satisfy fashion whims. They had some very interesting ideas which they shared with each other, listening politely to what others had to say. Discussions such as this and the good behaviour in lessons and around school clearly demonstrate pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Pupils are adequately prepared for the next steps in their education. Literacy and numeracy skills and attendance are average, but their willingness to adapt to change and to embrace challenge is good. However, pupils were not able to recall any opportunities they have had to develop enterprise skills. Pupils lead healthy lifestyles in school. They know what constitutes a healthy diet and what 'a healthy plate looks like.' They readily engage in opportunities to take physical exercise. Pupils' contribution to the school and wider communities is good. The school council has a good level of influence over what happens in school. Pupils have a number of opportunities to contribute to local life and are

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active in supporting national and overseas charitable work, such as sponsoring a teacher in Africa.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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?

The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Planning is mostly good. All planning shows that teachers are fully aware of the different levels individual pupils have achieved and are working at. Occasionally, this knowledge is not used to plan different levels within activities so tasks are not always sufficiently matched to each pupil's learning needs. When this is the case, some pupils capable of reaching higher levels of attainment are not fully stretched. Relationships between adults and pupils are strong and based on mutual respect. There is little need to manage behaviour because pupils are interested, but when there is, such as when the pace of lessons slows down, teachers are effective and pupils respond well. Teachers are good at gaining pupils' interest. Techniques such as acting in role, competent use of technology and making sure that pupils are actively involved for the majority of time are some of the effective strategies used to maintain interest.

The school has worked effectively to organise a curriculum that provides well for pupils' academic progress and for their personal development. It is adapted well to meet the learning needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, enabling them to make equal progress to other pupils. There is an appropriate emphasis on developing

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core skills, but well thought out links between subjects and a themed approach to learning ensure topics appeal to pupils' interests. Enrichment and extra-curricular activities are varied and add significantly to the quality of pupils' learning and the level of enjoyment they experience in school.

Adults show good care for all pupils. Advice and good quality guidance are systematically removing barriers to learning that pupils might experience. The Breakfast Club provides well for those pupils who attend. One parent wrote, 'My daughter enjoys Breakfast Club and it has helped with her social development, as well as getting a healthy breakfast.'

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Leadership and management of the executive leadership team are effective and have led to improvement in key areas since the previous inspection. Highly effective use of their robust monitoring and evaluation process, 'Cycle of Effective Learning', has provided members of the leadership team with a clear and accurate view of outcomes and the quality of provision. They have effectively used this information to set high expectations of themselves and all staff and have successfully established a shared drive for improvement and a will to strive for excellence. Leaders have done particularly well in raising the quality of teaching and learning since the previous inspection in the context of a high number of staff changes.

Governors have equally high expectations and are challenging, while still supporting the school well. They are fully involved in monitoring and evaluating school effectiveness and in strategic planning. Many are well known to staff and pupils alike. Safeguarding procedures are good. Policy and practice is regularly reviewed by governors and senior leaders and kept up to date. All policies are in place and required checks made on all staff. Support and safeguarding are particularly strong for vulnerable pupils. Their emotional well-being and academic progress are well supported through adults in school and good links with a range of support agencies. Equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination are high on the school's list of priorities and the school tries to ensure that all pupils have the same opportunities to learn and make progress, although very occasionally pupils capable of higher attainment are under challenged.

Governors and senior leaders have conducted an audit of how well they promote community cohesion. This has given them a clear understanding of the school's position in the local, national and global communities, in terms of different aspects of its context. Although there are still some areas to develop, school leaders are fully aware and have

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plans in place. The development of community cohesion is linked into the curriculum and is well represented in the school improvement plan.

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	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	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

Children and babies in the children's centre childcare receive good quality provision for their academic development and for their physical, personal and emotional growth. There is a good range of effective learning and development activities, covering all areas of learning, and which supports their communication skills and their physical, social and emotional development well. Learning activities take place both indoors and outside. Outdoor provision is particularly good, shared with the school and provides excellent opportunities for physical development. Progress and development are assessed effectively and well recorded in each child's 'My Learning Journey'. Particularly good use is made of photographic evidence to record individual development in these records. Consequently children's progress and development are good. Leadership and management are good. Adults are managed and deployed effectively. Security and safeguarding arrangements are good, with full adult supervision. This childcare complies with requirements for registration.

Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception Classes. The supportive atmosphere helps children to settle in quickly and they soon feel confident to make friends and enjoy learning. The indoor and outdoor areas are imaginatively organised and children learn through play equally well in both areas. Adults are deployed efficiently and work effectively with the children, guiding and supporting their learning. They take an interest in what children have chosen and ask questions which help deepen their understanding. However, activities are not always sufficiently 'hands on' to support learning through play.

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Children's progress and development are carefully tracked. Regular observations of children's activity provide information on how well they achieve skills and acquire knowledge across all areas of learning. Leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage are strongly focused on ensuring children make good progress. There are good induction procedures for all children and care, guidance support and safeguarding are all good in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children in the Nursery class, which is in the children's centre, are secure and fully safeguarded from adults visiting the centre.

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

About 20% of parents and carers sent in questionnaires and this response is lower than usually found. Parents and carers have very positive views of the school and there was over 90% agreement for all statements in the questionnaire.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Martin's Church of England 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 41 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 222 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	32	78	8	20	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	26	63	14	34	1	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	22	54	17	41	2	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	25	61	15	37	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	26	63	14	34	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	19	46	19	46	3	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	25	61	16	39	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)	20	49	17	41	2	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	54	18	44	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	19	46	20	49	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	15	37	22	54	1	2	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	25	61	15	37	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	28	68	12	29	1	2	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 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 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.

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.



19 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Martin's Church of England Primary School, Bilston, WV14 8BS

We really appreciated the warm welcome you gave to us when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you, both in lessons and in the group discussion one of us had with you. Your views were very helpful to us in making decisions about your school - thank you.

We were pleased with what we found and are delighted to be able to say that you go to a good school, but one which is also improving all the time. You all make good progress and the standards in your school work by Year 6 are similar to those found among many other pupils in primary schools. Your personal qualities are good. You show a sensible and mature approach to school life. You clearly enjoy school and behave well. All these things help your teachers provide a good quality of education. They also make sure that the school is a safe and pleasant place for you to learn and make friends.

We have asked your teachers to do one or two things to help raise standards further and to continue the trend of improvement. We have asked them to:

- help you improve your speaking skills by improving your vocabulary so you will be able to explain your thoughts more clearly and by helping you speak in different styles to suit different situations
- make sure you know what your targets actually mean and give you greater responsibility to assess the quality of your work and to work out for yourselves how to improve.

We hope your school continues to improve and are confident that you will do all you can to help by continuing to behave well and showing interest in your work.

Yours sincerely

David Speakman

Lead inspector

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