

The Primary School of St Mary and St Martin

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122796
Local Authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	359304
Inspection dates	3–4 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Susan Walsh

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	103
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Derek Patterson
Headteacher	Liz Piddington
Date of previous school inspection	11 October 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Inspectors visited 10 lessons and saw four teachers teach. Meetings were held with staff, members of the governing body and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at the school's development plan, the school's records of pupils' progress and school policies. They scrutinised 66 parental questionnaires and also looked at questionnaires completed by pupils and staff.

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

- Whether the school has sustained recent improvements to attainment and progress.
- The impact of support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Pupils' understanding of the wider community in the United Kingdom and beyond.

Information about the school

This primary school is smaller than average and serves the village of Blyth and the surrounding areas. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. However, the proportion can vary considerably from year to year and the school provides for a small number of pupils with complex needs. The number of pupils in each year group also varies significantly from year to year and currently children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a class that contains Reception age children and Year 1 pupils. The school has gold healthy school status. After-school care is supplied by a private provider and will be inspected separately.

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

The Primary School of St Mary and St Martin is a good school. The school provides a very cheerful and welcoming environment and this, combined with outstanding care, guidance and support, ensures that pupils feel exceptionally safe. There is a calm and very purposeful atmosphere reflecting the strong focus on pupils' personal development. Pupils clearly enjoy school and work and play well together. Pupils' spiritual development is outstanding; consequently they have a boundless curiosity and a thirst for knowledge that underpins their enthusiastic approach to learning.

Children get off to a good start in the Reception class, which offers a stimulating learning environment. Attainment by the end of Year 6 is rising and is now above average. Pupils are making good progress through Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 from their individual starting points, because of good teaching, and achievement is good. However, a small number of more able pupils do not always make rapid progress in mathematics lessons. This is because, occasionally, work is not closely matched to their needs or they do not have time to finish tasks. Many lessons across a range of subjects are vibrant and exciting but there are limited opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills. Although pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, their cultural development is the weakest element. Governors and staff recognise that pupils do not always have sufficient depth of understanding of cultural diversity in the United Kingdom and beyond, as their experience in this respect is relatively limited.

The headteacher's ambitious vision is shared by governors and staff and has been pivotal in driving improvement. Good quality monitoring of teaching, combined with thorough tracking of pupils' progress and analysis of data, ensures that self-evaluation is accurate. This enables the school to pinpoint exactly where it needs to improve and detailed planning successfully drives developments. Progress is accelerating and attainment is rising. All this demonstrates the school's good capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Enhance the progress of more able pupils, particularly in mathematics, by:
 - providing more well-considered opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills
 - ensuring that teachers are always crystal clear about what they expect more able pupils to learn in lessons and that pupils have sufficient time to complete each task to a high standard
 - making certain that the work set is always finely matched to pupils' needs.
- Extend pupils' understanding of other cultures by:

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- providing opportunities for pupils to have first hand experiences of other cultures
- developing more international links.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 and their current progress in writing is particularly impressive with pupils producing relatively long pieces of interesting work with increasingly accurate spellings and use of punctuation. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 has been broadly average for the last few years but improved substantially in 2010 when mathematics results rose. Currently pupils in Key Stage 2 are on track to maintain these above average standards. In most lessons pupils acquire knowledge and understanding at a good rate. A focus on using talk to prepare for writing has resulted in pupils demonstrating a rich vocabulary and above average skills in speaking and listening and in writing. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because they are quickly identified and offered effective support that is carefully tailored to their individual needs. However, the school is aware that able pupils do not make such consistently good progress, especially in mathematics.

Pupils have a very well developed appreciation of the natural world and experience awe and wonder through many things. This excellent spiritual development is because they have plentiful opportunities to reflect on their experiences and take part in assemblies of exceptional quality. Pupils are interested in cultures other than their own. However, their understanding is fairly narrow because they have little first hand experience of people from different backgrounds. Pupils willingly participate in the school community. They are proud to act as younger leaders at playtime, to be house captains and to contribute to the school council, and they certainly take their responsibilities seriously. Behaviour is good, especially in lessons. Pupils say that there is some falling out, especially amongst older girls, but are keen to point out that bullying is extremely rare. They are confident that adults will sort out any problems. Pupils recognise the importance of a healthy diet and are keen to take regular exercise. They understand the dangers of drugs and the excess consumption of alcohol. In lessons, they show the ability to work well independently and with others. This, combined with above average attainment and regular attendance at school, means that pupils are well placed for future success.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

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	2
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	1
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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
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?

Lessons are often exciting and motivating. Questioning is used well to challenge pupils and to check their understanding. Learning support assistants are highly skilled. The way that they are able to reshape explanations and improve pupils understanding underpins the good progress made by pupils, particularly those with special education needs and/or disabilities. Relationships between pupils and staff are consistently good. Pupils know that their contributions are valued. Consequently they are able to ask for help confidently when needed but also ask their teachers very well thought out and challenging questions. Occasionally teachers' planning lacks precision and is not sufficiently clear about what able pupils are expected to learn in mathematics lessons. As a result, the work set is sometimes not pitched correctly and intermittently too many activities are crammed into a short period of time. When this occurs, able pupils have insufficient time to complete activities they are interested in and are not able to produce work of the highest quality. The setting of regular homework is used well to support learning.

The school provides well-organised and imaginative learning experiences. Pupils appreciate the good range of visits, visitors and after-school clubs as well as the way the local environment is used to make learning interesting and relevant. Local partnerships are used well to extend opportunities for pupils, for example providing French lessons and enhancing opportunities for taking part in sport. Although there is a good emphasis on teaching basic skills the school is aware that there is there are limited opportunities for

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pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills by solving problems that occur in real life situations. Pupils who have complex individual needs are able to access a curriculum that is closely tailored to their needs.

Personal guidance is very good indeed, with pupils receiving very sensible advice about how to keep healthy and safe. Pupils potentially vulnerable due to their circumstances and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are exceptionally well supported. This outstanding support is enhanced by good cooperative working with other agencies. Consequently these pupils make good academic progress and often outstanding progress in their personal development. Transition arrangements are good. They ensure that pupils move smoothly through the school and look forward to the next stage of their education.

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?

Both staff and governors grasp opportunities and new ideas to good effect and this is evident in sustained improvements to achievement and progress. The school has systemically addressed relative weaknesses such as attainment and progress in mathematics. The leadership of mathematics has been strengthened and teachers are enhancing their skills in teaching mathematics through successfully employing techniques gained through additional training. The school is determined to promote equal opportunities and this is exemplified by the way it carefully monitors the progress of all pupils and successfully supports pupils with additional needs.

The governing body is rigorous in assuring that pupils are safe and discharges its statutory duties effectively. Relationships between staff and governors are extremely constructive and as a result of this and close contact with the school, the governing body is able to provide good support and challenge. The school's involvement with the local partnership of schools has a positive impact on many areas of its work, for example enhancing provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and extending opportunities for staff to take part in professional development.

Safeguarding procedures are good. The school ensure that all adults working with children are carefully vetted, and it makes certain that pupils are able to deal sensibly with risks that they may encounter in their day-to-day lives. The school understands its local community well and in itself forms a very cohesive and mutually supportive group of governors, staff, parents and pupils. However, the school is only just starting to reach out beyond its local community and pupils currently have limited opportunities to meet others whose backgrounds differ from their own. There are few links with schools in other countries.

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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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Reception class with skills that are generally similar to those expected for their age but there are wide variations between different cohorts. Children's personal and social skills are often well developed but their skills in writing are sometimes below those expected for their age.

Children consistently make good progress in the Reception class because of good provision. Their progress is carefully tracked and activities are thoughtfully planned to meet children's individual needs. There are plentiful opportunities for children to develop their writing and calculation skills and this underpins good progress in these areas. Expectations are consistently high and children respond well.

Children are keen to take responsibility for small tasks and work and play well together. The new outdoor area is used well to promote learning. The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good and leaders have successfully focused on providing a safe and supportive environment where children are able to make good gains in their learning.

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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

A high proportion of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire, and the very large majority are pleased with their child's experience at the school. A very small minority of parents or carers have concerns about communication. Inspectors took these into account. During the inspection the school was able to give examples of its support to parents and its positive responses to suggestions. Although a few parents or carers were concerned about their children's progress or the way the school meets their children's needs, pupils are achieving well.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Primary School of St Mary and St Martin 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 66 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 103 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	43	65	18	27	5	8	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	43	65	23	35	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	34	52	24	36	6	9	2	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	30	45	27	41	8	12	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	35	53	24	36	5	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	38	58	19	29	7	11	2	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	34	52	30	45	2	3	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)	33	50	27	41	4	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	36	55	20	30	9	14	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	40	61	19	29	4	6	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	45	27	41	7	11	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	40	61	20	30	5	8	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	38	58	21	3	7	11	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	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.



5 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Primary School of St Mary and St Martin, Worksop, S81 8ER

It was a delight and a privilege to inspect your school. You go to a good school that is getting better all the time. I was pleased to hear that you feel exceptionally safe. You have good manners and make visitors very welcome indeed. I think that you all make a really important contribution to your school. I was most impressed by your positive attitudes to learning and by the way you were able to ask your teachers some very interesting questions.

Children get off to a good start in Reception. Those of you in Years 1 to 6 are also making good progress and by the end of Year 6 you are reaching standards that are above those reached by other children in schools nationally. Although teaching is good I have asked your teachers to make some improvements to the way that mathematics is taught. This includes making sure that they are always quite clear what you are expected to learn in lessons and that you have enough time to complete each activity to a good standard. I have also asked them to make sure work is always hard enough for pupils who are good at mathematics, and that you get opportunities to practise solving problems in mathematics.

It was clear that you enjoyed the story telling session that included stories from other cultures and the opportunities to learn about Caribbean culture. However, you have few opportunities to meet other children from different backgrounds and to make links with schools in other countries. This has limited your awareness of other cultures, so I have asked your teachers to improve this.

You told me that the staff look after you very well and I agree. The people who run your school are working hard to make it an even better place. I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Susan Walsh

Lead inspector

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