

# St Martin's Church of England Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109220
<b>Local Authority</b>	North Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	356503
<b>Inspection dates</b>	26–27 January 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Townsend HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	8–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	441
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	M. Maleham
<b>Headteacher</b>	Simon Marriott
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 June 2008
<b>School address</b>	Spring Hill North Somerset BS22 9BQ
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 24 lessons and observed 16 teachers. They carried out two extended observation walks of teaching and learning around the school and held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body, staff, and groups of pupils as well as talking to parents about their questionnaire responses. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including data on pupils' progress, pupils' work in books, records on the monitoring of teaching and learning, improvement plans, external reports, training information and school policies. One hundred and thirty three questionnaires from parents and carers were analysed, together with 98 from pupils and 47 from staff.

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

- The school's use of data to identify and tackle underachievement.
- The use of challenging targets to raise standards in English and mathematics.
- How well teaching ensures that pupils make progress commensurate with their capabilities and starting points.

## Information about the school

The school is larger than average and serves the town of Weston-super-Mare and its surrounding area. Pupils are predominantly White British, with a small minority from other ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is similar to the national average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average, while the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The number of pupils on roll has fallen since the last inspection. The school begins admitting pupils into Year 4. The headteacher and six teachers were appointed to the school in September 2010.

**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

St. Martin's Junior provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. It has emerged from a recent unsettled period and is improving quickly. St. Martin's is an inclusive school that provides good care for its many potentially vulnerable pupils and prepares all pupils well for life in a multicultural society. The new headteacher and leadership team are determined to move the school forward. Together, they are self-critical and perceptive in identifying the correct priorities for the school's future development. However, because the concerted action they have taken to address the issues raised at the last inspection is recent and has not yet had a full impact, the school's capacity to improve is satisfactory rather than good.

By the time pupils leave the school in Year 6, their attainment is broadly average and most of them make satisfactory progress from their starting points, which, for many pupils, are below typically expected levels on entry to Year 4. Attainment in writing and mathematics remains below average, especially given that there has been some underachievement in the past. Concerted action to identify and provide targeted support for pupils at risk of not reaching the levels expected for their age is working well.

Teaching is satisfactory. Although some lessons observed were good, variability in quality remains and this prevents some pupils from making maximum progress. Relationships and the atmosphere for learning in all classes are good. The satisfactory but improving curriculum has been made more relevant and engaging for pupils, and lessons give greater scope for pupils to discuss their thinking and to apply new skills in practical contexts. The assessment of pupils' writing and use of targets to help pupils know how to improve their scripts is much improved. However, systems of a similar quality are not fully in place for mathematics. When teaching is no better than satisfactory, the pace of lessons is slower and there is insufficient focus on clear outcomes for pupils, especially the higher-attaining pupils. Opportunities for pupils to assess their own and others' work are increasing but not widespread.

There are good partnerships in place with local authority agencies and other schools to enrich the curriculum and provide specialist support for individual pupils. Leaders have established good links with other schools and external agencies to support the school's work. The school has worked hard to involve parents in their children's learning. However, its effectiveness is no better than satisfactory because some parents have concerns about behaviour, pupils' progress and communication between families and staff. The school recognises that more could have been done to ensure effective communication with parents and carers about their children's schooling and is taking robust action to address this issue.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and further accelerate pupils' progress in mathematics and writing by ensuring that:
  - all teachers consistently use information from assessment to ensure high expectations in lessons and good challenge for all pupils in their learning
  - teachers regularly provide pupils with good quality written and oral feedback in mathematics, linked to learning targets, to help pupils know how to further improve their work
- Raise the quality of teaching to at least good by January 2012, by ensuring:
  - a focus in class on the desired learning outcomes for pupils of all abilities
  - opportunities for pupils to assess their own and others' learning are offered consistently.
- Work with parents and carers to evolve more effective systems for informal and formal contact with the school in relation to their children's achievement and well-being.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

<b>3</b>
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Improvements to teaching since the last inspection and a focus on developing pupils' critical skills for effective study mean that the quality of learning is at least satisfactory. Most pupils are motivated to learn and show enjoyment when teaching engages them. Attainment on entry is below average. Teachers are working hard to address the lack of confidence and the weaker basic skills evident in a significant proportion of pupils, especially with regard to spelling and punctuation in writing and mental calculations in mathematics. Intervention programmes are now having a beneficial effect for these pupils at risk of not reaching expected levels by the end of Year 6. While the school has now set challenging targets for pupils' achievement and progress rates are improving, variability remains across classes and year groups, linked to inconsistencies in teaching. Occasionally, the higher-attaining pupils make slower progress, due to the lack of challenge in some lessons. For pupils with special educational needs, while progress over time has been good for those with more complex needs, achievement for pupils with specific learning difficulties has been variable.

Pupils clearly enjoy school. They feel safe and are knowledgeable about safety risks. They believe bullying to be very rare and express confidence in the school's ability to sort out any issues that do arise. Despite some parental concerns, and the pupils telling inspectors in discussion that behaviour has not always been good, inspectors observed calm learning environments in classes, orderly movement around school and pupils playing well together during breaks. This is testament to the effective work of the new leadership team and staff in establishing clear expectations and systems. A number of pupils for whom behaving well is a particular challenge are given close, effective support.

Pupils have a good awareness of how to stay healthy. They readily take part in physical exercise opportunities and many eat fruit and healthy meals. Pupils have good opportunities to be involved in decision-making through an active school council and they readily take on a range of responsibilities as library monitors, playground buddies, tuck

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shop and cookery club organisers. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and well nurtured, for example through class assembly discussions about what constitutes 'right and wrong' in relation to situations in school. Pupils actively explore global links and a range of faiths and cultures through their topic-based curriculum and partnership with other schools. Sound achievement in the basic skills, their personal qualities and the average rate of attendance prepare pupils satisfactorily for the next stage of their education.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

<sup>1</sup> 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?

Teachers have a good rapport with pupils and are helping them become more confident to achieve. Lessons are active; teachers use their secure subject knowledge to encourage pupils to be reflective thinkers, discuss their ideas and follow this up through well-resourced, practical group-work. However, inconsistencies remain in the quality seen across classes and year groups. In the best lessons, pupils of all abilities were challenged. For example, in a Year 5 lesson seen, pupils worked in groups against the stopwatch to order decimal numbers by size; the teacher gave each group different challenge levels but all pupils had mathematical enquiry rules to follow. Where less effective, lessons lack pace and the match of work set to pupils' needs is imprecise, particularly for more-able pupils. Similarly, while some pupils have good opportunities to assess their own learning and that of their peers, this is not always the case. Some teachers establish criteria for what

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effective learning looks like and regularly refer to targets set with pupils whereas others do this less consistently.

A good start has been made at adapting the curriculum to make it more relevant and exciting by making thematic links between the different areas of learning. Pupils get regular opportunities to develop and apply their basic skills, for example, in Year 4, by taking notes as reporters on the rituals and implements used by the Romans to bathe. Close links with local first and secondary schools have helped enrich the curriculum, with many visitors such as poets and artists sharing their expertise. Teachers also liaise with their colleagues at these schools to plan for more effective transition when pupils start and leave St. Martin's. However, the curriculum remains satisfactory rather than good. It is not yet challenging enough for all pupils because planning does not always specify sufficiently ambitious learning intentions for pupils of all abilities.

The school has a larger than usual number of potentially vulnerable pupils who need and receive well-targeted support, both from a skilled in-school team and many external agencies specialists, with whom the school has active communication links. The achievement and needs of all pupil groups is carefully monitored and pastoral care is good. Collaborative working and well-designed intervention programmes have helped a number of individual pupils overcome significant barriers to learning, and family support mentoring has been well received. The school has put in place many strategies to improve attendance and behaviour which are having a positive impact in securing rapidly improving outcomes for pupils.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

Through the good leadership of the headteacher and his strong senior team, clear pathways for development have been agreed with all staff and challenging targets to achieve have been set. They, and governors, are clear about the school's strengths and weaknesses. Action for improvement is rooted in careful analysis of performance data. The evaluation of teaching and assessment is accurate and the inconsistencies that exist have been identified. Middle leaders have a clear view of pupils' learning needs in each subject and additional support programmes are fully in place to address these. The promotion of equality of opportunity is satisfactory; the school thoroughly assesses the achievement of all pupil groups. New management systems for curriculum planning, behaviour management and to develop teaching are in place. They are starting to have a positive effect on pupils' academic outcomes and well-being but it is too early to judge their full impact.

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Members of the governing carry out their duties satisfactorily and have due regard to the school's strategic direction. Statutory requirements are fully met and good practices are in place to safeguard children. Community cohesion is well promoted through an inclusive culture within the school, its work to reach out to wider communities in this country and abroad and the opportunities pupils have for meeting people from different walks of life.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## Views of parents and carers

There were 133 responses to the inspection questionnaire. Parents and carers answered the inspection questionnaire by selecting responses and/or making comments. Overall, parents and carers support the work of the school and recognise the improvements being made this year under its new leadership. About one tenth of written comments included responses in praise of individual support for pupils and their families. A number of parents and carers, however, expressed some concerns:

- about one tenth expressed concerns about behaviour
- about one tenth were unhappy with the level of challenge or support for their children's learning and the school's response to these concerns.

Taking the proportion of parents and carers expressing concerns about behaviour fully into account, alongside the positive impact of actions taken on behaviour seen during the inspection, inspectors judge this to be satisfactory. Inspection findings about the level of challenge or support for children's learning pupils are presented in the text of this report. Regarding the issue of the school's responses when parental concerns were raised, inspectors agree that in some instances, more could have been done to ensure effective communication with parents and carers about their children's schooling through both informal and formal contact. However, inspectors agree with the school's new leaders that



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it is diligent in seeking close contact with families now and that communications are improving.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St. Martin's Junior 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 133 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 441 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	34	26	89	67	7	5	0	2
The school keeps my child safe	45	34	82	62	5	4	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	28	26	83	59	16	11	5	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	28	21	83	62	16	12	5	4
The teaching is good at this school	25	19	89	67	11	8	4	3
The school helps me to support my child's learning	24	18	85	64	16	12	4	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	32	24	87	65	7	5	1	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)	25	19	81	61	14	11	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	21	16	87	65	15	11	6	5
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	20	15	73	55	25	17	8	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	15	82	62	12	9	5	4
The school is led and managed effectively	23	17	81	61	11	8	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	27	20	85	64	13	10	6	5

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](http://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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



28 January 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St. Martin's Church of England Junior School, Weston-super-Mare BS22 9BQ**

Thank you very much for all the help you gave us when we came to visit your school. We enjoyed talking to you in class and around the school and looking at your work. We think you attend a school which gives you a satisfactory education and which is improving quickly. Here are some of the good things that we found out about your school:

- Most of you make steady progress and, by the end of Year 6, the numbers reaching average levels are rising fast.
- You say you enjoy coming to school. You feel safe and are knowledgeable about the risks to your own and others' safety.
- Your behaviour in lessons and around school is orderly.
- You play an active role in decision-making in the school and its organisation through the various responsibility posts you hold and your fundraising work.
- You have a keen appreciation of world cultures.
- Your headteacher and senior leaders in school are determined to make the school better, and improvements are being seen this year.

To improve the school further, we have asked the people in charge to work on these important things:

- Make sure that you all make faster progress with your writing and mathematics and meet the challenging targets set with you.
- Ensure that all lessons provide the right level of challenge and pace in the learning for you, especially if you are ready to move on more quickly.
- Offer all of you clear advice and learning targets as to how to improve further with your mathematics work.
- Work closely with all parents and carers to develop the most effective ways of sharing information about your learning and well-being.

You can all help by always doing your best in lessons and through considerate behaviour around school. We wish you all very well for the future.

Yours sincerely

David Townsend

Her Majesty's Inspector

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