

St Mary Magdalene CofE Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	103989
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	377003
Inspection dates	20–21 March 2012
Lead inspector	David Shears

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	241
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dick Franks
Headteacher	Ruth Gillett
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2008
School address	Stanway Road West Bromwich B71 1RP
Telephone number	0121 5882371
Fax number	0121 5888454
Email address	ruth.gillett@st-marymagdalene.sandwell.sch.uk

Age group	3–11
Inspection date(s)	20–21 March 2012
Inspection number	377003



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012



Introduction

Inspection team

David Shears

Additional inspector

Kathryn Skan

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors visited 16 lessons taught by nine different teachers, and held meetings with representative members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at policies, planning documents, assessment data and pupils' work. They analysed the questionnaires returned by 42 parents and carers, 15 members of staff and 100 pupils.

Information about the school

St Mary Magdalene CofE Primary is an average-sized primary school. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds, with the remainder from other cultures, the largest being of Asian origin. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is higher than the national average. The percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language is higher than the national average, as is the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. The school meets the current floor standard. It has gained the Quality Mark for Primary Schools, and has National Healthy Schools and Investors in People status. A new headteacher was appointed in September 2011.

A breakfast club and after-school childcare operates on the same site. Both of these provisions are managed externally and 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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. Although children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, pupils’ progress in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory overall. This means that despite recent improvements, the quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory rather than good.
- Pupils’ achievement is satisfactory. Their attainment at the end of Year 6 is broadly average, although the percentage of pupils reaching higher standards at the end of Year 6 is increasing. Pupils’ attainment in reading is average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Teaching is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage. While it is satisfactory in Years 1 to 6, the percentage of good lessons is increasing, so that pupils’ progress is improving. Where lessons are good, both teaching and support staff enthusiastically meet the needs of all pupils and have high expectations. However, in some lessons teachers talk for too long and when pupils are working independently, their learning is not monitored carefully enough. Most pupils are unable to identify their own individual targets.
- Pupils are keen to learn and behave well in lessons, which supports their learning. Pupils play well together in the playground and feel safe. Attendance has risen since the last inspection so that it is now above the national average.
- Leaders and managers at all levels work collaboratively to make improvements to teaching, including through performance management, and have demonstrated improving progress this year. While subject plans have clear actions, the monitoring and evaluation of these by some leaders, including the governing body, lacks rigour. The curriculum is improving, although there are not enough planned links between subjects to ensure the regular application of pupils’ skills in literacy, numeracy and communication.

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

- Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 to 6 so that pupils make good progress in all classes, by ensuring that:
 - pupils know and understand their next steps in learning and are reminded of these targets regularly by teachers during lessons
 - pupils are more actively involved in lessons and do not spend too much time sitting and listening to teachers
 - teachers and support staff monitor progress during lessons, adapting activities to enable pupils to make good progress.
- Improve the effectiveness of leaders and managers by ensuring that:
 - action planning prioritises the most important elements for school improvement and that these are rigorously monitored and evaluated to judge school effectiveness
 - the monitoring of the governing body is clearly focused on key areas for improvement and provides challenge to hold the school to account for the quality of pupils' learning and progress
 - opportunities are consistently planned into the curriculum for practising pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy and communication in other subjects.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Children arrive with skills and knowledge that are below that which is expected nationally. They settle quickly into school, and make good progress so that by the time they leave the Early Years Foundation Stage, their attainment is broadly in line with the national average. This is because the teaching they receive is effective in meeting their needs. For example, in one lesson observed in the Nursery, adults were skilfully deployed to intervene with children who were independently exploring the theme of 'growing and changing' by asking questions to extend their understanding and enabling good progress. In the Reception class, children have individual targets to enable personalised learning to occur in lessons, so that they, too, make good progress.

While there is a growing proportion of good teaching in Years 1 to 6, there is too much that is still satisfactory so that overall progress is satisfactory and attainment at the end of Year 6 is broadly in line with the national average. Pupils' attainment in reading at the end of Years 2 and 6 is broadly average. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to the rest of the class, as do pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. Pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals make satisfactory progress and the gap between these pupils and

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

their peers is smaller than that found nationally. Pupils who speak English as an additional language receive effective individual support in their learning and, consequently, make good progress.

In lessons where good progress is made, adults consistently tailor the learning to pupils' needs. For example, in one lesson, pupils were grouped by ability to practise their understanding of co-ordinates at different levels, while at the same time developing their mental arithmetic. These groups were overseen by adults who ensured that all were engaged and learning well. However, in other lessons where pupils are similarly grouped, adults are not consistently checking pupils' understanding on an individual level. Consequently, some pupils who are ready to move on are held back in their learning, while others are not given enough support. All parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire felt that their children were making good progress. However, inspectors found that while pupils were making good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in some classes in Years 1 to 6, too many pupils are still making satisfactory progress.

Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is consistently good in the Early Years Foundation Stage but only satisfactory overall in Years 1 to 6, although it is improving this year. In all classes, pupils have good relationships with staff and are eager to please. Appropriate attention is paid to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Teachers plan interesting activities to stimulate pupils' interest and use accurate assessment to plan work for pupils of different abilities. Good use is made of technology, such as the interactive whiteboard and visualisers, to enhance the quality of teaching. However, sometimes pupils sit for too long listening to teachers and this limits the time they have to demonstrate their learning through independent tasks. Pupils work well individually and are good at supporting each other in their learning. Nevertheless, teachers sometimes focus too much on supporting individual pupils and do not always check during lessons whether the activities are meeting the needs of all groups. Consequently, they miss opportunities to correct general misconceptions or to provide further challenge.

There are general areas of focus such as improving paragraphs in English and investigating time in mathematics and pupils are aware of these. Individual targets for pupils have been introduced and pupils know the level that they are working at. However, they are not yet able to identify what they need to do in order to achieve the next level in their work. Pupils are beginning to evaluate their own learning, although they are not always accurate in their own assessment. Teachers consistently and carefully mark work by giving praise and telling pupils what would have made it even better. In most classes, pupils are given time to respond to marking. The large majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire feel that their children are taught well and a similar proportion of pupils agree. Inspectors found that while there is some good teaching and it is improving, there are still too many lessons where the teaching is satisfactory.

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

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils behave well in lessons. They enjoy learning and are keen to do their best for the teacher. The highly positive relationships between pupils and staff ensure that pupils have good attitudes to their work. Just occasionally, when teaching is not engaging, a small number of pupils lose interest and find it difficult to concentrate, although without disrupting others' learning. Pupils say that behaviour in the playground is good most of the time. They recognise that there are a small minority of pupils for whom good behaviour is a challenge. However, they know that adults deal well with any difficult situations and so they feel safe in school, whether in lessons or on the playground. Pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes bullying and are able to identify different types of bullying. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong and display polite and courteous behaviour. Pupils are very keen to converse with adults around them and talk freely about their thoughts and feelings. The large majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire feel that pupils behave well and the majority of pupils agree. As a result, the large majority of both pupils and parents and carers feel that pupils are safe.

Attendance has improved from being in line with the national average at the time of the last inspection to now being above average. This is as a result of improved monitoring and clear policies and procedures for dealing with absence. Unexplained absence is rigorously followed up. Good use is made of local authority support to help address any persistent absence. The vast majority of pupils are punctual. Any lateness is carefully monitored. Good attendance, whether by individuals or whole classes, is celebrated and rewarded.

Leadership and management

Since the last inspection, the leadership and management of the school have been satisfactory. Current leaders and managers have a good understanding of the strengths of the school and what needs to be done to improve it further. Areas for development are set out clearly in action plans, although there is not always sufficient detail about how these are to be achieved and, in particular, how they are to be monitored and evaluated to demonstrate their impact on pupils' progress. The governing body is supportive of the school but its members do not focus their monitoring sufficiently on the most important aspects of school improvement, limiting their effectiveness in holding the school to account for the quality of pupils' learning.

Most of the issues from the previous inspection have been addressed. For example, a clear focus on the progress of more-able pupils means that the proportion attaining above average at the end of Year 6 has significantly increased over the last three years. Fewer pupils have exceeded the national average in Year 2, although this is set to improve this year. The school has clearly demonstrated the capacity to improve. The present leaders and managers work well as a team and have focused successfully on improving the quality of teaching, including through professional development. The monitoring of teaching supports teachers in knowing how to

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

improve and the quality of lessons is accurately evaluated. As a result, the percentage of good teaching has increased and pupils' progress is improving, although it is too early to see an overall increase in attainment.

The curriculum is satisfactory and adequately prepares pupils for the next stage of their education. Leaders and managers give due attention to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, enabling them to reflect well both on their learning and attitudes. The school recognises the need to ensure that subjects are clearly linked. In particular, there are not enough planned opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy, numeracy and communication skills in other subjects. Nevertheless, there has been a good focus on improving provision for information and communication technology and pupils are now making better progress in this subject.

The school values the partnership with parents and carers, the large majority of whom have positive views about the school. The school ensures any discrimination is quickly tackled and addressed. The promotion of equal opportunities is satisfactory because there is still a disparity in the quality of teaching and learning between some classes. There are good relationships with parents and carers. The school's safeguarding policies and procedures meet statutory requirements.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

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

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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

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

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



22 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Mary Magdalene CofE Voluntary Controlled Primary School, West Bromwich, B71 1RP

Thank you for the welcome that we received when we visited your school recently. It was lovely to meet you all and find out about your school.

You told us that you feel safe because adults around you look after you so well. We were particularly pleased with the polite and courteous way in which you talk to adults in the school and we can see that you enjoy your learning.

We found that you go to a school that gives you a satisfactory education, which means that some things are good but others can be improved. While the youngest children make good progress in their lessons, not everyone in the rest of the school makes as much progress. However, we are pleased to see that this is getting better this year. To make sure that you all make good progress in every class, we have asked your headteacher, governors and teachers to:

- give you more time to demonstrate your learning and to keep checking in lessons to make sure that you are making good progress
- help you to know, understand and use targets in English and mathematics so that you know what you need to do to get to the next level
- give you more opportunities to practise your literacy, numeracy and communication skills in other subjects
- keep checking that the teaching is helping all of you to make good progress across every year group.

You could help by always trying your best in every subject and politely telling your teacher if you need more help or could try harder work.

Thank you again for looking after us so well.

Yours sincerely

David Shears
Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.**