

St Mary's Catholic Primary School and Nursery

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112916
Local Authority	Derby
Inspection number	357219
Inspection dates	23–24 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Kenneth Thomas

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	365
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anna Zimand
Headteacher	Amanda Greaves
Date of previous school inspection	27 March 2008
School address	Broadway Derby DE22 1AU
Telephone number	01332 554831
Fax number	01332 553972
Email address	admin@stmarys.derby.sch.uk

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	23–24 March 2011
Inspection number	357219

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 documentation 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'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 13 teachers and saw 17 lessons. Inspectors observed two school assemblies and held discussions with staff, groups of pupils and the Chair of the Governing Body. They looked at pupils' books and viewed a wide range of documentation including school policies, curriculum planning, self-evaluation information, improvement planning, safeguarding and welfare arrangements, and records of pupils' progress. Questionnaires returned by 144 parents and carers, 102 pupils and 17 members of staff were analysed.

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

- How well do teachers use assessment information to plan lessons that meet the different needs of pupils of all abilities, so that all make adequate progress?
- How effectively does the curriculum promote the development of pupils' basic skills?
- Does school self-evaluation have sufficient rigour to accelerate progress across the school?

Information about the school

This is a very large school. The large majority of the pupils are from White British backgrounds. About a third are from minority ethnic backgrounds, which is above average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average and their main language is Polish. A few pupils are in the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average, while the proportion known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. A higher-than-average proportion leaves or joins the school partway through their primary school education. The school has gained Healthy Schools status.

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 Mary's Catholic Primary School and Nursery provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. It is a welcoming school that is justly proud of its inclusive nature. Pupils benefit from an attractive learning environment, both indoors and outdoors, and make good contributions to the school and the wider community. Most parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire indicated that their children enjoy coming to school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and a further strength is the good promotion of healthy lifestyles, evidenced in the school's achievement of Healthy School status. Most pupils participate in regular physical exercise and understand the importance of diet to health.

Attainment is average at the end of Year 6 and achievement is satisfactory given pupils' original starting points. Inconsistency in learning and teaching, particularly in the lower junior years, is the main reason that progress is satisfactory rather than better. There are some good and outstanding lessons in which pupils are making good and better progress. However, in some lessons, the work set is not always challenging enough for all ability groups and teaching assistants can only provide limited support because introductory and other teacher-led activities are too long. In most lessons, behaviour is at least satisfactory and often better. However, in a few lessons progress is slowed because the distracting, attention-seeking behaviour of a small minority of boys is not addressed consistently. Staff are implementing a number of well-considered strategies to improve pupils' reading and writing skills. These are having a positive impact on progress and attainment in English. However, progress in mathematics is lagging behind because not enough attention is being given to the application and development of pupils' numeracy skills in all subjects.

Because of promotions and retirements, senior leadership is at present heavily reliant on the headteacher. A new deputy headteacher will shortly take up post and school leadership is being strengthened further by the appointment of a number of other senior staff. Despite these changes, school self-evaluation identifies the correct areas for improvement and there is a clear drive for improvement. Subject coordination is satisfactory and staff with coordinating roles are keen to contribute more to the drive for improvement by extending their monitoring and evaluation skills so that good practice can be identified and shared more widely. More challenging targets are being set and recent developments in the use of assessment information to check pupils' progress are enabling targeted support to be provided where needed. This is particularly beneficial to the progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. One notable aspect of the school's effective care for individual pupils is the support provided for any who join partway through the school year, or whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable, to ensure that they keep up with their classmates.

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

Governance is satisfactory. While the school benefits from the full support of the governing body, the governing body is over-reliant on reports from the headteacher because it is not involved sufficiently in the direct monitoring and evaluation of school performance. Nevertheless, the determination of the headteacher and staff to move the school forward is seen, for example, in the willingness of all to seek and adopt best practice from other schools and external agencies. Together with the improvements seen since the last inspection and strengthening school leadership, this enthusiasm of staff and the governing body to tackle weaknesses gives the school satisfactory capacity for continued improvement.

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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in mathematics by providing more opportunities for pupils to use and apply their numeracy skills in other curriculum subjects.
 - Make all teaching good or better to accelerate progress, particularly in the lower junior years, by ensuring that:
 - full use is made of assessment information to plan learning tasks that are challenging for pupils of all ability levels
 - introductions to lessons and other teacher-led activities are not too long and the best use is made of teaching assistants
 - the school behaviour strategy is implemented consistently in all lessons.
 - Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - middle leaders have the skills necessary to monitor, evaluate and improve pupils' progress in their areas of responsibility
 - the governing body has the skills and information needed to offer challenge and support in equal measure.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Children's skills on entry to the nursery are generally in line with expectations for children of their age and they make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils' work in lessons and in their workbooks indicates that pupils of all ethnic backgrounds make satisfactory progress, although it is uneven through the school. Pupils enjoy and achieve well in their learning when lessons are stimulating and engaging. In these lessons, they show good behaviour also and demonstrate the capacity to work effectively, both independently and collaboratively. This was exemplified in a Year 5 literacy lesson when pupils were engrossed in writing a letter to the local council arguing for or against the provision of a graffiti wall. Their discussions generated plenty of ideas on the use of persuasive language and all made good progress because they were actively engaged. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language make satisfactory progress because assessment information is used effectively to target support closely to their needs.

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

Pupils are aware of how to avoid risks, whether on the internet or during their journeys to and from school. They assert that although there are some incidents of bullying these are taken seriously by staff and resolved quickly, so they feel safe in school. They say that there is always someone who will listen to them. The school council provides a forum for pupils' voices and pupils contribute well to the school in other ways, for example through the Eco-group or as mini-leaders or buddies. Pupils relate well to those from different cultural and religious backgrounds. They leave the school adequately prepared for their future and with a developing understanding of the range of opportunities available to them in later life.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
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?

Most lessons are characterised by good relationships between teachers and pupils. In the best lessons, pupils make rapid progress because assessment information is used well to guide the planning of learning tasks and pupils are expected to work independently, stretching themselves and others as they talk things through. Perceptive questioning is used to extend pupils' thinking. This was seen in a Year 6 numeracy lesson, when pupils made rapid progress in calculating time intervals, using analogue and digital clocks, because challenging learning tasks and high expectations promoted excellent learning and behaviour. However, in some lessons, progress slows because the inappropriate behaviour of a few pupils is not managed well enough to prevent it from disrupting learning. In some

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

other lessons, teachers take too much time introducing learning, which gives pupils too little time to practise, extend and apply their learning and skills. This also limits the work of teaching assistants, who spend too much time listening to the teacher and not enough on supporting learning.

The curriculum provides pupils with a satisfactory range of learning experiences. A topic-based curriculum is being planned to make more meaningful links between subjects, while maintaining an appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy. However, at present, pupils are not provided with enough opportunities to apply and develop these skills across the curriculum. The curriculum is adequately enhanced through partnerships with local schools and other providers. These links broaden pupils' experiences and, amongst other things, help to open their eyes to the diversity of faith and culture in modern society and in the wider world. Pupils benefit from a well-attended range of extra-curricular activities. These contribute much to pupils' enjoyment, as do visits out of school.

The school keeps pupils safe and provides a satisfactory level of support and advice. While support in lessons for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities is generally effective, in a few instances, the support for those who find it difficult to maintain consistently good behaviour is less effective. Action is being taken to improve this.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides effective leadership and is successfully negotiating the school through a period of transition in which senior leadership has been under strength. With the full support of staff and the governing body, the headteacher is focused clearly on raising standards. Successful action to tackle relevant priorities has led to improvements, for example, in reading and writing standards, the tracking of pupils' progress and the provision of clear targets for both pupils and teachers. However, the monitoring of provision by middle leaders is not yet developed well enough to sharpen the work of other teachers and so quicken pupils' progress.

Following the lead of the chair, the governing body is becoming more involved in determining the school's strategic direction and evaluating its work. It has ensured that arrangements for safeguarding pupils comply with statutory requirements. All necessary checks are carried out on staff and their child protection training is up to date. The school works hard to engage parents and carers and, for example, through an open door policy, together with half-termly coffee mornings led by the headteacher and 'surgeries' offered by the headteacher and chair of governors, they are able to discuss school priorities and raise matters of concern. However, only a few parents and carers take advantage of these

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

opportunities. Equality of opportunity is promoted satisfactorily and appropriate measures are in place to tackle any form of discrimination. The school is mindful of the community it serves and pupils' minds are opened to the range and diversity of culture in the United Kingdom and beyond.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle quickly in the nursery because of the well-organised induction arrangements, good care and support and some outstanding teaching. As a result, children feel safe and enjoy their learning. A strong emphasis on children's personal and social skills ensures that they soon begin to share, to learn and to play together. All adults are vigilant in meeting the needs of children and welfare requirements are fully met. Children make satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals. Some children exceed these goals. However, certain weaknesses in provision in the Reception classes, where there are not enough opportunities for child-initiated learning and outdoor activities are not always sufficiently focused on learning, prevent more from doing so. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader has taken up the position only recently and is in the process of evaluating the effectiveness of the provision to form a basis for planning and improvement.

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

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

There was a good response to the parents' and carers' questionnaire and their responses were generally positive. All criticisms offered were discussed in full, though anonymously, with the headteacher and the chair of governors. A small minority of respondents disagreed that unacceptable behaviour is dealt with effectively. Inspectors found that, while the behaviour of the overwhelming majority of pupils is at least satisfactory and often good, there are instances when the management of the very few pupils who find it difficult to maintain consistently good behaviour is less effective. A few parents and carers disagreed that the school is led and managed well, that their children make enough progress or that the school takes account of their suggestions and concerns. Inspectors judged that the headteacher is providing clear and effective leadership during a period of transition and that progress is satisfactory overall but uneven across year groups. They found also that teachers, the headteacher and the chair of governors make themselves available regularly so that any suggestions or concerns of parents and carers can be dealt with promptly.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Mary's Catholic Primary School and Nursery 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 144 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 365 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	71	49	68	47	2	1	2	1
The school keeps my child safe	60	42	73	51	7	5	2	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	58	40	76	53	4	3	4	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	57	40	67	47	12	8	5	3
The teaching is good at this school	56	39	72	50	10	7	2	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	51	35	77	53	10	7	3	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	39	27	95	66	7	5	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)	43	30	78	54	9	6	3	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	46	32	78	54	14	10	3	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	31	22	72	50	27	19	11	8
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	36	25	86	60	8	6	10	7
The school is led and managed effectively	40	28	74	51	12	8	11	8
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	59	41	69	48	5	3	7	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).

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.



25 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Mary's Catholic Primary School and Nursery, Derby, DE22 1AU

Thank you for the help you gave us with the recent inspection of your school and for the friendly way you received us. We spoke to many of you and you were really helpful. Thank you for telling us so much about your school and why you like being there.

You receive a satisfactory education. You make satisfactory progress and reach average standards at the end of Year 6. You could reach even higher standards and we have asked your teachers to make sure that, in all of your lessons, you are stretched so that you make the best possible progress. Most of you enjoy school, listen to what your teachers have to say and are willing to work hard in your lessons. We have asked your teachers to make sure that all of you behave as well as this because your teachers can then concentrate on making your work interesting and helping you to learn. We have also asked them to give you more opportunities to develop your mathematical skills in all subjects. Your teachers spend a lot of time marking your work. They correct any mistakes and make clear what you have to do to improve. All of you can help yourselves to make even more progress by making sure that you try hard to follow the advice you are given.

Adults at the school look after you well, so that you are safe and happy. Your headteacher, all the other staff and the governing body are determined to make things even better. To help this, we have asked that staff with responsibility for leading different subjects check how well you are doing in lessons and that governors are more closely involved in checking the work of the school. We think that everyone at St Mary's can work together to do these things and that you will all want to play your part by working hard in all of your lessons.

Yours sincerely

Dr Kenneth Thomas

Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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.