

Saint Mary's Catholic Primary

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112901
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	357217
Inspection dates	30–31 March 2011
Reporting inspector	John Horwood

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	143
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Mee
Headteacher	Simon Groarke
Date of previous school inspection	12 February 2008
School address	Gladstone Street Glossop SK13 8NE
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed ten lessons taught by seven teachers. Meetings were held with groups of staff, members of the governing body and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documentation including pupils' work, minutes of meetings, progress monitoring records and school policies. The responses to 63 questionnaires from parents and carers were scrutinised.

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

- Why did average-ability pupils in Year 6 in 2009 underachieve and do all pupils currently make at least satisfactory progress?
- Are sufficient opportunities provided to support pupils' understanding of different cultural backgrounds from their own?
- How well are literacy and numeracy skills promoted within other subjects?

Information about the school

St Mary's Catholic Primary School is smaller than the average primary school. Almost all pupils come from White British backgrounds and very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is higher than in most schools. The school has an average proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, but their needs cover a broad spectrum. There have been significant staff changes since the last inspection, including the current headteacher who took up his post in April 2008. The school has achieved Healthy School status and has been awarded the silver Arts Mark. There is a privately managed pre-school Nursery on the school site, which is inspected, and reported upon, 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

St Mary's Catholic Primary School provides a good education. It is a school that focuses on every aspect of the pupils' well-being within a safe and caring environment. As one parent wrote, 'St Mary's is a very supportive community with a good moral code and a caring attitude.' Another parent wrote, 'the school appears to be very settled now with the new head' and this was the inspection team's view. Much has improved since the last inspection and this improvement has accelerated in recent months. Teaching has improved and is now good. This has resulted in current progress being good although the impact on attainment is only just beginning to show. Pupils in Year 6 are working at levels above those expected for their age which represents good progress from their broadly average starting points. The school's self-evaluation shows that leaders know the strengths and weaknesses of the school very well and this, together with the improved teaching and better progress, confirms that the school has a good capacity for sustained improvement.

Teachers are using assessment data more rigorously in monitoring pupils' progress but there are variations across the school in how well they use the data in planning. Pupils are also becoming more involved in assessing their own progress but again this varies from class to class. Pupils confirmed that adults in the school help them to learn but a minority were not clear how well they are doing at school. This is because, when marking pupils' work, teachers do not always tell pupils clearly the level at which they are working and how they can get to the next step in their learning. Those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported in class and with one-to-one support. Their progress has also improved and is currently good.

The strong caring ethos within the school contributes to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Although there are only limited opportunities for pupils to meet those from different backgrounds, this is compensated for by a range of activities within the curriculum. These include studying different faiths in religious education and other cultures through history, geography and topic work. Their understanding of other cultures is enhanced by special events including an international arts week and the celebration of Chinese New Year. Despite this, pupils do not have enough direct contact with people from other communities.

The school has been very successful in promoting healthy lifestyles and this has contributed to it obtaining the national Healthy School status. Pupils run a healthy tuck shop to provide funds for new equipment and prepare healthy food for school events. The school council runs an annual healthy lunch-box promotion and many pupils join in local activities such as the Glossop Jog. There is also good participation in sports activities within the school. Pupils benefit from strong links with the nearby sports college where Year 5 and 6 pupils use the trampolining facilities.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment by:
 - improving teaching and learning by ensuring a consistent approach to the use of assessment data in planning
 - ensuring that when teachers mark pupils' work they always give written guidance on how to get to the next step in their learning and ensure that the advice is followed up
 - involving pupils more in assessing their own learning within the classroom.
- Improving the opportunities pupils have for direct contact with those from backgrounds different to their own.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils' attainment on entry to Reception varies from year to year but is either at the expected levels for their age or just below it. Over a three-year period pupils' attainment on leaving has been average although many pupils in the current Year 6 already exceed this level. There are no significant variations in attainment within English or mathematics. The concerns about science identified during the previous inspection have been rectified. In 2009, some pupils attained less well than expected but most of these had joined the school in the final year with low attainment. All pupils are currently making good progress and achievement is good. Pupils say they enjoy school and this is reflected by their above average attendance. There are excellent relationships with adults and with each other and this is evident in the confident way they ask and answer questions within lessons. Enjoyment to support learning is a clear focus in lessons. This was seen in a Year 5 English lesson when pupils were recording their own scripts which they had produced for a younger audience by adapting the original. In a Year 2 science lesson they enjoyed the practical activities and were able to predict well the outcomes of the effect of friction on distance travelled by vehicles. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities were always able to join in the lesson activities and made the same good progress because of appropriately set work and good support from adults. Because pupils enjoy school and work hard in lessons the behaviour of the vast majority of pupils is good.

In addition to their outstanding approach to a healthy lifestyle pupils have good opportunities to prepare for their future economic well being. Throughout the school they were seen to be confidently using the information and communication technology systems to support their learning. They are also involved in supporting each other, participating as members of the school council and with the older pupils being given the responsibility of taking on roles as playground buddies. They contribute well to the local community through activities such as the choir singing in the town centre at Christmas and projects such as tree planting and litter picking.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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?

All aspects of the school's provision are good. Teachers all have good subject knowledge and they know their pupils well so that they can set appropriate work. Their skills at formally using assessment data to fine tune their planning is developing but at present varies from class to class. They make lessons enjoyable and ensure that all pupils are included through skilfully directed questions. They use interactive whiteboards and other resources well in lessons to stimulate pupils' interest. The quality of marking and the involvement of pupils in assessing their own progress in lessons is good in many lessons but not consistently so in others.

The curriculum includes much topic work to make the work enjoyable and appropriate to pupils' interests. The development of literacy and numeracy skills through other subjects is planned more effectively in literacy than in numeracy. The school's provision matches the needs of pupils of all abilities including the most able ones and those who find learning difficult. There is good support for all aspects of pupils' personal development and pupils benefit from a wide range of enrichment activities. The older pupils, for example, are really looking forward to their forthcoming trip to London.

Pupils are well cared for within the school and pupils, parents and carers say that pupils are safe in the school. There is good support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities whose progress is now rigorously tracked to ensure that support is provided where it is needed. Additional funding has recently been obtained to provide

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one-to-one support for pupils who need extra help and this has had a significant impact on outcomes. There are good partnerships with external agencies, the local authority and other schools in the area which are well used to support all pupils with their academic and social needs. There are very effective links to support those pupils in potentially vulnerable circumstances. The links with the local Catholic secondary school ensure that pupils are well prepared for a smooth transition at the end of Year 6.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

Leadership and management structures are clear and established. Leaders at all levels are involved in supporting and securing school improvement in many aspects of the school. Staff training and successful new appointments have resulted in improved teaching and learning. Governance is good and members of the governing body have supported the school well in their shared vision and drive for improvement. All the systems to improve teaching and increase progress are now in place and, although not yet consistently used across the school, their impact is clear. Members of the governing body are actively involved within school and have an effective committee structure to carry out their duties. They are particularly strong in supporting safeguarding and know that they have more to do to ensure that pupils have more opportunities to meet those from different backgrounds.

The effectiveness with which the school promotes equal opportunities and tackles discrimination is good. There is no sign of discrimination within the school and every pupil has the same opportunities within class and other school activities. As a result, there are no significant variations in the levels of progress made by the various groups of pupils and attainment is average. Safeguarding arrangements are good, with good site security. Records of the suitability of all staff to work in the school are all up to date and risk assessments are comprehensive. There are good records of meetings with external agencies to support pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable. School leaders understand their community well and have ensured the cohesion within the school is good and that good links with the local community have been developed. Modifications to the curriculum enhance pupils' understanding of those from other faiths and cultures and there are some opportunities for pupils to meet pupils from different backgrounds.

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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

Most children join Reception from the on-site Nursery where they have already had the opportunity to visit the school and take part in activities such as cookery. They settle quickly into Reception where they play and interact well with one another and their behaviour is good. During their time in Reception all pupils make good progress. The learning environment is stimulating and spacious, supporting learning well. The outdoor area is used well to extend classroom learning but is small. The teacher plans well for lessons and uses data well to ensure activities are set to match the needs of children.

During the temporary absence of the Early Years Foundation Stage coordinator the teacher currently in the Reception class is working with the senior leaders to ensure good progress is continued. This is effective because procedures and systems are securely established. Staff have good relationships with the children and are fully involved in supporting their personal development. They look after the children well and ensure that all welfare requirements are in place. The teacher works closely with the special educational needs coordinator and with outside agencies to provide extra support when appropriate. Good links have been established with parents and with the on-site Nursery to ensure a smooth transition into the school. Good monitoring procedures ensure that leaders know where strengths exist and where improvements are needed.

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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

Most parents and carers who completed inspection questionnaires were satisfied with the school. They were especially pleased with how the school helps their children lead a healthy lifestyle and are kept safe and happy. There were many supportive comments, typified by 'Any issues have been dealt with quickly and with care and concern' and 'We find the teaching staff very approachable and willing to listen.' A few parents and carers were concerned with the way the school deals with behaviour and about the leadership and management within the school. Inspection evidence suggests that these concerns reflect past issues and do not reflect the current situation. A very few parents and carers expressed individual concerns that were followed up as part of the inspection process but they followed no particular pattern.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Saint Mary's Catholic Primary 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 63 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 143 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	34	54	28	44	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	41	65	21	33	1	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	34	54	27	43	1	2	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	34	54	25	40	4	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	32	51	29	46	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	35	56	25	40	3	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	38	60	24	38	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	30	48	27	43	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	31	49	26	41	4	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	35	23	37	11	17	3	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	31	49	21	33	4	6	2	3
The school is led and managed effectively	28	44	24	38	5	8	3	5
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	35	56	25	40	3	5	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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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.



1 April 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Saint Mary's Catholic Primary, Glossop, SK13 8NE

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to your school. We really enjoyed talking with you and looking at the work you do. Your school is giving you a good education.

There are many things we admire about your school and these are a few of them.

Your understanding of how to keep healthy is outstanding.

You tell us that you feel very safe in the school because staff look after you so well.

You all enjoy school and have good attendance records.

You all make good progress as a result of good teaching.

You tell us that behaviour is good although a small minority sometimes misbehave in a few lessons.

A large number of you take part in the many after-school clubs and activities which the school provides.

These are the things we have asked the school to do to make it even better:

- ensure that when teachers mark your work they always tell you how to improve and check that you take their advice
- ensure that you are more involved in assessing your own progress
- ensure that teachers always use assessment data when planning their lessons
- give you more opportunities to meet people from different backgrounds.

All of you can help the school move forward by carrying on working hard. We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

John Horwood

Lead inspector

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