

St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School, Richmond

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121655
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	359058
Inspection dates	30–31 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Moira Fitzpatrick

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	163
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Steve Lawson
Headteacher	Mrs Jill Collins
Date of previous school inspection	28 November 2006
School address	Cross Lanes Richmond North Yorkshire DL10 7DZ
Telephone number	01748 822365
Fax number	01748 821124
Email address	admin@st-marysrc-pri.n-yorks.sch.uk

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M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Twelve lessons were observed and seven teachers were seen. Meetings were held with the headteacher and staff, groups of pupils, members of the governing body, the school support adviser and the School Improvement Partner. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including the school's improvement plan, attainment and progress data, teachers' planning and safeguarding procedures. The responses in 51 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, nine completed by staff and 68 from pupils were considered.

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

- The impact of new senior leaders in ensuring greater consistency in the quality of teaching and in improving pupils' progress.
- How well senior leaders are developing the skills and ambition of staff, and the extent to which new systems are enhancing pupils' learning.
- How effectively the school is reducing the impact of high staff turnover in the recent past so that pupils feel secure and able to learn.
- Whether the school has the capacity to improve further given its existing resources.

Information about the school

The school is a smaller than average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. Nearly all pupils are from a White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average; the percentage with a statement of special educational needs is average. More pupils than usual join and leave the school other than at the expected times. A significant proportion of these are from families at the nearby army garrison at Catterick. The school has recently been awarded Healthy School status.

The school has experienced very high staff turnover, including at senior leadership level, in recent years. This has meant that a significant proportion of pupils now in the school have been taught by many different teachers. This situation has now stabilised. In April 2010, a new headteacher was appointed and a new leadership team has been formed since then. Since the start of this academic year, the stable staffing means that pupils in all classes now have one main teacher. At the previous inspection in February 2010, the school was given a notice to improve the leadership and management.

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

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

The school's effectiveness is satisfactory. It is improving rapidly as new systems and the headteacher's high expectations of pupils and staff begin to embed. There is now a clear leadership structure in the school and roles and responsibilities are delegated well to senior staff. This is not yet the case for other staff and the school recognises that the next step in accelerating the rate of improvement is to provide further training for middle leadership. Self-evaluation is accurate. The effectiveness of the leadership and management has improved since the previous inspection and, as a result, pupils' progress is accelerating. The school now demonstrates a satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and pupils make satisfactory progress to reach broadly average attainment by the end of Year 6. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress against their targets because the curriculum is well adapted for their needs. Attainment in reading is stronger than in mathematics and writing because this key skill is more thoroughly reinforced in different subjects. Not all pupils are taught to write for a wide range of purposes, and their mathematical skills are not promoted well in other subjects. In some classes, mathematics teaching does not cover all aspects of the subject in sufficient detail. There are signs of accelerating progress in pupils' learning as the quality of teaching and teachers' use of assessment information about pupils' learning and progress improves. The curriculum is increasingly well matched to pupils' needs, and provision for enrichment and extra-curricular clubs has improved well since the headteacher took up post.

Provision and outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage are good and children make an enjoyable and secure start to school life. Good quality care, guidance and support ensure that pupils feel safe and secure in school. The vast majority of pupils get on well together and show care and concern for each other although very small number are overly boisterous at lunchtimes. The school is taking steps to address this issue but realises there is more to be done in this regard. Pupils make a good contribution to the school community by taking responsibility for the smooth running of the school. By the time they leave Year 6, they are adequately prepared for the next stage of their learning.

Because a significant number of staff are new to the school, senior leaders have ensured they are receiving training to improve the consistency of their approach to the management of behaviour. The headteacher has rightly identified the need to improve the school's climate for learning by involving pupils, parents, carers and staff in reviewing and improving this so that it fully reflects the school's aims and values.

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Up to 40% of school's whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in mathematics and writing by:
 - providing access to a wider range of mathematical activities and by ensuring that pupils apply their skills in different subjects
 - ensuring that pupils write in a wide range of styles for different purposes, both in English lessons and in other subjects.
- Improve the lunchtime behaviour of the very small minority of pupils who are overly boisterous by:
 - developing pupils' understanding of the need for respect and tolerance for everyone in the school community
 - reviewing systems for behaviour management at lunchtime
 - providing lunchtime supervisors with effective training to carry out their role
 - continuing the process of reviewing and further improving the school's climate for learning.
- Accelerate the school's improvement by:
 - distributing leadership roles and responsibilities more widely amongst staff
 - providing training to enable staff to develop the necessary expertise that will enable them to discharge their new roles effectively.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

The majority of pupils are enthusiastic learners who enjoy all that school has to offer. They work well in lessons, because they want to please their teachers and do well. Most listen carefully to explanations and to each other's ideas during discussions, although occasionally a few do not show their peers the respect they should. Pupils relish opportunities for practical activities and working with partners. For example, in a Year 3 English lesson, pupils made good progress in generating word lists to describe the tastes, scents and the feel of different items.

In many classes, pupils' behaviour is good, but in a few pupils call out or interrupt, which slows the pace of learning. Pupils know what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and are beginning to adopt a sensible approach to exercise and diet. Pupils are active fund-raisers and show a genuine concern for those in need. They help the school to run smoothly by looking after resources well and clearing away at the end of lessons. The eco-warrior group makes sure all pupils understand the importance of recycling materials and looking after the future of the planet. The school council has lacked leadership in the last year and inspectors agree with pupils who are council members that they have much more to contribute to school improvement. The vast majority of pupils show good care and concern for each other, enabling relationships to be positive and supportive. The good level of respect that predominates in the school was made evident by the concerns

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expressed by some older pupils that a very small number of boisterous pupils do not always show respect for lunchtime supervisors.

Pupils' achievement and progress are satisfactory from starting points on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage that are below expectations for their age. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of the support they receive. The school's tracking data and the inspection evidence show that in most classes progress is now accelerating as new systems embed and take effect. In most year groups, the vast majority of pupils are reaching the level expected for their age and some are exceeding this. Pupils in Year 6 are on course to attain their whole-school targets.

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	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
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	3

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?

Teaching is satisfactory overall and improving quickly as new systems and the clear direction from senior leaders take effect. Most lessons contain good features and some teaching is outstanding. Teachers are making better use of information about pupils' learning to provide appropriate challenge for different ability groups in the class. When teaching is good or better, pupils have opportunities to work together and engage in practical activities which makes their learning more memorable. Pupils say learning this way is fun and that, 'You learn quickly from each other.' Staff make effective use of their improving knowledge of pupils' learning to provide additional programmes designed to fill gaps and to help pupils make up lost ground. This approach is contributing well to the

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improving rate of progress. In some classes, teachers do not plan enough opportunities for pupils to use their writing and mathematical skills in other subjects. The contribution made by teaching assistants to pupils' learning varies from class-to-class and the school has begun a programme of training to bring more consistency to the quality of support as well as to teaching.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and places appropriate emphasis on basic skills. However, planned opportunities to use these in different subjects are not yet well developed. The curriculum is suitably modified to meet the needs of most pupils and is often well adapted to meet the needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. A programme of personal, social and health education has been introduced which is enabling pupils to appreciate their roles and responsibilities within society. The work of the eco-warrior group in promoting recycling confirms the impact of this provision. The provision for enrichment and after-school activities has grown in the last year, with a range of visits and visitors and some well-supported clubs.

The school has good systems for tracking pupils' progress and well-being, which are helping teachers to know pupils well. This means staff are able to spot any changes in mood or performance and take action to give support to those who need it. Pupils say they feel safe and trust adults to deal with any concerns they have. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those whose circumstances put them at risk of being vulnerable are well supported through appropriate intervention programmes.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has shown determination and skill in stabilising the school and in winning the support of staff and the governing body to her vision for a happy, successful school, whose core values are at the heart of all its work. The senior leadership team has taken effective action to improve the school by introducing new systems which are raising the aspirations of staff and fuelling their ambition to provide the best for each pupil. Staff have implemented many changes in the past Year. Improvements to the quality of teaching and learning are beginning to raise pupils' attainment.

Morale is good because staff are confident that senior leaders have the appropriate vision for the school. Monitoring and evaluation of improvement has fallen mainly to senior leaders in the last year. It has been regular, rigorous and accurate, so that the correct priorities are identified. The headteacher rightly recognises that staff are now ready to play a bigger role in improving the school by taking on leadership roles to help to

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accelerate the rate of improvement; however, they need further training to equip them to do so.

Members of the governing body have given unstinting support to the school through challenging times. They have given very good support to the headteacher, to ensure that her ambitions for the school have a strong foundation, for example, by helping to stabilise the staffing situation. The governing body ensures that staff and pupils are safe and secure on site and that safeguarding requirements are met.

Equal opportunities are soundly promoted, pupils are valued equally and discrimination is not tolerated. The school knows its own community well and has begun to make links with communities further afield.

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	2
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 make a good start in Reception because they feel safe, secure and happy to explore the many exciting and interesting activities that are prepared for them. They quickly develop confidence because staff establish clear routines which allow them to become independent and take a lead in their learning. From starting points that are below expectations for their age, children make good progress to reach at least average levels in all areas of learning by the end of the Reception Year. In their personal and social development, language and communication, and mathematical skills some children now exceed the expected level.

Staff make accurate assessments of children's progress and of their interests and tailor activities to their needs, for example, with the 'space project' and the 'oil truck'. Staff achieve a very good balance of child-initiated and teacher-led learning. Direct teaching is often excellent, because the teacher has very high expectations of what children can do

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and makes learning lively and fun by involving them in challenging activities, which assure greater success. Parents and carers speak highly of the provision, and of the close partnership they have with the Early Years Foundation Stage staff that enables them to effectively support their children's development. Comments such as, 'We are thrilled with our child's learning and enjoyment of life in Reception' are typical. Leadership and management of Early Years Foundation Stage are good, reflecting an astute evaluation of provision and of children's progress, and in setting an ambitious agenda for further improvement.

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 hold positive views of the school and agree that their children are safe and happy in school. A significant minority have concerns about the progress that their children make, the quality of teaching and the way that the school manages unacceptable behaviour. Inspection evidence shows that the school is overcoming the impact of high staff turnover in recent years and now provides a calm and purposeful learning environment for pupils. While behaviour in most classes is at least satisfactory and sometimes good, the inspection found incidents of overly boisterous behaviour at lunchtime, which the school has taken recent action to address. The judgements on teaching and learning are contained in the body of the report and indicate that they are contributing to an improving picture of progress and attainment for pupils.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School, Richmond 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 51 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 163 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	27	53	17	33	6	12	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	18	35	30	59	1	2	1	2
My school informs me about my child's progress	11	22	29	57	6	12	4	8
My child is making enough progress at this school	13	25	25	49	8	16	4	8
The teaching is good at this school	15	29	24	47	10	20	2	4
The school helps me to support my child's learning	10	20	29	57	10	20	2	4
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	11	22	31	61	4	8	1	2
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)	10	20	22	43	6	12	3	6
The school meets my child's particular needs	16	31	22	43	7	14	4	8
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	8	16	23	45	12	24	7	14
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	8	16	28	55	10	20	2	4
The school is led and managed effectively	16	31	22	43	9	18	4	8
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	14	27	25	49	7	14	4	8

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 St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School, Richmond, DL10 7DZ

Thank you for making us welcome and being so helpful when we inspected your school recently, and for sharing your views about your school with us. We have judged that your school is progressing quickly and that it no longer needs extra help. It provides you with a satisfactory education, so that you reach the expected level by the time you leave. We have suggested that you could achieve better in English and mathematics if you had more opportunities to practise your numeracy and literacy skills in different subjects.

Opportunities for activities outside the school day have improved well since your new headteacher joined the school and it is good to know that so many of you are joining in these. You told us that you feel safe in school and think that staff know you and look after you well, which makes a good foundation for your learning.

We were pleased to see that in most lessons you behave well and we could tell that you really enjoy learning when it is challenging and you are allowed to work independently or with a partner. Some of you shared your concerns with us about the behaviour of a very small number of pupils at lunchtime and the lack of respect some of these show to each other and the lunchtime supervisors. We agree with you and your headteacher, who shares your views that these things should be better, and have asked the school to work on creating a stronger community spirit, by involving you, your parents and carers and all staff in the process. We saw that you have a good community spirit in helping others less fortunate than you and in caring for your school and supporting each other in lessons. We also agree with those of you who felt that the school council could do much more to help improve the school and think the suggestion to, 'Get it going again.' is a good one.

Your headteacher, teachers and the governing body are keen to make your school the best it can be, so that you all achieve well. We have suggested that involving more staff in helping the school to improve would make this happen more quickly. You can help by working as hard as you can, by trying your best to help each other to develop respect for everyone and for a very small number of you to behave better at lunchtime.

Yours sincerely

Moirá Fitzpatrick

Lead inspector

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