

St Mary's Lewisham Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100730
Local Authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	354878
Inspection dates	17–18 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Joanna Toulson

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	276
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kate Ward
Headteacher	Ronke Soyombo
Date of previous school inspection	26 March 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 12 lessons taught by 10 teachers, observed an assembly and held meetings with parents, pupils, governors and staff. They observed the school's work and looked at the school improvement plan, minutes of governing body meetings, a range of policies and risk assessments, data relating to pupils' progress and attainment, documentation relating to safeguarding, lesson plans and pupils' work. The questionnaires returned by 99 pupils and 134 parents and carers were also scrutinised.

Inspectors looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The impact of leadership and management on raising standards.
- How effectively the school is closing the attainment gap between vulnerable groups.
- How effectively the school is improving the quality and consistency of teaching and learning.
- How well the school has tackled the improvements needed in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

The number of pupils in the school is decreasing as the school moves to having one class in each year group, rather than mixed aged classes. It is now an average sized primary school. Nearly half the pupils are from Black Caribbean backgrounds with the next largest group being of Black African heritage. There are few pupils at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than the national average. Most of these difficulties relate to behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, autistic spectrum disorders and specific or moderate learning difficulties. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is significantly above average. The school has the Healthy Schools Award and the Activemark. The before-school provision on site is not managed by the governing body and is subject to a separate inspection.

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?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to:

- raising attainment and improving achievement in English and mathematics
- improving the quality of teaching and learning
- improving teachers' use of assessment.

The school has been through a period of considerable turbulence with four headteachers within three years. This uncertainty has contributed to the decline in attainment and achievement. The proportion of pupils who reached expected standards of attainment in both English and mathematics in 2010 was low. However, the appointment of a new headteacher has brought stability to the school. Together with a recently appointed deputy and capable governing body, she has taken decisive action to reverse the trend of declining standards. Actions taken by senior leaders are beginning to raise standards in reading but have not yet impacted sufficiently on the overall attainment and progress of pupils across the school, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Almost all parents say their children enjoy school. While most parents feel that the school keeps their children safe, pupils say they sometimes feel anxious when other pupils become angry or take part in 'play fights' on the playground. Behaviour is generally well managed by adults and is satisfactory; however, some pupils struggle to manage their own behaviour. Pupils have a good understanding about how to keep healthy and have responded well to the school's emphasis on making healthy choices for lunch. Pupils are developing a common sense of values arising from the Christian ethos of the school and assemblies contribute well to this. Pupils are also developing a good knowledge of the different cultures within the school and the local community, but have less understanding of cultural diversity beyond this.

The quality of teaching is inadequate, varies throughout the school and is not ensuring that pupils make consistently satisfactory progress in their work. Senior leaders are aware of this, and have already taken robust action to begin to eradicate inadequate teaching. They have supported individual teachers in order that they can improve their skills. However, too much teaching remains barely satisfactory. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low and work is not well matched to individual pupils' needs. Teaching assistants are not providing strong support to pupils in lessons. Progress of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, although satisfactory, is held back by too few assessments being made to then inform planning.

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Senior leaders are determined to improve outcomes for pupils and have put in place a robust action plan, based on accurate self-evaluation, which they have shared with staff and parents. The school regularly seeks the views of parents and carers and a new Parent Teacher Association is providing an additional channel through which parents can communicate with the school. As a parent said, 'the headteacher is very supportive and accessible'. Safeguarding systems are good and all staff have received good quality training. Governors are very knowledgeable about the school and are well placed to challenge further. This, together with recent improvements in reading, the improvements to the outside area in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the successful actions to support good attendance, demonstrate that the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and achievement in English and mathematics by:
 - ensuring that planning provides for a coherent progression of learning.
- By September 2011, improve the quality of teaching and learning so that all teaching is securely satisfactory or better by ensuring that:
 - the pace of learning in all lessons is lively and new learning is introduced appropriately quickly
 - activities are well matched to what the teacher wants the pupils to learn
 - teaching assistants have the necessary skills to support pupils effectively.
- By September 2011, improve teachers' use of assessment so that:
 - assessment is used to match work to the needs of individuals and to provide appropriate levels of challenge
 - marking consistently gives pupils guidance about how to move their learning on.
- By December 2011, improve achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - carrying out more frequent assessments and ensuring these are used to match the activities to individual children.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

Children enter Nursery with skills and knowledge slightly below what is expected for their age, particularly in their communication and language skills. Attainment at the end of Year 6 was significantly below average in 2009 and 2010, having declined steadily since 2007. There has also been a downward trend in the progress that pupils make and in 2010, boys, pupils eligible for free school meals and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities made significantly less progress than their peers nationally. As a result, pupils are not well enough prepared for the next stage in their education. Lesson observations and pupils' work show that attainment remains low and progress, although stronger in Year 6, where teaching is better, is inconsistent through the school. The introduction of guided reading texts and daily guided reading is, however, improving standards in reading. Good learning and progress was observed in a mathematics lesson where pupils responded well to effective questioning by the teacher and improved their knowledge

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about co-ordinates. In weaker lessons, where the pace of learning is slow, pupils spend too long recapping prior learning. For example, in a science lesson pupils were repeating work which they had already covered. Learning is also hindered when the activity is not well matched to what the teacher wants the pupils to learn. For example, in an English lesson, pupils spent too long writing the objective of the lesson and the address for a postcard, rather than using the different sentence starters that the teacher had modelled at the start of the lesson.

Pupils take on responsibility within the school, for example, all Year 6 pupils have the opportunity to become prefects. Pupils have performed music in the community; they raise money for charity and distribute food through their harvest festival. However, pupils do not regularly assess how well they are doing against clear criteria. This caps their independent learning.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
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	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
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?

Classrooms are bright and include appropriate learning prompts. Pupils' work is celebrated in engaging displays around the school. Teaching overall, however, is inadequate. Too often, teaching assistants do not support pupils effectively. The progression of learning through planning is not sufficiently rigorous, with too many concepts covered superficially. This is hindering pupils' ability to build securely on their learning. Work is not well matched to meet the needs of individual pupils and so too many pupils find the work

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either too easy or too hard. This is because teachers often do not make good use of assessment information when planning work. While there is some good marking of pupils' work, this is not consistent and so pupils are not always given sufficient guidance about how to improve their work. The curriculum is satisfactory and pupils have opportunities to learn from the local environment, for example, the local theatre. A more creative curriculum is being developed to improve English and mathematics links across different subjects. The school provides a welcoming environment and there is evident care by the staff towards the pupils. Potentially vulnerable pupils are supported effectively, through, for example, frequent meetings which include a governor as well as senior leaders.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	4
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
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, together with the able deputy, have a clear vision for improvement and this has driven their actions so far. The lack of robust assessment data prior to Autumn 2010 has meant that the school has not been able to track and evaluate the progress of different groups of pupils and ensure equality of opportunity. However, the recently introduced system to track pupil progress has now enabled the school to set targets for pupils. Additional support, such as one-to-one tuition and 'booster' classes, is being provided, although it is too early to be able to fully evaluate the impact of this. The school is yet to analyse the participation of different groups in school life, for example, attendance at clubs. The new Inclusion Manager has made a good start to the role and there is now more accurate identification of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However she recognises that it is too soon for the actions taken to have had a significant impact. There is now a rigorous monitoring system in place with the quality of teaching being monitored through lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work although the impact of this is yet to be seen in better teaching. The headteacher provides good information to the governing body which enables them to hold the school to account for tackling important weaknesses. This is ensuring, for example, that good practice for safeguarding is in place in all areas of the school. The school successfully promotes community cohesion in school and the local community, but beyond this impact is limited.

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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	4
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	4
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	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Both Nursery and Reception provide a welcoming and secure learning environment. Relationships are positive and this helps children to make choices about the activities they engage in. It also enables children to feel confident to share their concerns with the adults working with them. Significant recent improvements in the environment provide children with a broad range of interesting and stimulating activities which encourage them to explore and use their imagination through play. Opportunities for physical development are also well planned. Children make satisfactory progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage. Although staff carry out assessments of children's learning, these are insufficiently frequent and are not used sharply enough to plan activities and interactions which will move individuals' learning on more quickly. Adults are not always well deployed. Leadership, although temporary, is satisfactory.

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

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Views of parents and carers

Most parents and carers are supportive of the school and feel that their children are making enough progress and that teaching is good. The inspection found that progress is not yet consistently satisfactory because teaching is not yet good enough. A few parents and carers felt that the school did not prepare their children well for the future and the inspectors found that too many pupils do not reach standards of attainment in English and mathematics by the end of their time at St Mary's Lewisham that prepare them satisfactorily for the next stage of their education.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Mary's Lewisham Church of England Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 134 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 276 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	82	61	50	37	2	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	61	46	67	50	2	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	59	44	69	51	4	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	55	41	67	50	8	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	63	47	66	49	4	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	54	40	71	53	6	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	43	32	79	59	5	4	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)	41	31	66	49	7	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	41	31	80	60	5	4	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	54	40	64	48	8	6	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	37	28	79	59	8	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	47	35	79	59	3	2	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	58	43	70	52	1	1	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

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.



18th March 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St Mary's Lewisham Church of England Primary School,
Lewisham, SE13 6NX**

Thank you for all your help during the recent inspection of your school. We have decided that your school needs a Notice to Improve. This means that although there are things that your school does well, there are some important things that need to get better. Your headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the governors work well together and we are sure that they will be able to make the improvements which are needed. Your attendance is above average and you have a good knowledge of how to keep healthy. We found that the staff care for you and make sure you are safe. However, we found that many of you do not do as well as you need to in English and mathematics and we have asked the school to help you do even better. This is what we have asked the staff in school to do:

- help you to do better in your English and mathematics by making sure they plan lessons which link together well
- help the youngest children achieve better through more regular checking to see how they are doing
- Make your lessons even better, for example by making sure that:
 - teachers use the information they have about how well you are doing to match work for you that is not too easy or too hard
 - adults working with your teacher know precisely how to help you
 - marking always gives you guidance about how to improve your work.

You can help by always working hard and telling your teacher if the work is too easy or too difficult for you. On behalf of the inspection team, I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Joanna Toulson

Lead Inspector

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