

St Matthew's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	125235
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	381068
Inspection dates	7–8 March 2012
Lead inspector	Eileen Chadwick

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	474
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	William Alexander
Headteacher	Janet Lightfoot
Date of previous school inspection	1 July 2009
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Eileen Chadwick

Additional inspector

John Collins

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Gary Kirkley

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors spent 14 hours observing teaching, which included visiting 30 lessons and observing 17 teachers. The inspectors heard groups of pupils' reading in Years 1 and 2, and in Key Stage 2, as well as having meetings with pupils. Meetings were also held with school staff and representatives of the governing body. The inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work and looked at documentation, including policies, the school improvement plan, pupils' work, and records of their learning and progress. In addition, inspectors considered the responses to questionnaires from 273 parents and carers as well as those submitted by pupils and staff.

Information about the school

St Matthew's is much larger than the average-sized primary school. Approximately half of the pupils come from White British backgrounds, whilst others represent a diverse range of minority ethnic heritages. One third of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The percentage of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is above average and their needs include autism, emotional and behavioural difficulties and literacy difficulties. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is much higher than average and includes the 11 pupils in the Key Stage 2 specialist unit for pupils with autism. The Early Years Foundation Stage children are taught in single-age Nursery and Reception classes. The school meets the government's current floor standard which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Whilst in the past, an above average proportion of pupils have joined or left the school at other than the usual times, the rate of pupil mobility is now similar to most schools. The school provides a daily breakfast club.

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	4
Achievement of pupils	4
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key 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 the attainment of White British pupils by accelerating their progress, especially in literacy, and ensuring teaching is consistently good or better for all pupils.
- Although improving, the school is still addressing longstanding underachievement and for this reason its effectiveness is not satisfactory. Over time, pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 has been low and their achievement inadequate. In the current Year 6, pupils' attainment is broadly average but their spelling is relatively weaker. Disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress overall. Pupils in the specialist unit make consistently good progress. While lower-attaining pupils, mainly White British, now make satisfactory progress they do not always demonstrate a good grasp of phonics (knowledge of letters and their sounds). Their achievement over time is inadequate.
- Teaching is satisfactory overall. It has improved sharply in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in mathematics in Key Stage 2. Occasionally, assessment is not used well when teachers are planning lessons so that activities are too easy for more-able pupils or too hard for the lower attainers.
- Behaviour is good and has improved markedly in recent years. The school cares for pupils very well and they feel very safe. Attendance is improving but remains a little below average. The incidence of serious misbehaviour, bullying or racism is rare.
- The effectiveness of leaders and managers is satisfactory. The headteacher has

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raised expectations of what pupils should achieve. The actions taken, including the management of the staff's performance, have improved teaching and pupils' behaviour. The monitoring of teaching does not always focus enough on the learning of groups of pupils, which limits school leaders in evaluating the impact of initiatives on raising achievement. Nevertheless, with the improvements made, the school demonstrates it has the capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' achievement so that it is at least good or better by:
 - improving the progress of those from White British backgrounds and of lower-attaining pupils' in reading and writing by systematically building their phonics skills
 - improving writing in Key Stage 1 and strengthening pupils' ability to spell accurately throughout Key Stages 1 and 2
 - improving attendance by working closely with families to ensure they appreciate the impact of regular attendance on their children's future.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that all pupils make good or better progress in lessons by December 2012 by:
 - ensuring there is a strong focus on building reading and writing skills in literacy lessons
 - using assessment information to ensure lessons build upon pupils' previous learning
 - providing opportunities for lower-attaining pupils to read every day.
- Ensure that all leaders and managers evaluate the impact of initiatives on improving the academic outcomes for pupils rigorously by July 2012 by:
 - ensuring that the school improvement plan has clear targets for improving pupils' attainment
 - ensuring that lesson monitoring consistently focuses on how well teaching meets the learning needs of different groups, including White British pupils, and accelerates pupils' progress if they fall behind.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Although pupils make satisfactory progress in lessons, their achievement over time is inadequate. Most parents and carers feel their children are making good progress but inspectors found that there are still areas of significant underachievement in literacy to address.

Children's skills and abilities on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage are well below those found nationally. A minority are at early stages of learning English or

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have weaker communication skills. Good progress in Nursery and Reception, with outstanding progress in language for communication and thinking, lifts their attainment to broadly average on entry to Year 1. Satisfactory but uneven progress in Key Stage 1 results in broadly average attainment in reading and mathematics and below average attainment in writing. Pupils' attainment in Year 6 is now broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. Good progress in mathematics in Key Stage 2 enables pupils to apply their skills to real-life problems.

In reading and writing, although most groups now make good progress lower-attaining pupils, mainly White British, make only satisfactory progress and are hindered by gaps in their previous learning, including inadequate progress made in learning phonics. Spelling is a relative weakness for pupils of all abilities. Support programmes do not help less-able pupils to quickly build all the skills needed to read more-complex words. There is no significant difference between the achievement of girls and boys or later entrants to the school. Pupils' communication skills develop well, and by Year 6, many speak confidently, including those who speak English as an additional language.

In Key Stages 1 and 2, progress sometimes slows in literacy lessons when the tasks set are not matched to pupils' needs. For example, in a Year 1 phonics lesson, most pupils successfully learned to blend sounds to read words but the progress of lower attainers slowed when tasks became too hard. In literacy in Key Stage 2, the progress made by lower-attaining pupils' occasionally slows when they are not given enough opportunity to practise their phonics skills or to apply them when writing. For example, in Year 6, most wrote successfully about saving the environment, but lower attainers made repeated errors as they were not reminded of letter sounds before writing.

Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is not strong enough to promote consistently good progress as pupils move through the school. Good features include good relationships and teachers' management of pupils' behaviour. Throughout the school, practical activities and information and communication technology are used well to help pupils learn. Pupils have challenging targets, teachers provide clear explanations of them and work is marked so pupils know how to improve.

Teaching is consistently good throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage and the specialist unit for pupils with autism. In Nursery and Reception, a good balance is struck between children learning for themselves and the direct teaching of basic skills by adults. The stimulating classrooms, indoors and outside, fully reflect the required areas of learning for children in this age range. Children systematically develop their phonics and reading and writing skills through daily focused literacy tasks as well as through good quality, purposeful play. In the specialist unit, the calm atmosphere and well-matched work promote pupils' good progress in literacy and numeracy. These pupils are well supported in mainstream lessons, which supplement the good help they get in the unit.

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In the best lessons, teachers use the accurate assessment information and their secure subject knowledge to plan well-matched and challenging activities. For example, in a mathematics session in Year 5, pupils of all abilities developed calculation skills well through good discussion and targeted questioning. However, the teaching does not always build on what pupils already know or have learned and there is not always enough direct teaching of literacy. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils spent too long in discussions and there was not enough direct teaching of reading and writing. Reading records show that teachers do not ensure that low-attaining pupils read often enough to consolidate and extend their reading skills.

A revised mathematics curriculum has strengthened the teaching of number skills and problem-solving. Teaching in mathematics is often strong in Key Stage 2 because teachers have good subject knowledge. In less effective mathematics lessons, more-able pupils are not consistently challenged.

The broad curriculum is used well to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, Year 2 pupils developed their curiosity and sense of wonder about nocturnal animals when they eagerly researched information from books and computers about the habits of bats, hedgehogs and owls.

Most parents and carers expressed their satisfaction with the quality of teaching and say that it is improving. They are particularly pleased with teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage and specialist unit. The inspection team agrees with this positive view.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils and staff say that pupils typically behave well in the playground and in lessons. Most parents and carers are pleased with pupils' behaviour and say how much it has improved in the last few years. The inspection findings echo these views. The school is a very harmonious community, where pupils of all backgrounds work and play together well. There is a calm and happy atmosphere in lessons, at lunchtimes and at playtimes. Pupils conduct themselves safely around the school site and their behaviour in whole-school activities, for example in assembly, is exemplary. Pupils are friendly and eager to learn. Even when teaching is undemanding or not well matched to their learning needs, they usually concentrate well but, very occasionally, lose concentration and start to become distracted.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage learn to take some responsibility for their own learning from the earliest days, often sustaining concentration well when learning independently because there are many interesting activities. Pupils across the school are courteous and their well-established understanding of right from wrong is developed well through consistent behaviour management. Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties are helped very well and learn to adjust to the staff's expectations.

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Pupils say they feel very safe and know how to keep themselves safe. They understand different types of bullying, including cyber-bullying. They say there is very little bullying and that they trust adults to deal with any that might occur. Senior leaders' concerted approach to improving behaviour has led to a great reduction in exclusions, with none in the last year. Pupils are punctual and attendance is improving due to the school's robust procedures. Attendance is currently just below average and a few pupils do not attend school as regularly as they should because their parents and carers keep them away for too many days.

Leadership and management

The headteacher provides a strong strategic direction and is well supported by the senior team and staff. She has improved self-evaluation and monitoring systems. All teachers are now involved in regularly analysing pupils' progress and their evaluations are more accurate. School leaders' initial emphases were, rightly, on consistent behaviour management, professional development for improving teachers' subject skills and the accuracy of assessments. The school has rightly identified the need to improve the achievement of White British pupils. However, senior leaders' monitoring does not always identify how well different groups, including White British pupils, are learning. Middle leaders' roles are now quickly developing and they have begun to observe teaching.

The satisfactory curriculum focuses on pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, coupled with a rich array of practical activities to bring learning alive. However, systems for listening to pupils read vary in different classes and are not always robust enough to improve the reading skills of lower-attaining pupils.

The governing body works effectively with senior leaders and is suitably challenging to make sure that their plans remain on track. The school improvement plan focuses on the right priorities but has a limited focus on the levels of attainment pupils should be striving for. This hampers leaders in their evaluation of initiatives for raising attainment. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are robust and include all the required checks on staff and child protection training. There is no evidence of discrimination but White British pupils have not consistently performed as well as they should so equality of opportunity is not sufficiently well catered for.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

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

Overall effectiveness of schools

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

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

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

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

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

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

Common terminology used by inspectors

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

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



9 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Matthew's CofE Primary School, Redhill RH1 1JF

This letter is to thank you for your help in the school's recent inspection and to tell you what we found out. Although the school is improving, it is not as good as it should be. The school has been given a notice to improve because there are things that need to get better quickly. Inspectors will come back to check that the school is making enough progress. This is what we found out.

- Not all pupils do as well as they should in reading, writing and spelling.
- Children in Nursery and Reception make a good start to their education.
- Pupils in Sun Class make good progress in literacy and numeracy and we saw how much they enjoyed physical education.
- Pupils in Key Stage 2 make good progress in mathematics.
- You told us you enjoy school and that pupils are well behaved. We agree, and also find that you are very polite and get on very well with each other..
- Most of you come to school regularly but too many pupils miss too much time.
- The headteacher and staff are working hard to improve the school.

To help your school improve quickly, we have asked the headteacher, governors and staff to do the following things.

- Improve your skills in reading, writing and spelling.
- Improve the attendance of some pupils. You can help by coming to school as much as you can.
- Make sure you all get exactly the right work to do in lessons, which is not too hard and not too easy.
- Ensure school leaders, teachers in charge of subjects and members of the governing body keep a closer check on how well you are doing.

We hope you will continue to enjoy school and carry on working hard.

Yours sincerely

Eileen Chadwick
Lead inspector

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