

Saint Mary RC Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100499
Local Authority	Kensington and Chelsea
Inspection number	354856
Inspection dates	15–16 June 2011
Reporting inspector	James Henry

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	383
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Max De Lotbiniere
Headteacher	Kathleen Williams (executive headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	8 November 2007
School address	East Row London W10 5AW
Telephone number	020 8969 0321
Fax number	0208964 3122
Email address	info@st-marys.rbkc.sch.uk

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	15–16 June 2011
Inspection number	354856

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

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

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons and observed 12 teachers. Meetings were held with senior staff, a group of pupils, a representative from the local authority and the Chair of the Governing Body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at school improvement plans, reports from the School Improvement Partner, policies in particular regarding attendance and safeguarding, minutes of governing body meetings and assessment information that tracked pupils' progress. Questionnaires from pupils, staff and 146 parents and carers were received and analysed.

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

- Pupils' levels of attainment, particularly at the end of Year 6, and the progress that pupils make across the school, especially in writing compared with reading and mathematics.
- The extent to which inconsistencies in the quality of teaching identified at the last inspection have been addressed.
- The accuracy of self-evaluation and the effectiveness of leaders at all levels, including the governing body, in writing and implementing whole school improvement plans to raise the achievement of all groups of pupils.
- The extent to which average levels of attendance have an impact on raising pupils' achievement.

Information about the school

St Mary's is larger than the average sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. The number of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is below average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. The large majority of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds, especially Black British Caribbean. Almost half of the pupils speak English as an additional language. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in one Nursery and one Reception class. Since the last inspection the school has been working in collaboration with another local primary school with an executive headteacher and an associate headteacher taking joint responsibility for St Mary's. The school has achieved Healthy Schools status, Artsmark Gold, Sing Up and Spanish School of the Year awards.

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 is a good school. It has improved significantly since the last inspection due to the sustained efforts of determined leaders at all levels. Progress of pupils across the school has improved and is good, although there are still a few pockets of unevenness in how quickly pupils learn in Key Stage 2. Also pupils make better progress over time in reading and mathematics than in writing.

Attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 has been broadly average. However standards are rising quickly across the school due to the increasing progress being made by all groups of pupils. The 2010 school assessments show that pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in English and mathematics rose to above the national average, especially in the number of more able pupils achieving the higher levels. Indications are that results in 2011 are likely to show above average attainment by the end of Year 6.

Increasing pupil progress reflects improvements in the overall quality of teaching. Pupils are taught well and are keen to learn. However, in a few lessons observed the pace of learning slowed due to pupils having to sit and listen for too long and not being fully involved in their own learning. Also pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to develop the skills needed to be responsible for their own learning, especially through their use of information and communication technology (ICT). Nonetheless, the improvements in the consistency of good teaching are a positive reflection of the accuracy of school self-evaluation. This is informing leaders at all levels, ensuring the development of effective school improvement plans which identify and tackle areas of weakness. As a result, strategies to address any underperformance are carefully targeted to ensure all groups of pupils make good progress, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities or speak English as an additional language. This is having a positive impact on raising the achievement of pupils across the school. Members of the governing body are also fully involved in the self-evaluation process. They are now providing challenge and holding school leaders to account for their performance. As well as supporting the school, they are also providing a strong strategic direction in establishing an effective leadership structure throughout the school so that implementing improvements is not the responsibility of just a few senior leaders. The establishment of a new leadership structure, which has been successful in improving the quality of self-evaluation, raising the overall quality of teaching and increasing the rate of pupil progress that has led to rising attainment, shows that the school has a good capacity for sustained improvement.

Good relationships and strong pastoral arrangements mean that pupils are safe and happy at school. Pupils have every confidence that staff will deal with any concerns or difficulties they may have. Behaviour both in classes and around the school is good with pupils from different backgrounds mixing well and showing respect and empathy for each other. Pupils' attendance is average. This is due to parents and carers taking their children out of

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

school during term-time which is hindering the achievement of a few pupils. The school has put in place strategies to raise levels of attendance and enable pupils who miss school to catch up but these have not been fully effective in ensuring that these pupils have the opportunity to achieve their potential.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment by;
 - ensuring that pupils have more opportunities to become responsible for their own learning, particularly through the use of ICT
 - increasing pupils' progress in writing to match their progress in reading and mathematics.
- Ensure that all teaching is consistently good through maintaining a good pace of learning throughout all lessons with an appropriate balance between teachers' input and pupils' active involvement in their learning.
- Raise the level of attendance by ensuring the systems already in place are more rigorously applied.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils' good enjoyment of all aspects of school is an important element in their good achievement. For example in a Key Stage 2 lesson pupils were enjoying their learning by sharing their responses about including embedded clauses in their writing. In a music lesson pupils were enjoying using percussion instruments to coordinate the tempo of a beat. An assembly based on achieving well, which was shared with parents and carers, was led and directed by pupils who wrote their own 'rap' song. Children enter Nursery with skills and knowledge below the levels normally expected and leave in Year 6 with broadly average attainment. However, attainment is rising due to all groups of pupils, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds, making good progress overall across both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

The development of pupils' personal qualities is good. For example, older pupils help younger ones in the playground through a buddy system. The Catholic spirit of the school ensures that spiritual development is promoted well with pupils knowing and respecting other world faiths and cultures. Pupils effectively contribute to their school and local community and willingly take on responsibilities around the school. There is an effective school council which is involved in the life of the school and has raised money to buy equipment and support countries, for example Japan and Haiti, which have suffered natural disasters.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and live healthily which is a reflection of the school's Healthy Schools award. For example, through working with road safety officers, they understand about being safe on the roads, especially when riding their bicycles. They understand the importance of eating healthy food and the damage that drugs and alcohol can cause. Even though their attendance is average, pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education due to their rising attainment, the good progress they make in their basic skills and their good personal development.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for 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	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

A sustained and successful focus on improving the quality of teaching by senior and middle leaders is now benefiting pupils. While some minor satisfactory aspects remain, teaching is good overall. Teachers successfully assess and track pupils' progress to plan lessons that meet the needs of the different ability groups in classes. There is a consistent approach to teaching in lessons, for example, in sharing with pupils what they are expected to learn and explaining to pupils how they can judge if they have been successful in their learning. Occasionally the pace of learning slows when pupils are not sufficiently challenged, for example, being asked to copy questions from a worksheet. Nonetheless, teachers make good use of resources such as the interactive whiteboards to make learning interesting. 'Teachers help us rise to our full potential', was one pupil's comment.

The school has worked effectively to adapt the curriculum and provide a theme-based approach that integrates different subjects together. This provides pupils with opportunities to practise their basic skills across the curriculum rather than just in literacy or numeracy lessons. In practice, the application of numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects is not as well developed as it is for writing. However, increased opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in other subjects have not been in place long enough to improve the rate of pupils' progress in this area of learning to that of reading and mathematics. The curriculum is enriched through the school's Sing Up and Spanish School

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

of the Year awards. As a result there are strong links with the Royal College of Music and a school in Spain which mean that music and the learning of Spanish are strengths of the curriculum. Pupils also willingly take up sporting opportunities through attending a variety of different clubs after school, such as football and netball.

The school provides a nurturing learning environment where pupils with additional needs are well supported by skilled school-based staff and the use of external expertise such as the Family Support Worker. Vulnerable pupils are well integrated into the school and intervention schemes such as an intensive reading programme are used effectively to ensure they can access the curriculum. Transition arrangements are successful for both the induction into school and in preparing pupils for their move to secondary education.

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?

Following a period of uncertainty, the school now has a strong and stable leadership team. The governing body has provided good strategic direction through working with another school and the local authority to effectively establish a new senior leadership team. The executive headteacher and associate headteacher, supported by the governing body, have been very successful in developing the roles of other senior and middle leaders so that the monitoring and evaluating of the work of the school is now more evenly distributed. This has been an important factor in the successful drive to improve teaching and raise pupil achievement. It has also led to a shared ambition among staff and governors to succeed even further. As a result the governing body is now providing more challenge in holding the school to account for its performance.

A consequence of this shared ambition is the effectiveness of the school in ensuring that all groups of pupils have an equal opportunity to succeed and this inclusion means that there are effective procedures in place to tackle any discrimination. This supports good community cohesion within the school and the various awards achieved mean that there are good links with other schools both nationally and abroad. Consequently pupils from different backgrounds interact well.

Relationships with parents and carers are good. They are kept well informed about their children's progress and the school has set up a community room which is used on a weekly basis to house a parent/carers and toddler group.

There are effective safeguarding procedures and policies in place which are regularly reviewed. Risk assessments are thorough. Staff are well trained in child protection

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

procedures and have been appropriately checked to ensure that they are suitable to work in school.

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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

'I have seen my child's English really develop since his start; the support and understanding is fantastic.' This comment from a parent/carer represents the positive view that parents and carers have of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Relationships with parents and carers are good and staff make every effort to ensure that parents and carers are involved in their children's learning. All groups of children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress. As a result, the large majority achieve the expected goals in all areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1. Children develop good early speaking, reading and writing skills across the setting due to being taught well, and because of good relationships and good quality support they learn quickly. For example, one Reception class child quite confidently explained that 'five take away five makes nought'. Teachers assess children's progress regularly through observations and this informs further planning. While planning is in place it is sometimes too brief and links with the different areas of learning are not always clear. There is a good balance between teacher-directed and child-initiated activities using both the indoor and outdoor learning areas. This safe and secure environment helps develop children's independence and cooperation with each other. Consequently, children behave well and have positive attitudes to learning. Leadership and management are good and this ensures that effective safeguarding procedures are in place. Also the Early Years Foundation Stage leader monitors staff to ensure they have a good understanding of the different areas of learning and how children learn effectively.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	2
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

Approximately 35% of parents and carers returned questionnaires, which is about an average return rate, although not all completed each question. The overwhelming majority said that their children enjoyed school, that the teaching was good and that they were happy with their children's experience at school. Most parents and carers felt that the school was effectively managed and led. A few considered that the school did not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Evidence during the inspection found that pupils' behaviour was good both around the school and in lessons and that the school has effective procedures to deal with any unacceptable behaviour that may occur.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Mary's RC 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 146 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 383 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	101	70	43	29	2	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	92	64	53	36	0	0	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	84	59	59	41	3	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	80	56	59	41	5	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	76	53	66	46	2	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	74	52	66	48	3	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	63	44	79	55	1	1	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)	49	34	77	54	6	4	2	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	55	38	73	51	8	6	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	58	40	72	51	11	8	2	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	48	33	75	53	9	6	3	2
The school is led and managed effectively	60	42	68	48	7	5	3	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	89	61	53	37	1	1	1	1

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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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.



17 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Mary RC Primary School, North Kensington, London W10 5AW

I am writing to thank you for making us feel welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed watching you work well with each other and your teachers in lessons. Your school gives you a good education. Attainment you achieve by the end of Year 6 has been broadly the same as other schools nationally. However, this is changing quickly due to the hard work of the adults at your school. Here are some of the things we found out during our time at your school.

- You enjoy school because it is a friendly place in which to learn. You behave well, and respect each other's backgrounds and cultures.
- You work and play happily together, with the older pupils helping the younger ones, and you feel safe in school.
- You are proud of your school and are keen to learn and do your best.
- You thoroughly enjoy the opportunities to take part in different sporting, artistic and musical activities.
- Adults look after you very well and make sure you are very safe.
- Your parents and carers fully support the school and think the school gives you a good start to your education.

To make sure that your school improves we have asked teachers and other adults who have responsibility for your school to do three things.

- Raise the levels that you reach in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 through:
 - giving you more opportunities to develop the skills that will help you learn by yourselves, especially through using ICT
 - making sure you make as much progress in your writing as you do in reading and mathematics.
- Make sure that teachers in all your lessons help you to learn quickly by finding a good balance between explaining what you have to learn and you starting your work.
- Improve some pupils' attendance so that everyone has the chance to learn as well as they can and achieve their potential.

You can help by working hard and continuing to be friendly, polite and cheerful and, importantly, have good attendance at school. I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

James Henry

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.