

St Mary's and St John's C of E Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103119
Local Authority	Barnet
Inspection number	376822
Inspection dates	5–6 October 2011
Reporting inspector	David Radomsky

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	420
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev John Hawkins
Headteacher	Dee Oelman
Date of previous school inspection	15–16 May 2007
School address	Prothero Gardens Hendon London NW4 3SL
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They observed teaching and learning in 21 lessons taught by 16 teachers, and meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, parents, carers and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised policies, exercise books, monitoring information, safeguarding procedures, data about past and recent performance and the school's improvement plans. The team analysed 220 parental questionnaires, 27 completed by staff and 116 by pupils.

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

- How effectively are the 2011 improvements in English being sustained, and how is the school addressing the recent dip in attainment at Level 4+ in mathematics at the end of Year 6?
- How effectively does the school support the achievement and personal development of its pupils whose circumstances may make them more vulnerable, especially those that join at other than the usual times?
- What is the impact of the school's strategies to improve attendance?

Information about the school

St Mary's and St John's C of E Primary School is a larger than average-sized school. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those whose first language is not English is well above average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average and the number who join or leave the school other than at the usual time is above average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, mainly experiencing difficulties with speech, language and communication needs, is lower than usual. The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs is higher than normal. The school has achieved a number of accreditations, including, since the previous inspection, the Healthy Schools and full International School awards. The school is one of the first in the country recently to receive the Get Set accreditation in recognition of its work in promoting the Olympic and Paralympic values. There is a breakfast club and an after-school club, neither of which is managed by the governing body and so not within the remit of this 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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school which plays an important part in the life of the local community. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding, as reflected in the school's International and Get Set awards. Pupils develop self-confidence very well and are extremely polite, thoughtful and supportive of each other. This results in a highly positive and nurturing school culture. They make a good contribution to their school and local communities and, as one parent said, 'I feel part of a community. My child is happy and developing values I strongly approve of.'

Outstanding systems for pastoral care, guidance and support ensure that pupils feel very safe in school. They adopt healthy lifestyles, reflected in the Healthy Schools award, and attendance is above average and increasing over time. Through accurate identification and effective support systems, the school ensures that most pupils for whom English is an additional language and those who have special educational needs and/disabilities including speech, language and communication needs, as well as those joining the school other than at the usual times, achieve well.

The good curriculum is well adjusted to meet the needs and interests of most pupils. However, there are insufficient opportunities to further develop numeracy skills for the very small minority of pupils making less progress than their peers.

Good teaching, which accounts for most lessons seen in the inspection, contributes well to the good progress pupils make. Occasionally learning is passive and lacks sufficient challenge and pace. Consequently, progress in those lessons slows. Pupils are generally given targets for improvement and good guidance on how to enhance the quality of their work, especially in English. In some instances, however, insufficient opportunities are given to pupils to respond to and follow up on teachers' comments and learn from their mistakes.

The Early Years Foundation Stage provides a welcoming environment which enables children to make satisfactory progress. However, questioning is not regularly used well enough to develop children's speaking and listening skills at a faster rate. Additionally, learning is limited as assessments are not always sharp enough to inform effective planning to ensure consistently good progress for all.

The school knows itself well through good self-evaluation which has led to effective planning. As a result of well-targeted actions, much has improved since the previous

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inspection. Attendance has increased and, following two years of broadly average attainment in English at the end of Year 6, progress accelerated significantly last year so that in 2011 attainment in English was high. The strategies to improve English continue to consolidate these improvements and leaders have begun to take effective action to secure a higher proportion of pupils attaining Level 4+ in mathematics in the current Year 6 cohort. Work seen in lessons and in pupils' books confirms the school's own analysis which shows that across the year groups, rates of progress are good overall and sometimes outstanding in both English and mathematics. Good systems are in place for tracking pupils' achievements and for supporting those who are not meeting expectations. As a result, all groups make similar progress to their peers and attain well. Senior and middle leaders support teachers effectively to develop their skills, but some middle leaders, however, do not always use performance data consistently to monitor and evaluate pupils' progress. Senior leaders have identified that the opportunities available for monitoring by the Early Years Foundation Stage leader are too infrequent to ensure that improvements in provision and outcomes are made rapidly enough. Consequently they have planned to increase the capacity of leadership in the phase. The school has consolidated recent improvements and this, combined with strong support from the governing body, demonstrates that the school's capacity to improve further is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate children's learning and progress across the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - using regular and frequent assessments to ascertain current levels of attainment and plan activities to accelerate children's learning
 - ensuring all adults regularly use questions effectively and consistently to extend children's speaking, listening and thinking skills
 - ensuring provision is regularly monitored and improvements are made.
- Increase the rate of progress so that attainment is consistently above national averages at the end of Key Stage 1 and high at the end of Key Stage 2 in both English and mathematics by:
 - drawing on good practice to strengthen the quality and consistency of all teaching to ensure pace, rigour and challenge for all pupils in lessons
 - ensuring that activities in mathematics lessons are consistently planned to meet the needs of all pupils
 - ensuring that all pupils are fully aware of their targets and that they have sufficient opportunities to respond to their teachers' comments for improvement
 - ensuring that middle leaders focus sharply on the learning of all pupils through effective monitoring and evaluation supported by a robust use of performance data.

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Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils are proud of their school and enjoy their lessons a great deal. As one pupil said, representing the views of many, 'I enjoy learning and I am getting better and better.' Pupils collaborate very well when working in groups or in pairs. For example, in a Year 6 English lesson, pupils supported each other to enhance the quality of their written responses to what the character in a picture on the interactive computer whiteboard might be thinking or saying. They value the opportunities to assess each other's written work in their exercise books, and in receiving suggestions for further improvement from their peers.

The quality of learning seen in lessons during the inspection was good overall with some outstanding elements. In an outstanding Year 2 mathematics lesson pupils made rapid progress as teachers ensured that activities engaged the interest of all pupils by relating the mathematics to real-life situations, such as working out the costing in planning the menu for a dinner party. Groups of children with learning difficulties and those with English as an additional language were supported very effectively by other adults, and, with the work tailored to their specific needs they too made outstanding progress. The work seen in pupils' books confirmed the school's own analysis that pupils are achieving well. Pupils enter the school with average age-related skills and abilities and make good and sometimes accelerated progress to attain above average standards overall by the end of Year 6. All groups make at least good progress similar to their peers, including those with English as an additional language, all minority ethnic groups, those who join the school later than the usual times and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Pupils value the wide range of opportunities to take on responsibilities in school and in contributing to the wider community. For instance, Year 6 peer mentors support any lonely pupils in the playground and engage them in activities. Pupils are proud of the money they raise for a range of charities such as during Jeans for Genes day and for the British Heart Foundation. They particularly enjoy singing, and the school's choirs perform at the Royal Albert Hall and in local festivals. It is a source of great pride to the entire school community that pupils recently won the Barnet Young Gardeners of 2011 competition for their work on the school's gardens.

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	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2

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

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The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Teachers have a strong rapport with their pupils and have established outstanding behaviour in lessons both of which make a positive contribution to learning. Teachers skilfully use a range of creative resources to capture pupils' imaginations. In the best lessons seen, teachers plan for the learning needs of all pupils, set a good pace and regularly assess how well pupils are learning. Teaching assistants are well deployed and make a very strong contribution to learning. Occasionally teachers miss opportunities to engage all pupils in the learning, the pace is slow and teachers talk for too long. As a result, pupils' learning and progress are slower than in the more successful lessons. In the Early Years Foundation Stage the questioning of children is not regularly used sharply enough and assessment information is not used effectively enough to plan work that is consistently challenging.

The curriculum is well organised and enriched with a range of additional opportunities. These include residential visits as well as opportunities to engage in sporting and performing arts activities. The quality of opportunities ensures that pupils enjoy a wide variety of stimulating experiences, which helps to support their achievement and personal development effectively. Themes, such as Life during World War Two, which includes a visit to the Royal Air Force Museum, making gas masks in art and writing suitcase labels as evacuees, effectively engage pupils in their learning and increase their enjoyment of learning across the curriculum. There are still however, some missed opportunities in planning to fully exploit pupils' numeracy skills, especially in fully engaging the few who make less progress than their peers.

Staff have excellent knowledge of each of their pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. Strong links with families, partnerships with agencies, early identification of support needs and carefully planned provision combine to enable pupils who experience difficulties to make good progress. As a result, attainment is above average and in some cases high, behaviour is outstanding and persistent absence is rare as are the number of exclusions. Attendance is above average and rising.

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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	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The school benefits from the dedicated leadership provided by the headteacher who is respected and highly regarded by all of the school's community. The new deputy headteacher is bringing additional energy and expertise to the leadership team. Along with members of the governing body, senior leaders communicate a shared vision that is ambitiously focused on high academic and personal standards for all. All of the staff who responded to the survey during the inspection strongly agreed that they feel proud to be staff members.

An important factor in raising attainment significantly in both reading and writing has been the introduction of a writing scheme underpinned by good quality professional development of teachers. The tracking of pupils' progress across Key Stages 1 and 2 is thorough and provides a clear overview of their progress. The information gathered by senior leaders is used in ensuring that appropriate support is given to underachieving pupils. As a result, the rates of progress in 2011 improved on the previous year and are being sustained. Some middle leaders are new in their posts and have not yet had sufficient time to demonstrate the impact of their planned improvements. There remains more to do to ensure a consistently good standard of teaching across the school.

Every effort is made to fully include pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities in all aspects of school life. To avoid discrimination, pupils have equal opportunities to participate in activities, for example, pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable are targeted, supported and encouraged to participate in activities that will improve their personal development and progress.

The contribution the school makes to community cohesion is good. This school is a harmonious community, and discrimination is not tolerated. The school has well developed links with schools across the globe such as in the USA, Germany and China. Links with a school in Gloucestershire are at an early stage of development.

The effectiveness of the governing body is good. Members of the governing body are highly supportive and visit and monitor the work of the school regularly and effectively. They are currently considering how they may actively seek and act on the

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views of parents and carers. Members of the governing body fulfil their statutory duties and play a key role in determining the school’s strategic development. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are robust and reviewed regularly so that pupils’ safety is ensured. Staff are well trained in child protection procedures and all adults are thoroughly vetted before working 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

Children arrive happy and confident to the Nursery and quickly develop good relationships with staff and with each other. They behave well, work collaboratively and their health and safety are ensured. Parents and carers told inspectors how much they value the strong communication links they have with the setting, especially highlighting the fortnightly coffee mornings. These links with families and with external agencies support children’s learning and well-being effectively.

Inspection evidence confirms the school’s own assessment information that children enter Nursery with skills that are broadly typical of children of their age. Ongoing assessments and planning do not however, identify with sufficient precision the learning intended from each activity or lesson to ensure consistently good progress. As a result, progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall.

Children enjoy coming to school and being purposefully engaged in the variety of activities available. Inspectors saw children enjoying making play dough. Other children were observed developing their fine motor skills well in their play dough creations. They also saw children engaged in playing musical instruments and others measuring their height against a tower that they had built. Staff, however, miss too many opportunities to embed learning of basic literacy and numeracy skills through

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for instance, engaging children in dialogue in a way which stimulates higher-order thinking and through directing children to targeted activities that would enhance their learning further.

The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory. The phase coordinator has a sound understanding of good practice and what needs to be done to secure accelerated progress. Development of better quality teaching, regular monitoring and moderation of assessments, however, have not been rigorous enough to secure good progress across the phase.

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

Views of parents and carers

The return rate of the Ofsted questionnaire was well above average. Almost all of the parents and carers who responded to the parental questionnaire were very positive about the school. They were particularly positive about how their children enjoyed school and the school's due regard for their children's safety. Inspection evidence concurred with this. A few parents and carers raised concerns about the frequency with which they receive information on their children's progress and a few say that the school does not always take into account their suggestions and concerns. Inspectors found that the school gives parents and carers timely progress information. The school lacks any formal mechanisms for seeking the views of parents and carers and acting on them.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Mary’s and St John’s CE 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 220 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 420 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	155	70	59	27	1	0	3	1
The school keeps my child safe	133	60	83	38	0	0	2	1
The school informs me about my child’s progress	94	43	98	45	18	8	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	77	35	114	52	16	7	3	1
The teaching is good at this school	94	43	106	48	10	5	2	1
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	83	38	109	50	17	8	3	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	102	46	101	46	10	5	2	1
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)	84	38	103	47	9	4	2	1
The school meets my child’s particular needs	76	35	122	55	6	3	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	79	36	111	50	7	3	6	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	55	25	125	57	20	9	3	1
The school is led and managed effectively	114	52	92	42	3	1	2	1
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	119	54	87	40	6	3	3	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 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.

8 October 2011

Dear Pupils



Inspection of St Mary's and St John's C of E Primary School, Hendon NW4 3SL

Thank you for the warm welcome that you gave us when we visited your school. We greatly enjoyed talking to many of you and wish we had had more time to meet all of you. Yours is a good school and these are some of the reasons why.

Your headteacher, staff and governing body want to help you achieve your potential in all that you do and you are extremely well cared for and supported. You clearly enjoy school and we were very impressed with how well you behave and respect everyone's faith and culture in your school, in this country and the world. You have a good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle, make a good contribution to the school and wider community and have excellent knowledge of how to stay safe. The school provides you with many enjoyable and fun learning opportunities. The majority of teachers prepare good lessons and work with you to make your learning exciting.

The leaders of your school want you to achieve well and do your very best. They know what needs to be done next and, from our findings, we have asked them to do some things to improve your school. We have asked the adults to use information about the things those children in Nursery and Reception know already to plan lots of exciting things for them to do. The teachers have been asked to make sure that the work they give you is suitable to help all of you make the best possible progress. We have asked them to give you targets for improving your work and make sure you always have opportunities to improve your work after they mark your books. School leaders have been asked to regularly check that each of you is helped to do your very best in all subjects.

You can contribute to these improvements by working hard and responding well to all that the teachers ask you to do.

We wish you all the best for the future and thank you again for your help.

Yours sincerely

David Radomsky
Lead inspector

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