

St Margaret's CE Primary School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 100170 |
| Local Authority | Greenwich |
| Inspection number | 376359 |
| Inspection dates | 2–3 November 2011 |
| Reporting inspector | Gordon Ewing |

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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|--|--|
| 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 | 287 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Sian Stringer |
| Headteacher | Jeremy Lunnon |
| Date of previous school inspection | 23–24 March 2009 |
| School address | St Margaret's Grove Plumstead London SE18 7RL |
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|---------------------------|-------------------|
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 17 lessons, observing 12 teachers. Meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior leaders, members of the governing body, members of staff and groups of pupils. Informal discussions were conducted with some parents, carers and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work, including the systems for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress, pupils' work and teachers' planning and marking. Policies and procedures for safeguarding pupils were inspected. Inspectors took account of questionnaires completed by 146 parents and carers, 20 staff and 137 older pupils.

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

- The relative rates of progress through the school of all pupils in English and mathematics, and especially higher attainers, those of White British origin and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- How effectively the school has responded to the issues raised at the last inspection, including the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage, developing the role of middle leaders in school improvement and improving aspects of the quality of teaching across the school.
- How effectively leaders at all levels use assessment information about the attainment and progress of pupils to bring about rapid and sustained improvement in their achievement.
- The degree to which governors actively monitor the impact of the school's actions in bringing improvements in the outcomes for pupils.

Information about the school

St Margaret's Primary is larger than the average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average. The largest group of pupils (56%) is of Black British African heritage. The proportion of pupils that are learning English as an additional language is above average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The percentage of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average; predominantly, these pupils have speech, language and communication difficulties or specific learning difficulties.

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

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

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

St Margaret's is a satisfactory school where pupils are happy and well cared for. In this safe and secure environment, pupils develop good personal qualities and generally behave well. Their enjoyment of school is evident in their high attendance. The school strives successfully to support pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable, some of whom make excellent progress in their growing confidence and self-esteem. The vast majority of parents and carers hold the school in high regard and a comment from one parent was typical: 'The school is fantastic. My daughter has made excellent progress since she began. She is encouraged and supported by all the staff and members of the school community.'

Children get off to a sound start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make satisfactory progress in their learning. Although pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall, rates of learning and progress are variable through to Year 6 because the quality of teaching is inconsistent. Examples of good teaching were seen during the inspection but, on balance, teaching and learning are satisfactory. Pupils' engagement is greater when the lessons are stimulating and learning is active. In some lessons the pace of learning is pedestrian and tasks lack challenge, especially for high attainers, who are not encouraged to take initiative or exercise independence in taking the next step. Some teachers use assessment data well to inform their lessons in order to accelerate pupils' learning or adapt activities to better meet pupils' needs. This effective practice is not a common feature across the school.

Lesson observations made by leaders and managers sometimes lack precision and rigour. Their evaluations are not focused enough on what pupils actually learn. The leadership by the headteacher has ensured that the school has not stood still. Indeed, some new initiatives are beginning to pay dividends in improving the attainment and progress of key groups. For example, White British pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are making better progress as a result of more accurate tracking and targeted intervention. This is not the case for high-attaining pupils. Some do not achieve the higher levels of which they are capable, especially in writing. Leaders and managers, including governors, have a broadly accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses, but their self-evaluation is sometimes too generous and improvement planning lacks detail and the precision needed to bring about rapid and lasting improvement. Taking into account the leadership's adequate track record of improvement since the previous inspection, pupils' positive attitudes to learning and the strong support of the school community,

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the school has a satisfactory capacity to sustain further improvement.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged as satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' achievement so that, by July 2012, 80% of lessons are good or better, by:
 - ensuring teachers confidently understand the components of good and outstanding teaching by giving them targeted training and support
 - ensuring that teachers share existing good practice in how to use assessment data so that pupils become increasingly independent and know precisely what to do to improve their work
 - monitoring teaching and learning rigorously to gauge the impact of the training and support
 - extending the good collaborative work to include moderation of the quality of teachers' marking and target setting for pupils.
- Increase the level of challenge in lessons so pupils of all abilities, especially the higher attainers, achieve the levels of which they are capable, by:
 - sharing good practice to improve teachers' understanding of how to include challenging activities in lessons
 - tracking pupils' progress frequently against targets to identify any underachievement
 - providing more opportunities to extend high-attaining pupils' achievement in writing.
- Improve the quality of the school's self-evaluation procedures by:
 - sharpening the school's improvement planning to include clear and measurable targets to track precisely the impact of actions
 - making lesson observations astute, accurate and focused on what pupils learn.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Levels of progress for most pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are satisfactory in the majority of lessons. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds demonstrate good attitudes to learning and are well motivated. This is particularly so where activities are accurately geared to their abilities. In lessons where pupils are encouraged to engage in their learning, they make more rapid progress than in others where they are passive learners or where they are too reliant on the teacher to take the next step. For example, in Year 5/6, pupils were thoroughly engaged in learning how to use the 12 and 24 hour clock to interpret television and bus timetables. The teacher encouraged them to check their own progress on their individual learning targets and to discuss their progress with a talk-partner. Different tasks were well matched to the varied

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abilities of the pupils and teaching assistants ably checked on pupils' learning frequently throughout the lesson.

Pupils are friendly, polite and courteous. They are proud of the school and its Christian values. They appreciate cultural diversity and report that they feel safe and well cared for. As one pupil justly commented, 'It is a friendly school where we all learn and get on well.' Behaviour is generally good around the school and this reflects their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Bullying does occasionally happen, but when it is brought to the attention of adults, pupils receive prompt and effective support. Pupils can confidently explain how to stay healthy and what they are doing to adopt healthy lifestyles. They particularly enjoy the varied sports provision and outdoor adventure visits, such as to Swanage. Opportunities to take on responsibilities, such as being a school councillor, are valued and pupils are keen to take on even more constructive roles in shaping the school's future. Pupils acquire satisfactory skills in literacy, numeracy and in information and communication technology (ICT), and these, alongside their positive attitudes and high attendance, prepare them soundly for life's future challenges, including the move to their next schools.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

The teaching and curriculum are having a satisfactory impact on pupils' learning and progress. Teachers' subject knowledge is good. In better lessons there is an appropriate level of challenge and a good balance between activities led by the

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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teacher and pupils working independently. Particularly effective learning takes place when the activities are linked to real-life situations or where pupils are encouraged to work on their own. However, this is not the case in enough lessons. At times, pupils spend too long passively sitting on the carpet listening to the teacher. Consequently, some pupils become restless. In weaker lessons, tasks are not matched well to the different abilities of pupils and the lesson objectives are too general. Though targets are set, especially in English and mathematics, progress against them is not consistently tracked and pupils do not know them with confidence. Teachers' marking does not always show pupils clearly how to improve their work.

The curriculum is broad, balanced and adequately matched to pupils' interests and needs. Particular strengths include the provision of additional activities such as Forest School, chess, cookery and music. Cross-curricular links are being established, for example through the theme of Coast, which bring greater relevance to pupils' learning in literacy, numeracy, art, history and geography.

Good quality support and care are strong features of the school's provision. Strong partnerships help to secure pupils' good personal development. This is particularly so for vulnerable pupils and their families. Pastoral care is a clear strength and pupils are confident that staff are always on hand to help them. Effective transition arrangements within and beyond the school, for example, in the end of year transfer of pupils from mixed-age classes and to secondary schools, ensure that pupils move to the next stage with increasing confidence and expectation.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

| | |
|--|----------|
| The quality of teaching | 3 |
| Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning | 3 |
| The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships | 3 |
| The effectiveness of care, guidance and support | 2 |

How effective are leadership and management?

St Margaret's is a happy and harmonious community within which pupils learn. The dedicated headteacher is supported by a cohesive team of adults who have a clear understanding of the leadership's vision. Leaders and managers promote equality of opportunity adequately. Pupils relate well to each other and fully respect the cultural mix across the community where any discrimination and racism are not tolerated. Pupils with particular needs are well supported so that any barriers to learning are minimised. Other groups, however, are supported less consistently and patterns where achievement is not as high as it should be are not always identified soon enough, for example, in the writing skills of high attainers. New approaches involving middle leaders in tracking the progress of pupils have been introduced, but it is too early to gauge the effectiveness of this on improving achievement.

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School improvement planning and self-evaluation are satisfactory. The school's plans for the future rightly identify the broad areas for improvement but sometimes lack precision in tracking the impact of the school's actions. Targets tend to be too general and deadlines unclear. Therefore, strategies to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of teaching have not led to sufficient improvements in pupils' outcomes. Governors have an adequate grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses but are not, as yet, systematically evaluating the school's work and holding the school's leadership to account enough for the sustained improvement of the attainment and progress of key groups of pupils.

Safeguarding procedures are effective in ensuring that pupils and staff are safe. Staff receive regular training and child protection procedures are secure. The school has well-established partnerships with other professionals and organisations, for example the Plumstead Common Cluster of schools, which contribute effectively to the good levels of care, guidance and support and in bringing breadth to the curriculum. Parents and carers think highly of the school and recent initiatives, for example the parents' forum, are strengthening their opportunities to contribute positively to the school's development. Community cohesion is promoted well within the school and local community, but the school has yet to engage fully with other communities from different contexts, both nationally and beyond.

These are the grades for leadership and management

| | |
|--|----------|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 3 |
| Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met | 3 |
| 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 | 3 |
| 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 | 3 |

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle well into the setting because their induction is well managed. They enjoy their learning and develop trusting relationships with each other and the adults around them. They are well motivated and enjoy the activities provided, making

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choices when encouraged and share resources with their peers with enthusiasm and care. They behave well in indoor and outdoor settings, and feel safe. That said, some do not fully understand hygiene practices, for example, in putting toys and objects in their mouths and drinking liquids used in play activities. Adults have a good knowledge of children’s needs and a developing understanding of their progress. The quality of interaction between adults and children is variable and opportunities to develop children’s problem solving skills and to encourage them to become more independent are often missed. Adults’ planning of activities is, at times, too prescriptive and, consequently, children’s learning is sometimes inhibited as the level of challenge is not high enough. Forest School is a strength and children are thoroughly absorbed in the wide-ranging and stimulating activities open to them.

Adults’ observations of children’s learning and the use of assessment to track progress have improved since the previous inspection. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader is now more focused on how to develop more consistent practice across the setting. She has a good understanding of what helps children learn and is now well placed to raise attainment and drive through key improvements in provision.

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

There was an above average response to the questionnaire, the overwhelming majority being very positive. A very small minority of parents and carers expressed concerns about how effectively the school prepares pupils for the future or how the school leadership responds to their suggestions and concerns.

Inspectors found that pupils are well prepared for the move to the next class and to their next stage of education. Pupils’ attainment in literacy, numeracy and ICT are broadly average and they demonstrate satisfactory skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Inspectors are of the view that, given pupils’ basic skill levels and their positive attitudes to learning, they are adequately prepared for the challenges ahead.

The very large majority of parents and carers were very positive about the school’s leadership and management, one parent writing, ‘I feel over the past two years the school has made much more effort in including parents in all aspects of the school.’ Recent initiatives, for example the parents’ forum, are indicative of the leadership’s commitment to engage and consult with stakeholders and additional plans are in place to involve parents and carers in similar opportunities and in reviewing the work of the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Margaret'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 146 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 287 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 91 | 62 | 55 | 38 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 86 | 59 | 59 | 40 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress | 70 | 48 | 74 | 51 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 66 | 45 | 75 | 51 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 72 | 49 | 70 | 48 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 74 | 51 | 64 | 44 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 65 | 45 | 69 | 47 | 3 | 2 | 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) | 48 | 33 | 77 | 53 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 44 | 30 | 88 | 60 | 6 | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 52 | 36 | 83 | 57 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 47 | 32 | 79 | 54 | 9 | 6 | 1 | 1 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 61 | 42 | 76 | 52 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 77 | 53 | 63 | 43 | 4 | 3 | 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 | 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.



4 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Margaret's CE Primary School, Plumstead SE18 7RL

The inspectors really enjoyed their recent visit to see you at work. You made us feel very welcome and all of you spoke positively about your school life. Thank you!

You clearly enjoy school. Your parents and carers are happy with the school. Your school is a satisfactory school that takes good care of you. This letter is to tell you what we found, including those aspects that we thought were good.

- Your behaviour is generally good and you get on well together.
- You make satisfactory progress overall, although we know that with extra help you can do even better, especially those of you who find learning easy.
- Your really good attendance contributes to your enjoyment of learning.
- You feel safe and secure and thoroughly enjoy your lessons.
- The staff work hard to ensure that you build on your positive attitudes to learning so as to improve your chances of doing well in life.
- You are keen to contribute to improving the school.
- The school offers you a broad range of after-school clubs and visits, which improve your physical, creative and personal development.

The school community at St Margaret's rightly wants the school to be even better, and to help make this possible we have asked the staff and governors to:

- improve the quality of teaching and marking of your work so that you know exactly how well you are doing and what you need to do to improve
- make lesson activities are more challenging and give you more opportunities to develop as independent learners
- improve the way leaders review the work of the school.

We hope that you will continue to play your part in making St Margaret's an even more successful school.

Yours sincerely

Gordon Ewing
Lead inspector

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