

# St Mary's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	123458
<b>Local authority</b>	Shropshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	380657
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18–19 June 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	David Driscoll

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	203
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Michael Shipley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Nadine Wilde
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 March 2007
<b>School address</b>	Shaw Lane Albrighton Wolverhampton WV7 3DS
<b>Telephone number</b>	01902 372885
<b>Fax number</b>	01902 375154
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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
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## Introduction

Inspection team

David Driscoll

Additional Inspector

Jan Connor

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching in 14 lessons. A total of seven teachers were observed teaching. Inspectors held meetings with parents and carers, pupils, a representative of the local authority, members of the governing body and staff. They observed the school's work, heard pupils reading and looked at records of pupils' progress, safeguarding documentation, behaviour and attendance records and the results of the school's checks on the quality of teaching. Inspectors analysed the responses of 55 parents and carers to the inspection questionnaire, together with responses from staff and pupils.

## Information about the school

The school is smaller than most other primary schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. A below-average proportion of pupils are disabled or have special educational needs supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs. Almost all of the pupils are White British. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. A class teacher was promoted to acting headteacher in April 2012 and is supported by three other class teachers. A new headteacher has been appointed and will take up the post in September 2012.

The school shares its site with Playden, which provides childcare before and after school, and with St Mary's Nursery. Both of these facilities are privately managed and subject to separate inspections.

**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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>

## Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It is not yet good because there is not enough good teaching of writing and mathematics to help pupils make consistently good progress. The school's systems for improving teaching are not always sufficiently well focused on those areas most in need of improvement. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Pupils make satisfactory progress in writing and mathematics and good progress in reading. Most groups of pupils make satisfactory progress, although disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress. Progress is also good in the Reception class. Attainment by Year 6 is average in writing and mathematics and above average in reading.
- Teaching is good in Reception and satisfactory in other year groups. Tasks are well matched to the specific needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. The work given to other pupils is not always tailored well enough to their abilities and their progress is not always checked sufficiently frequently in lessons. Pupils sometimes spend too long listening to the teacher or simply following instructions, which limits their independence.
- Pupils are well behaved, polite and considerate of others. They have good attitudes to learning and are quick to take the initiative when they are given the opportunity. Incidents of poor behaviour are extremely rare. Attendance is consistently above average.
- Leadership and management, including performance management, are satisfactory. The school accurately assesses and tracks the performance of individual pupils. However, the analyses of the resulting data is not always accurate and is not used to target checks on teaching in order to identify the reasons for differences in progress between subjects, groups and classes. Insufficient attention is paid to evaluating the impact of teaching on pupils'

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learning.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' progress in writing and mathematics to the good level in reading, by July 2013, by:
  - checking pupils' progress more frequently in lessons and using the results to adapt tasks to meet the needs of individuals
  - planning lessons that have specific tasks for pupils of different abilities
  - providing pupils with more opportunities to take an active part in their learning.
  
- Improve the school's systems for the leadership and management of teaching by January 2013 by:
  - accurately analysing data on pupils' progress and using the results to target checks on lessons in order to identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching that lead to differences in progress between subjects, classes and groups
  - focusing lesson observations on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and progress.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Achievement is satisfactory and current attainment is broadly average. Attainment on leaving the school has been above average in recent years, owing to above average attainment in English, but slower progress in writing has led to lower attainment for pupils currently in Year 6. Most parents and carers who returned the inspection questionnaire hold the view that pupils make good progress. Inspectors found that progress is good in reading, but satisfactory in writing and mathematics.

Children join the Reception class with skills, knowledge and understanding that are as expected for their age. Their progress has been improving in recent years and is now good in all areas of learning, so attainment is now above average on starting Year 1. In lessons observed, children responded well to the many opportunities to speak, learn the sounds that letters make and write the letters down. The emphasis on helping pupils to read at an early age continues in Years 1 and 2 so attainment is above average in reading by the end of Year 2. Once this foundation has been laid, pupils continue to make good progress because they read many different types of texts in lessons. Attainment in reading is above average by Year 6. Pupils in Year 6 read fluently in lessons and several were reading non-fiction books at the same time as novels. All could explain why they had chosen their books and described in detail the content.

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Progress in writing and mathematics is satisfactory in Years 1 to 6. Pupils enjoyed the topics that they were studying in the mathematics and writing lessons observed. However, their attention would sometimes wander when they had to spend too long listening to the teacher. Pupils worked hard and concentrated well when given tasks that were well-matched to their abilities. However, in some lessons the higher attainers finished before others, while lower attainers were unsure of how to start. In these cases, the pupils sat quietly and waited, but made slow progress. Changes to the curriculum since September 2011 are providing more opportunities for pupils to write at length and in different contexts. This approach is proving successful in accelerating their progress and is starting to address the decline in attainment.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs learn well and make better progress than other groups. The gap between their performance and that of their peers has been successfully closed. They are supported by detailed individual education plans which identify what each should be learning and what support is needed. As a result, staff are very well informed of exactly how to tailor work to their needs.

### **Quality of teaching**

Pupils say they enjoy the new curriculum because teachers plan topics that they find engaging. For example, pupils worked hard at writing precise instructions for pirates to find treasure hidden on an island. Teaching is firmly rooted in good subject knowledge. This is particularly notable in teaching the sounds that groups of letters make and the accuracy with which teachers correct different vowel sounds when teaching pupils to read. In mathematics and writing, some of the activities are too structured and do not allow pupils to be active in their learning and develop their independence. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to discuss and work in groups, which promote their social and moral development well. For example, pupils in Key Stage 1 discussed the reasons for and against wearing school uniform. They learnt to listen to others and respect their views. Pupils go on many trips which widen their experience and are particularly effective in developing their understanding of different faiths and cultures.

Almost all parents and carers responding to the questionnaire felt that their children were taught well. Inspectors found teaching to be no better than satisfactory because it does not meet pupils' needs consistently well. Some lessons are planned to provide different activities for groups of pupils according to their abilities. In these cases, pupils are able to work on their own and make good progress. In most lessons, though, one task is given to the whole class. It is usually pitched at a level appropriate for the middle ability pupils. Teachers often support specific groups in these lessons, but do not check the progress of others. In one lesson, for example, four pupils had produced no work at all because they did not know how to start while some others had finished the task and waited quietly for the rest to catch up. This leads to a variation in progress over time as pupils make good progress in lessons where they work with a teacher, but slow progress in others where the task is not matched well enough to their abilities in order for them to learn independently.

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This is not the case in Reception, where the close tracking of individual children's progress is used to adapt the curriculum to meet their specific needs and move their learning on at a good pace. Similarly, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are taught well because staff make good use of the guidance in individual education plans to adapt tasks to meet pupils' specific needs. Inspectors observed such pupils concentrating hard and learning well for the full duration of a lesson as a result of such support.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Behaviour is typically good both in and out of lessons. This view is supported by the parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire. No pupil has been excluded in recent years and serious incidents are very rare indeed. Pupils say that lessons are not disrupted by misbehaviour and none was observed during the inspection.

Teachers rarely have to resort to any more than a quick verbal reminder to regain a pupil's attention. Pupils usually work well in lessons and are keen to produce their best work. They show initiative when given the opportunity. For example, when asked to estimate the mass of an egg, one group improvised a home-made balance. Pupils are polite, respectful and are proud of their responsibilities, such as acting as members of the school council.

Pupils, parents and carers all say that there are rare examples of bullying. These are usually limited to being unkind to one another, such as not allowing a pupil to play with them, rather than anything more serious such as physical or cyber-bullying. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and different types of bullying. They have confidence in the staff to deal with such acts of unkindness, which are recorded in detail and tackled quickly and well. Above average attendance has been maintained for several years.

### **Leadership and management**

The school's leaders, including members of the governing body, demonstrate satisfactory capacity to improve the school. Parents and carers are pleased with the improved partnerships that are being developed. Children are now making good progress in Reception and the new curriculum is starting to raise achievement in writing. The school's leaders have rightly identified progress in mathematics and writing as priorities for improvement and suitable plans are in place to address them. However, there are no clearly measurable criteria against which their success can be evaluated. Safeguarding requirements are met. All forms of discriminatory behaviour are tackled well, but errors in the analysis of the achievement of different groups limit the school's inclusion and promotion of equal opportunities to satisfactory.

Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are robust and all staff have a good knowledge of individuals. The analyses of data arising from these assessments contain errors. This means that the school's leaders do not have a completely accurate evaluation of its performance and this limits their effectiveness in improving teaching from satisfactory to good. Monitoring is not targeted at specific

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lessons to identify the reasons for differences in achievement and lesson observations focus too narrowly on what the teacher does without taking account of the impact on learning. However, the observations are detailed, provide a satisfactory basis for performance management and are used appropriately to identify further training requirements. They are particularly good in ensuring a consistent approach to managing behaviour.

The curriculum is suitably broad and balanced. It provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There are good opportunities to reflect in assemblies and in subjects such as art. Pupils are particularly knowledgeable about other faiths and cultures through visits to places of worship and links with other schools, such as the one in Kenya. Relatively few opportunities are provided for pupils to be actively involved in their learning and to develop their independent learning skills.



## 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	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 to 31 December 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](http://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.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
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.**



20 June 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of St Mary's CofE Primary School, Wolverhampton, WV7 3DS**

Thank you for the help you gave us when we visited your school. We found you to be polite, considerate and well behaved. Your attendance is above average, so well done.

We found that you are getting a satisfactory education. The youngest children get off to a good start in Reception and you all learn to read quickly, so by the time you leave school you are reading better than we often see. Your progress in writing and mathematics is satisfactory. You are often all given the same task to do in these lessons, which is too easy for some of you and a bit too hard for others. When this happens, you sit quietly and do not disturb others. We have asked your teachers to always give you work that is just right for you and to check more frequently how well you are getting on. You can help by putting your hands up when you need another task or need help to get started. Those of you who need extra help always get it because the teachers know exactly what support you need. You make good progress. You told us that you enjoy the new topics because they are more interesting. We also saw that you enjoyed lessons more when you were able to solve problems and work on your own initiative. We have asked your teachers to give you more such opportunities.

The teachers assess your work accurately so they know exactly how each of you is doing. However, when all that information is analysed, mistakes are made so the school's leaders do not have a completely accurate picture of the whole school's performance. We have asked them to make sure the data are always accurate, and then to use the information to find out what works well in the teaching and what could be improved, so that your school will improve more quickly.

With all best wishes for your future.

Yours sincerely

David Driscoll  
Lead inspector

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