

# St Mary's Catholic Primary School (Maltby)

Muglet Lane, Maltby, Rotherham, S66 7JU

**Inspection dates** 7–8 November 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress as they move up through the school.
- Pupils, whose circumstances could make it harder for them to learn, do in fact achieve just as well as other pupils. This is because the school's leaders and staff know each pupil very well and see that they get the right sort of help and support.
- Teachers are well informed about the subjects they teach. They plan lessons carefully, choosing interesting activities and making sure that work is neither too hard nor too easy.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and at playtimes. They feel safe in school and know just what to do if they have any worries. They are confident that the adults in school would be quick to sort matters out.
- Since the last inspection, there have been good improvements all round. Leaders and governors made changes that led to better teaching, achievement and behaviour. They are very clear about what they need to do next so the school improves even more.
- Pupils would recommend their school to other children. They say, for example, 'We have fun: teachers have a sense of humour' and 'You make good friends here'.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not enough outstanding teaching. Teachers do not always allow the most able pupils to move on quickly enough during lessons. Marking is sometimes not helpful.
- Achievement in reading is not always as strong as that in writing and mathematics. Not all pupils read enthusiastically or widely. Leaders have lots of ideas for tackling this but have not asked pupils what would encourage them to read more.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 13 lessons involving 11 teachers and teaching assistants.
- They held meetings with groups of pupils, staff, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. Informal conversations took place with a number of parents.
- A range of documents were looked at including samples of pupils' work, records relating to achievement and behaviour, the school's plans for its future development and information about safeguarding arrangements.
- The nine responses to the on line questionnaire (Parent View) were considered.

## Inspection team

Rosemary Eaton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Barbara Martin

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average sized primary school.
- An average proportion of pupils is known to be eligible for the pupil premium.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- A smaller than average proportion of pupils speaks English as an additional language.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching. Focus particularly on ensuring that:
  - the most able pupils move on to different stages of the lesson when they are ready, rather than at the same rate as other pupils
  - marking always informs pupils how to improve
  - teachers require pupils to act upon the advice they are given.
- Improve achievement in reading by:
  - preparing firm plans to put into practice leaders' ideas for making pupils more enthusiastic readers
  - asking pupils what would encourage them to read more often and more widely.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- When they join the school, children's skills are often below those typically expected for their age. They make good progress during the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children now learn to rely less on adults to do things for them. This sets them up well for making the move to Year 1 work.
- The number of pupils in each Year group is often small and so each pupil makes a big difference to the school's results in national tests. This can make it harder to pick out patterns in achievement from year to year. However it is clear that more pupils are now reaching or going beyond the levels expected at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
- Pupils achieve better now because teachers and leaders see to it that they make good progress every year in order to leave school good and ready for secondary school.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress. Staff spot quickly when pupils are having difficulty and the headteacher makes sure that they each get the particular help they need. Some pupils improve so much that they no longer need extra support.
- The pupils eligible for the pupil premium achieve well and make the same good progress as others in the school. In fact, in 2012, all of these pupils made the progress expected of them in both English and mathematics. They did better in mathematics than other pupils in the school and in many schools across the country. This is because leaders spend the money wisely after talking to teachers about what will benefit particular pupils. For example, those with no computer at home have extra time to use school equipment.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make equally good progress. The majority need no extra help. A few others are given good support to practise their speech, learn new vocabulary and increase their understanding of English.
- In the 2012 assessments of Year 1 pupils' ability to use the sounds made by letters (phonics) in order to help them read, only a small number of pupils reached the required standards. Throughout the school, less-able readers find it hard to cope with words they have not come across before. The pupils who do read competently are not particularly keen readers and have a limited knowledge of books and authors.
- Leaders have taken some firm steps to improve reading, such as introducing a new system of teaching reading to less-able pupils. They are already benefiting from learning step-by-step in small groups. New books have been purchased and classrooms all have attractive reading areas. Pupils have not been asked what else would encourage them to read more. Leaders have a long list of their own ideas but have not decided which to follow up or how they will set about them.
- Pupils' writing skills have improved particularly well since the previous inspection. Their writing helps them to learn in other subjects, such as history. Pupils' mathematics skills are used most often in science, for example, when drawing accurate graphs and charts.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers' detailed knowledge of different subjects enables them to give clear explanations and helpful demonstrations to pupils. For example, in a mathematics lesson, Year 1 pupils quickly learned that an estimate is a 'good guess' because the teacher explained it so well. Teachers and teaching assistants are well-trained in teaching reading but do not always make sure pupils know the correct terms, for example, to describe skills such as building words from the sounds made by their letters (blending).
- Pupils are always told what they are to learn and not simply what they are to do. This means that they see the importance of tasks and set about them with a will.
- Teachers use questions well to check how much pupils have learned. In the best lessons, they do so at frequent intervals and then adapt their plans, for example, by bringing pupils together and giving them more advice or showing another example.

- Checks of how well pupils' have learned are used well by teachers to make sure that activities are neither too hard nor too easy. However, from time to time the learning of the most able pupils slows down because they are not permitted to start their work until the teacher has made sure that every pupil understands just what to do. This means that the most able pupils mark time as they listen to detailed explanations that they do not need.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are strong. Adults give plenty of praise and encouragement, boosting pupils' self-esteem and giving them confidence to tackle demanding work.
- Lessons are frequently enjoyable, motivating and link together different areas of learning. For example, a lesson in Year 5 about seed dispersal involved science, literacy and information and communication technology.
- Marking has improved since the previous inspection. However, not all is as good as the best. Pupils are not always told exactly how they can improve their work and when they are given advice there is sometimes no sign that they have taken any notice of it.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Pupils are keen to learn and nearly always try hard. They say, for example, that 'if work is too easy, there's no point doing it'.
- Behaviour has improved and it is unusual for lessons to be disrupted by pupils behaving inconsiderately. Pupils follow the examples set by staff by treating everyone they meet with respect and politeness.
- Pupils enjoy their playtimes although some do get over-excited during games such as 'tig' which occasionally leads to arguments. Pupils say that adults quickly sort out incidents such as these before they have time to go too far.
- Older pupils are proud to be 'playground leaders', organising games and looking after pupils who seem lonely.
- The small number of pupils who find it hard to control their own behaviour are given support tailored to their particular needs. This results in marked improvements in behaviour.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school because there are always plenty of adults around, looking out for them. They say, and the school's records confirm, that there are few bullying instances. They know that they should report any name-calling and are confident that staff take quick and effective action.
- Through the curriculum and assemblies, pupils are made aware of different types of bullying including cyber-bullying. They know about the risks posed, for example, by social media, strangers and fireworks.
- Attendance is improving although it is seldom above average. Most absences are owing to childhood illnesses and holidays taken during term time.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher makes her high expectations very clear. She leaves other leaders, staff and governors in no doubt that this is a school where 'every individual is known and loved'. All are wholeheartedly behind developments, such as the new reading system, and are keen to improve the way they each contribute to teaching and learning. They want to provide as well as possible for every pupil.
- The school already gives all pupils equal chances to learn well. Its success is seen in the way different groups make the same good progress as others.
- There are well-organised arrangements to continue to improve teaching and raise achievement. Leaders use visits to lessons, checks on pupils' books and detailed examinations of teachers' judgements about pupils' progress to pinpoint what needs to be done to provide better for particular pupils. Leaders know much more clearly than before how well the school is getting on.

That is why they have decided to concentrate this year on improving reading.

- Teaching has improved and leaders are working towards making more of it outstanding. For example, the training provided for staff is linked to the areas leaders have found need most improvement. As a result, lessons now take much more account of what different groups need to learn next. Teachers work in pairs to learn from each other and are given time to visit other classes or different schools in order to see the very best teaching.
- The headteacher takes the lead when it comes to visiting lessons to judge the quality of teaching. Other leaders are becoming more involved in this work and playing a greater part in improving the school. Teachers' responsibilities are linked to their position on the salary scale.
- The curriculum has been improved and is now more exciting. The school continues to pay close attention to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Teachers grasp opportunities and make events such as Remembrance Day relevant to pupils. After seeing film clips, Year 2 pupils made poppies and took part in a class ceremony to think about families affected by war.
- The local authority no longer provides direct support because its checks have found that the school has improved so much. Instead, it helps the leaders to take control of pushing the school further forward by helping them to work with other Catholic schools in the area, for example, to share training events.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are much more involved and knowledgeable than before. They know what is happening in school and are ready to ask questions and make sure they get the right answers. For example, a governor has visited to see how well the new system for teaching reading has been introduced. Governors are clear about the quality of teaching and know how it has been improved. They look at published information about pupils' achievement and draw their own conclusions about how well the school is doing compared to other primary schools. The budget is managed carefully. Governors help to decide how the pupil premium is spent. They are considering how best to check that each way in which it is used is improving the achievement of pupils entitled to the extra money.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	106940
<b>Local authority</b>	Rotherham
<b>Inspection number</b>	405067

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	181
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Aden Wass
<b>Headteacher</b>	Catherine McLaughlin
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 October 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01709 812611
<b>Fax number</b>	01709 790694
<b>Email address</b>	maltbystmarys.primary@rotherham.gov.uk

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