

St Marie's Catholic Primary School and Nursery

Merttens Drive, Rugby, CV22 7AF

Inspection dates 12–13 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Achievement and progress are uneven across the school and pupils do not build sufficiently on the good start they make in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Not all pupils achieve well enough in mathematics and the progress made is not as strong as in English.
- There is not enough good or outstanding teaching to make sure that all pupils achieve well, particularly the more able.
- Leaders' checking on the school's performance, and particularly teaching, has not been regular enough and not all subject leaders are systematically involved in improving the quality of teaching.
- Governors do not have enough information about the progress of different groups, particularly those who are known to be eligible for free school meals, to consistently hold senior leaders to account.

The school has the following strengths

- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because they are well supported by adults and they have a wide range of activities to help them develop their early skills.
- Pupils who do not speak English as their first language make good progress due to the early support they receive.
- Pupils are safe and well cared for. Positive relationships between staff and pupils contribute well to pupils' good behaviour.
- The school provides a caring and supportive environment.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well promoted. Pupils have a good understanding and appreciation of the different cultures in modern Britain.
- Leaders are making good use of recent local authority support to set the right priorities and plan further improvements.

Information about this inspection

- This is the first inspection carried out by Ofsted as the school was opened in September 2011 following the amalgamation of the infant and junior schools.
- Inspectors observed teaching in all classes. They visited 28 lessons or parts of lessons, two of which were with the headteacher.
- Discussions were held with pupils, teachers, the headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 41 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) during the inspection and previous survey information collected by the school. They also spoke to parents as they collected or brought their children to school.
- Questionnaires from 38 staff were received and their views taken into account.
- The inspection team listened to pupils read, spoke with them about their learning and looked at the work in their books.
- The inspectors looked at a number of documents, including the school's own self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, data on pupils' current progress, leaders' reports of lesson observations, minutes of the governing body meetings and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Heather Simpson, Lead Inspector

Additional Inspector

Nicholas Capron

Additional Inspector

Edgar Hastings

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Marie's is larger in size than most other primary schools.
- The school opened in September 2011, when the infant and junior schools were amalgamated. Although now primary, it still operates on a split site with Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 in one building and Key Stage 2 in a different building. There is approximately a four-minute walk between the two buildings.
- New classrooms have been built for the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 following a fire in June 2012.
- The majority of pupils are White British; almost half come from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds.
- At around a third, the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much higher than the national average.
- A below-average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for looked after children and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported through school action is below average but the proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- All pupils are educated on site. The school does not use alternative provision to support any of its pupils.
- In 2012, the school met the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- St Marie's Day Care Nursery and the before- and after-school care clubs on-site are run privately. These were not included in this inspection and are inspected separately.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of consistently good and better teaching by:
 - providing more time for pupils to get on with their work by reducing the amount of time pupils spend listening to the teacher, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1
 - planning activities that meet the needs of all ability groups, especially more-able pupils
 - ensuring that pupils know what levels they are working at in reading, writing and mathematics and that they refer to their learning targets regularly in order to progress to the next level
 - ensuring that teachers consistently provide regular guidance to pupils on how to improve their work and then allowing them the time to put this advice into practice.
- Raise achievement in mathematics, particularly in Key Stage 2, by:
 - ensuring that pupils consistently use the correct and precise mathematical vocabulary to explain their work
 - raising the level of challenge for more-able pupils to improve their mental mathematical skills and reduce the prompts and support resources they are given
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills in other subjects.
- Strengthen leadership, management and governance by making sure that:

- all leaders undertake more regular and focused checks on pupils' progress and teachers' performance to secure a rise in pupils' achievement
- governors are presented with information about how well different groups of pupils are doing so that they can measure the impact that additional funding is having for those who are known to be eligible for free school meals
- there is greater continuity of practice and shared purpose between the two school sites, to promote smoother transition and increased progress for all pupils.

An external review of the governing body should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Attainment at the end of Year 6 in 2012 was below the national average because pupils underachieved. This was as a result of some previously poor teaching, an influx of pupils joining the school late, disruption caused by the amalgamation, and a major fire on the school site. Current data for pupils in Key Stage 2 is much stronger and shows that pupils are now on track to reach above-average levels, particularly in English. The inadequate teaching has been addressed and teaching has improved. Stability has therefore been restored.
- The progress of pupils in Key Stage 1 requires improvement because pupils do not make as rapid progress in Years 1 and 2 as they do in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Although attainment in 2012 was above the national average in mathematics, it was average in reading and writing.
- Progress rates are accelerating in writing, and standards in Key Stage 2 are rising as a result of the initiatives introduced. Standards in mathematics, particularly in Key Stage 2, are not yet in line with English and are broadly average. While pupils have individual targets for improvement, they do not know them from memory or refer to them during lessons. Additionally, they do not know what levels they are working at or what they have to do to reach the next level. This limits their progress.
- Pupils are now making good progress in reading. They are encouraged to read widely and often. The teaching of letters and sounds (phonics) is effective and gives younger pupils the confidence to work out unfamiliar words. Older pupils talk enthusiastically about the books they have read and their favourite authors. They are developing good reading habits, for example, reading at bedtime.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to their classmates. They receive additional support in lessons, and afternoon booster sessions have been introduced to build on and reinforce work covered during the morning. This enables them to keep up with their peers.
- The pupil premium funding is used to provide a range of support, such as additional adult time in lessons, and to develop eligible pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Activities such as rock climbing, after-school clubs and the residential visit are funded so that pupils are fully included and want to come to school. Consequently, there is little difference in the levels which these pupils reach compared with their fellow pupils.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress as they pick up early language skills quickly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Adults provide lots of activities which promote strong social and communication skills. Pupils who speak the same language are also on hand to translate, to make sure that these pupils get the help they need.
- Most children start school with skills that are lower than those typically expected for their age. Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because they are well supported by adults and given a wide range of activities, both indoors and outdoors, to develop and build on their basic skills. Consequently, children join Year 1 at levels which are above the national average.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Whilst the quality of teaching is improving, teaching is variable across the school. No outstanding teaching was seen during the inspection.
- Some lessons are good but, in too many, activities are not always well matched to the needs of pupils of different abilities. This is particularly the case for more-able pupils where the work is not challenging enough. The prompts and resources supplied, for example, in mathematics lessons, reduce the demands for pupils to think for themselves or develop higher order skills. As a result, they do not reach the higher levels.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, learning is slowed down by too much teacher talk, particularly at the start of lessons. This reduces the amount of work which pupils are able to complete. Expectations are sometimes not high enough in mathematics lessons in Key Stage 2 and some teachers do not make sure that pupils use the correct mathematical vocabulary.
- Teachers regularly check pupils' understanding during lessons and when they mark their books. However, the guidance and advice given to pupils to help them improve their work is not consistent. In some literacy and mathematics books, comments are made about what pupils have done well and what they need to do next. In other books, work is merely ticked or not marked at all, and pupils are not given the chance to respond to the advice given.
- Where teaching is good, pupils are very clear about what they must do and teachers have high expectations of what they can achieve. Pupils are given lots of opportunities to discuss their work with a partner and explain their thinking. Skilled questioning by the teacher and other adults also checks pupils' understanding and probes deeper to make pupils think.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a good start because teachers plan exciting activities and make good use of both indoor and outdoor spaces. Adults work together well as a team and provide the right level of help so that children make good progress.
- Additional adults are used well to help pupils during lessons and take small groups or individuals during afternoon sessions, including those who have special educational needs or are eligible for the pupil premium. This helps those who are at risk of falling behind to keep up with other pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils have good attitudes and are keen and eager to learn. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils are polite, well mannered, and support each other in lessons and at playtimes. Pupils say that behaviour has improved. They know about the sanctions and rewards in the behaviour policy.
 - Pupils say they enjoy school and feel safe. This is shown in their attendance rates, which are above average. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, for example when using the internet, as a result of teaching and explanations from visitors to school.
 - Pupils are aware of the different forms that bullying can take, including cyber-bullying and name-calling. They say that bullying is not a problem in school and are confident that if a problem is reported, it is dealt with effectively.
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- The school promotes good levels of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Daily prayer and time for reflection reinforce the school's values. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong and celebrate and appreciate pupils from different backgrounds due to the diverse community within their own school.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- As a newly created primary school, leaders and governors have faced considerable challenges in their first year. These challenges include amalgamating the infant and junior schools, whilst still operating on two sites, and dealing with the disruption caused by a major fire. Although these initially set back plans to raise attainment and improve the quality of teaching, actions taken, support from the local authority and other schools, together with more focused planning, are leading to whole-school improvement and increased rates of progress for pupils.
- Most views expressed by staff in the questionnaires returned were positive. A small minority however felt that school policies were not always applied consistently due to the school operating on two different sites. Parents spoken to also feel that transition could be improved when pupils move from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2.
- The monitoring of teaching performance by senior and subject leaders has lacked rigour and the necessary focus on learning. Not all leaders are involved in checking on the quality of teaching, linking this with pupils' progress or holding their colleagues to account. As a result, progress in some classes is not swift enough. Action has however been taken to deal with inadequate teaching and training has been implemented to help move more teaching to good.
- Targets have been set for teachers and are linked to the school improvement plan and the progress pupils make. The headteacher has not yet had to make any decisions regarding pay awards to teachers based on their performance in the classroom but is aware that the new *Teacher Standards* must be fully met in order to approve a pay rise.
- A recent review from the local authority has provided leaders with a clear and accurate overview. Valuable support is also being provided to help drive improvements more rapidly, for example, working in conjunction with another school.
- Leaders' self-evaluation is accurate. Leaders know the schools' strengths and areas for development. School improvement plans are now sharply focused on improving teaching and governors also have their own action plans.
- Pupils are given the opportunity to use and develop their literacy skills across a range of different subjects but there are relatively few opportunities for pupils to use their numeracy skills in other subjects. Information and communication technology is used effectively to support learning. Learning is extended through a wide range of after-school clubs and memorable visits and visitors help to promote pupils' academic and personal development.
- Good relationships and levels of pupil participation in the life of the school are positive features of the school's approach to promoting equality and tackling discrimination.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - As a relatively new team working together, governors are supportive and provide some challenge to senior leaders. However, as a result of limited training and the lack of detailed information about the progress made by all groups of pupils, they are unable to hold the

school fully to account. They have not carried out any monitoring in order to know how good the quality of teaching or leadership is, or how well pupils are doing. They are aware of the pupil premium funding and what it is used for, but are unable to link this to the levels pupils reach. Governors recognise that attainment in 2012 was not good enough for Year 6 pupils and that further improvement is needed to strengthen the quality of teaching. They also acknowledge that the pace of improvement during the first year of amalgamation has been too slow. Procedures for managing the headteacher's performance are in place, and strategies to challenge and remove inadequate teaching have been successful. Governors understand the link between salary increases and teachers' performance in the classroom. There is a good range of expertise in the governing body. They are very committed to seeing the school improve and they ensure that it fulfils its statutory responsibilities, for example in relation to safeguarding arrangements, so that all pupils and staff are well protected.

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

Unique reference number	136507
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	400278

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	440
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anthony Fry
Headteacher	Mark Walsh
Date of previous school inspection	Not applicable
Telephone number	01788 543636
Fax number	01788 553783
Email address	admin3598@welearn365.com

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