

St Mary Magdalen's Catholic Primary School

Worple Street, London, SW14 8HE

Inspection dates 18–19 April 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Pupils achieve exceptionally well. They make outstanding progress to leave at the end of Key Stage 2 with standards in English and mathematics that are well above average.
- The headteacher, staff and members of the governing body have worked together highly effectively to improve the quality of teaching since the previous inspection. Teaching is now outstanding and pupils learn extremely well because they are interested and engaged in lessons.
- There is a strong culture of striving for improvement with teachers listening to and acting upon advice and guidance given to enhance performance.
- Leaders have robust systems for checking on pupils' attainment and progress.
- The curriculum is exciting and engaging. The many opportunities extended to pupils during and beyond the school day ensure that they develop a broad range of skills and understanding which prepare them exceptionally well for secondary school.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They conduct themselves exceptionally well in lessons, at playtimes and around the school. They are courteous and respectful, and contribute well to lessons so that they get the most out of the learning opportunities afforded them.
- Pupils feel very safe at school. They enjoy being part of such a close community and are proud of the school's achievements in sporting and artistic events and competitions.
- Attendance has a high priority. The involvement of the governing body and outside agencies has supported the school in improving attendance so that it is now above average.
- Leadership at all levels is outstanding. All leaders are fully committed to, and involved in, ensuring all pupils' needs are exceptionally well met.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons or parts of lessons across a range of subjects, including a joint observation with the headteacher. They saw each teacher at least once.
- The inspection team listened to pupils read, attended an assembly and held meetings with staff, pupils, and representatives from the governing body and the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 108 responses to the online Parent View survey and correspondence received during the inspection as well as the views of parents and carers spoken to on the playground. Questionnaires from 19 staff were also considered.
- The inspection team looked closely at pupils' work in lessons as well as work they have completed over time in their books.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents including those relating to safeguarding and child protection, the governing body minutes, the school's self-evaluation and development planning, information relating to pupils' academic performance, documents showing how leaders evaluate the quality of teaching and logs relating to behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Jeanie Jovanova, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Michael Barron

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a slightly smaller-than-average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also lower.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium, which is additional funding for looked after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and the children of service families, is much lower than average. No pupils in the school are looked after or from service families.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. A number of other ethnic groups are represented in varying proportions.
- More pupils in this school speak English as an additional language than is the case nationally; very few of them are at the early stages of learning English.
- 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?

- Fine-tune measures used to check the progress of individuals and groups of pupils so even more pupils make the fastest rates of progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- The majority of children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with basic skills that are close to the level of development expected for their age in most, but not all, areas of learning. Notably, calculation and reading skills are below those of typical four-year-olds.
- Pupils achieve exceptionally well across the school and consequently perform extremely well compared to other schools in national tests. The Year 1 phonics screening check shows that pupils make a very good start with their phonic skills and the check is used very effectively to measure the progress of pupils in understanding the sounds letters make. Consequently, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 is above average, and a far greater proportion of pupils achieve the highest level at the end of Key Stage 2 in both English and mathematics than is typical.
- The headteacher has ensured staff understand that progress and attainment are equally important. This drives staff to ensure that all pupils make at least expected levels of progress and that high proportions make more than this. Pupils at St Mary Magdalen's make much better progress than pupils nationally.
- The school regularly analyses the achievement of individual pupils and acts decisively on any discrepancies it finds. Consequently, any pupils who are in danger of underperforming are identified early and successful measures are put in place to get them back on track. Using a finer measure would enable this to happen even more quickly, thereby further enhancing progress.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve exceptionally well because careful checks are made on how effectively their needs are being met. The school uses its own staff and specialists from outside to ensure there is the expertise required to provide the most appropriate support possible.
- Pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium typically do very well. For example, they often attain average point scores in English and mathematics, as measured by national tests, of up to a term more than other pupils in school and always outstrip that of all pupils nationally. The school narrows the gap highly successfully for these pupils because of well-thought-out initiatives and support that accelerate their progress.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve as well as other pupils in school because the school is passionate about pupils developing a broad, rich vocabulary and there is a strong focus on correct grammatical usage.
- All groups, including those from different ethnic backgrounds, achieve similarly well because the school is committed to ensuring that equality of opportunity affords all an equal chance of gaining success.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teaching is outstanding and produces outstanding results over time in terms of both the progress pupils make and the standards they achieve.
- Teaching produces such exceptionally high outcomes because teachers take great care to meet the differing abilities of the pupils in their class and always ensure work is not too easy or too difficult.
- Teachers regularly check pupils' understanding in lessons. Where necessary, they give additional guidance or tips on how best to approach tasks so that all pupils make excellent progress in their learning. For example, during a mathematics lesson, the teacher noticed that a number of pupils were not using the apparatus in the most efficient way. She stopped the class and clarified this point, which enabled pupils to learn faster and more effectively.
- Teachers promote new measures to enhance pupils' achievement with enthusiasm and skill. For example, teachers embraced a new approach to teaching writing so successfully that pupils left Year 6 last year having gained an additional three terms' progress compared to the previous

year.

- Marking and feedback in books and in lessons are highly effective in ensuring pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. A positive culture of striving for excellence means pupils are open to constructive comments and keen to evaluate both their own learning and that of their classmates.
- The quality of teaching is equally high in all subjects and teachers ensure they promote the essential skills of reading, writing, communication and mathematics across the curriculum. For example, in a physical education lesson, pupils had to explain to their partner precisely what was needed for a successful move in netball and had to think very carefully before formulating their instructions.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary around the school and in lessons. Playtimes are harmonious despite the area available being limited. Pupils of all ages and from different groups get on extremely well because the school promotes excellent behaviour and ensures there is no discrimination.
- Pupils contribute well in lessons and are keen to learn. They treat each other and their teachers with respect, listen attentively and perform well in different situations, such as when working in pairs and small groups. This behaviour has a positive impact on the quality of learning and enables pupils to get the most out of lessons.
- Pupils feel very safe at school and understand how to keep themselves safe, for example talking about how vital it is never to share your personal details online. The parents and carers who completed the online survey were unanimous in agreeing that the school keeps their children safe, and inspection evidence supports these views.
- Pupils have well-developed ideas about what constitutes bullying. They are emphatic that behaviour is very good at their school and bullying seldom, if ever, occurs. They are adamant that teachers would deal with any situation before it became serious, or long-term, enough to be classed as bullying. Logs detailing behavioural incidents are well kept and support pupils' views that serious incidents are few and far between.
- Behaviour is managed well for all pupils, the rules are clear and applied consistently. Pupils respond well to the reward system and take pride in receiving commendations for their exemplary behaviour.
- Attendance has improved so that it is now above average because senior leaders, including governors, have worked effectively to put a range of measures in place to promote the importance of attending regularly.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The ethos and vision are clearly shared by all members of this inclusive community. A desire to ensure pupils are well-rounded individuals who are exceptionally well prepared for the next phase in their education permeates all that the school does.
- Senior staff have developed a positive culture where striving for excellence is considered the norm. This means teachers are always looking for ways to improve their classroom practice. Scrutiny of leaders' evaluation shows that teachers act upon feedback given to produce increasingly effective teaching.
- Building on this positive culture, the performance of individual teachers is well managed. Teachers regularly meet the exacting targets they are set in terms of pupils' progress. They gain a lot from the process because they are well supported to continually enhance their skills and understanding. All the staff who responded to the survey agreed that the school makes appropriate provision for their professional development.
- Senior leaders, including governors, have a robust view of the school's strengths and where it

can make further improvements. They update their self-evaluation document regularly and this drives their development plans, which are coherent and detailed.

- The school's curriculum has been enhanced since the previous inspection. There are far more opportunities now for pupils to develop reading, writing, communication and mathematical skills across different areas of learning. For example, pupils use computers to support their learning in everything from phonics to geography. Lessons are supplemented by stimulating trips and visitors into school. Year 6's trip to France brought their history topic on the First World War to life and gave them the opportunity to practise the French they had learnt in real-life situations.
- Inspirational assemblies and opportunities to reflect deeply on issues of moral and ethical importance, such as fair trade, ecological sustainability and the elimination of global poverty, all supplement the curriculum to ensure pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well promoted.
- The local authority provides support when requested such as, for example, meeting with senior leaders to validate their self-evaluation.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors understand data and are proud that their school is in the top 20% of schools nationally in terms of its attainment and progress in English and mathematics. However, this does not make them complacent. They scrutinise information about pupils' achievement regularly and ask questions of senior staff if they spot any variations. Governors work closely with senior leaders to ensure the performance of individual teachers is well managed so that the quality of teaching remains outstanding. Governors understand the link between pay and performance and ensure that producing outstanding results in terms of pupils' outcomes is reflected appropriately in rewards, increments and opportunities for career progression. The governing body manages school spending highly effectively. For example, deploying additional adults to provide small group and one-to-one tuition to pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding has ensured that they achieve equally highly relative to other groups in school. Governors attend all relevant training to keep their skills updated and ensure safeguarding requirements are met to exacting standards.

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	102909
Local authority	Richmond upon Thames
Inspection number	402905

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	234
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Colin Sambrook
Headteacher	Helen Frostick
Date of previous school inspection	27–28 March 2008
Telephone number	020 8876 6679
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