

# St Mary's Endowed Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary School

Chapel Road, Roughton, Norwich, NR11 8AF

**Inspection dates** 3–4 July 2013

<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.

- St. Mary's is a very caring school with a strong Christian dimension. Attributes such as compassion are fostered in pupils.
- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics because teaching is good.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent. Pupils have a thirst for learning.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those who struggle make good progress because they receive the help they need.
- Pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding do well.
- Staff expertise is used well so that art and design standards, for example, are very good.
- Pupils say they particularly enjoy the varied and interesting activities they do.
- Pupils say, and all their parents agree, that they feel safe in school.
- The vast majority of pupils behave well.
- Staff form a very effective team. Morale is high because staff know what is expected of them, and that their views will be listened to.
- Parents, governors, staff and pupils all agree, the catalyst for recent improvements is the new headteacher. One parent said, 'It is as if the school has been sprinkled with stardust.'
- Giving pupils the best education possible is at the heart of everything the headteacher, staff and governors do.
- Good improvements to teaching and pupils' achievements have been made since the last inspection report.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not check often enough that pupils have understood their teaching.
- Some tasks are not interesting and the pace of learning drops.
- Improvement plans do not make clear what success will look like.
- The teaching and learning policy is not clear enough to help staff improve.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed seven lessons. All were joint observations with the headteacher.
- The inspector made other visits to classes, looked at pupils' workbooks and listened to a sample of pupils read.
- The inspector held discussions with pupils, the headteacher, other staff, governors, parents and carers, and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the 21 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View). The inspector also spoke to a number of parents. The responses to seven staff questionnaires were also considered.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents including, the school's own data on pupils' progress; planning and monitoring documentation; the school's self-evaluation; the records of how the school uses its funding, especially how the money from pupil premium is spent; records relating to behaviour and attendance; and documents relating to safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Robert Greatrex, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a much smaller-than-average primary school.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (the extra government funding for children looked after by the local authority, known to be eligible for free school meals or whose families are in the armed forces) is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average. The proportion of pupils supported through school action plus or a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- Pupils are taught in two mixed-aged classes, one for four to seven year-olds and the other for seven to 11 year-olds.
- The school operates a breakfast club each school day.
- A charity run preschool shares the site and is inspected separately.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching by:
  - ensuring staff check pupils' progress in lessons more regularly so that misconceptions are quickly corrected
  - building on the 'excellence weeks' to teach subjects particularly mathematics in a more interesting way
  - giving pupils a clearer understanding of what must be achieved within a specific time.
- Ensure targets in the school improvement and development plan are clear, measurable, realistic with deadlines so everyone is clear what must be done and when it is achieved.
- Review the teaching and learning policy so that staff are clear what each element looks like in practise and know how to implement it.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start school with a range of skills and experiences that are broadly as expected by this age. They settle quickly because of good transition arrangements from the on-site preschool.
- In Reception, children make good progress because they are catered for much better than at the time of the last inspection. They have a good balance of adult-led activities and those they choose for themselves. The use of the outdoor area is good. They also learn from the older pupils in the class.
- Good progress continues through the school. By the end of Year 6, the vast majority of pupils reach the levels expected in English and mathematics, and many exceed them. The few that do not have all made at least the expected level of progress from their various starting points.
- Many interesting activities give pupils good opportunities to learn how to link letters to the sounds they make (phonics) and nearly all pupils reach the level expected by the end of Year 1.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those who struggle with subjects receive the right extra help in their areas of need and make good progress.
- Last year the school recognised more needed to be done for able mathematicians. Changes were made and a much higher proportion now reach higher levels. Pupils said they enjoyed 'Maths Excellence Week' when their learning was more practical and related to everyday life. They said they understood much better from this way of learning. Their memories confirm this.
- Pupil premium funding is spent effectively. The very few eligible pupils are catching up with other pupils in reading and writing and receiving the right extra support in mathematics.
- The school has correctly identified that more able writers could do better, particularly to be more creative. Carefully chosen staff training, in how to use dialogue to stimulate writing, is beginning to improve pupils' writing.
- Basic skills are good and improving as pupils are given more and more opportunities to practise them in other subjects.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils learn well because teachers generally group them according to their ability. Those that are ready for harder work, or those that need extra practise, are taught with pupils at similar levels so they do well.
- Teachers use technology well to explain learning and, most particularly, to give pupils some interesting starting point that gets them 'hooked' on the lesson's learning.
- Fundamental to the good rate of learning is the very positive relationship between pupils and all staff. Pupils describe their school as 'one big happy family' and that is the atmosphere in classes.
- Dialogue is used effectively, for example to stimulate thinking before a writing task. During lessons, pupils are asked to turn and talk to a partner. They share ideas, and come up with new

ones, so that learning is improved.

- Since the previous inspection, a stronger focus on learning outcomes means that staff and pupils have a clear understanding of what will be learnt. When pupils are clear about 'steps to success' they do well.
- Staff plan interesting and challenging tasks that pupils want to learn about. Science may be linked to literacy, or information and communication skills taught through designing an interactive presentation. However, pupils feel this is not consistent. They see mathematics and writing as 'work' done differently, although they agree the latter is changing.
- During activities, pupils sometimes go too long without staff checking how they are doing. On these occasions, confusions are not quickly corrected and pupils may repeat the same mistake, for example when practising a mathematics technique or skill. Pace of learning drops, too.
- Teaching assistants and other support staff use their excellent knowledge of art and design techniques very effectively so pupils reach high standards. Pupils are regularly engrossed in producing high quality two and three-dimensional artefacts.
- Pupils say they understand the new marking policy and it helps them. The eldest say they find the individual targets they are given helpful, too. They like that their views are included.
- Homework is used effectively to reinforce and consolidate learning in school. The website and helpful 'what I can do at home?' elements of topic plans are useful to parents.

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

- Both pupils and their parents feel that staff take great care of them. Within a strong Christian ethos, each is valued. The school is fully inclusive and welcomes all pupils. Many parents choose to travel to bring their children to St. Mary's because of its caring ethos.
  - Parents say the school builds self confidence, a 'have-a-go' attitude. During the inspection, one of the youngest asserted himself with a classmate saying, 'You're not a very good partner.'
  - Within the strong 'family feel', pupils look out for one another and older pupils take pride in helping those younger than themselves. The eldest regularly help the youngest to read.
  - Fundamental to the good progress pupils make is their positive attitudes to learning. They have a thirst for knowledge and want to learn. One parent said, 'She runs to school each morning.'
  - Pupils say, and parents confirm, that they feel safe in school. They are taught about staying safe, for example on the internet or in woodland activities, and receive regular reminders.
  - Pupils' behaviour is generally good and there have been no exclusions. Some pupils struggle to manage their behaviour, or work in a group. Outdoor learning is very beneficial to these pupils. Other pupils can become frustrated with them, too.
  - Pupils know they are valued because staff and governors ask them their views, and then often act upon them. Breakfast club is a very social time and parents and carers are welcome to join their children for lunch.
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- Although the vast majority of pupils attend well, attendance is below average. The school plans to offer pupils rewards to encourage good attendance.

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

- The vision for the school is shared, understood and acted on by all. Everyone has come together under the headteacher's outstanding leadership. Staff always smile, morale is high. The results of the staff survey were all positive.
  - The headteacher quickly determined what needed to be done, and in what order. The right plans were put in place and beneficial changes made. While current plans are the right ones, success criteria lack clarity.
  - Staff regularly discuss the progress their pupils make and give extra help if needed. This is checked again, to see it makes a difference, and to change it if not.
  - Clear policies mean everyone knows what is expected of them, and what they may expect from others. While the teaching and learning policy gives helpful advice, it is broad and lacks detail.
  - Since the last inspection, teaching is monitored more closely. The headteacher is clear about improvements and returns to see they have been done. Subject leaders now observe teaching but do not yet use this to improve their subjects.
  - Subjects are good and improving because the headteacher is introducing a more creative approach. Pupils say woodland learning is excellent. They speak enthusiastically of the countless opportunities they enjoy in the superb school grounds. This contributes well to their spiritual growth. It, and moral, social and cultural development, is good.
  - The partnership with parents is very strong. All responding to the on-line survey would recommend St. Mary's. Parents say they are delighted with all the recent changes.
  - The partnership with local schools is good. Staff and pupils from a local high school supported pupils' learning and good use is made of specialist help.
  - The local authority gave good support during the time between this and the last permanent headteacher. Because the current headteacher is very capable they involve themselves less.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - The governing body is strong and effective, fully trained and well organised. They challenge and support the school equally well, and are as active in long term planning as in day-to-day school life. The latter gives them an accurate view about teaching and learning. They know staff have clear targets and check arrangements to promote staff and link to pay. They know what the school is doing to tackle any underperformance. Whether about finance, including the use of pupil premium funding, or data about the progress of pupils, they have a good understanding of information about the school. They meet statutory requirements, including those for safeguarding.
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## 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>	121125
<b>Local authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	402006

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>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	48
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Anne Cottingham
<b>Headteacher</b>	Polly Kossowicz
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 May 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01263 761368
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