

# St Mary's RC Primary School

Kynder Street, Denton, Manchester, M34 2AR

**Inspection dates** 3–4 July 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
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.

- Achievement is outstanding. Pupils leave the school with well above average standards in English and mathematics.
- All groups of pupils make outstanding progress from broadly typical starting points on entry to the nursery class.
- Teaching is frequently outstanding and never less than good.
- The school provides very well for those children with additional or specialist learning needs.
- The range of learning opportunities is excellent, but within this, the learning environment within the Early Years Foundation Stage is underdeveloped. It does not sufficiently stimulate children's creativity, language skills, or curiosity for learning.
- Behaviour is outstanding. Pupils are very involved in ensuring that behaviour remains outstanding across the school. Pupils feel safe in school.
- Teachers responsible for particular areas of the curriculum have very good specialist subject knowledge.
- The school is very good at helping teachers and other adult assistants to improve their practice, and has high expectations of them.
- Leaders and managers, and especially the headteacher and governors, have a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have driven significant improvement forward since the previous inspection.
- The school has a very positive atmosphere, in which learning, sharing and caring for each other are highly valued and demonstrated.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons, of which three were joint observations with senior leaders. In addition, inspectors made a number of other short visits to lessons, observed an assembly and an enterprise presentation by pupils to adults. They carried out an extensive scrutiny of pupils' work and observed other aspects of school life.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body and school staff, and parents were consulted when they collected their children from school. The inspectors spoke to two groups of pupils and listened to two other groups reading. Telephone conversations were held with a representative of the local authority and the school's improvement consultant.
- Inspectors took account of 15 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), scrutinised the schools' own surveys of parents' and pupils' views and 12 responses from staff about the school.
- A number of documents were analysed, including the school's own data relating to pupils' achievement, the school's self-evaluation summary and school development plans, records relating to behaviour and attendance and safeguarding arrangements.

## Inspection team

Nigel Cromey-Hawke, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Doreen Davenport	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school, with a well-above average number of girls.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage, with a very few whose first language is not English. There is a very small group of pupils from Traveller families.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is above average, and the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational need is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (the additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, for children in local authority care and for pupils with a parent in the armed forces) is average.
- 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?

- Make the learning environment both inside and outdoors within the Early Years Foundation Stage more attractive, richer in its support for language and better resourced, in order to better stimulate children's creativity, curiosity and learning.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Over the last three years, attainment in English and mathematics has been consistently well above national averages by the time pupils leave Year 6. The school's assessment data and inspection evidence indicate that this profile is being maintained, with standards having improved further, particularly in Key Stage 1 over the last year.
- Most children enter the school at, or slightly below expected levels of development. They make outstanding progress from their starting points. For example, the proportion of pupils that make better than expected progress in English and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2 is high in comparison with similar schools nationally.
- The progress made by children in nursery and reception is never less than good, with an increasing number making outstanding progress. Children leave the Early Years Foundation Stage well prepared for the next stage in learning.
- Pupils' progress in reading is rapid throughout the school, reflecting the high priority the school gives to this area of learning. Standards at Key Stage 1 are above average and at Key Stage 2 well above average. Inspectors listened to several pupils read and they clearly demonstrated their skills and love of reading, many using the school library and benefiting from close parental support through their excellent home/school reading records. Pupils' skills in writing are also well developed, with a minor weakness last year in Year 4 quickly identified through the school's excellent self-evaluation procedures and has already recovered through well-targeted support programmes.
- There are no significant differences between the achievement of boys and girls. Pupils of different abilities also achieve very well, especially in mathematics. The progress made by pupils who find work harder is often highly accelerated, due to the additional support they receive from high quality teaching assistants and other adult helpers. Together these demonstrate the high level of commitment the school has to equality of opportunity.
- The group of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium make outstanding progress, especially in reading. The attainment of this group is well above that of similar groups and often above other pupils nationally.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make outstanding progress. So too do the very few pupils whose first language is not English. This is because they receive individualised support, which is very well matched to their particular needs.
- Children from Traveller families are rapidly integrated into the school and their interests and learning needs quickly identified. They make progress in line with other pupils, especially in reading.

### The quality of teaching is outstanding

- The impact of teaching over time on pupils' achievement is outstanding. Teachers have high expectations and often use inspirational teaching strategies, together with timely and sharply focused support and interventions, that ensure pupils' learning needs are met. Consequently, pupils learn exceptionally well across the curriculum.
- Teaching within the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children settle into the nursery well and clear routines and high expectations mean that they are soon making at least good progress. The learning environment within this phase is not as attractive as it could be, however. Resourcing is underdeveloped in some areas, both inside and outdoors and does not fully support children's language development through its use of displays and prompts to reinforce reading and early writing skills. As such, it does not stimulate children's creativity, curiosity and learning as effectively as other areas of the school.
- Teachers are highly committed and extremely enthusiastic. They have very good subject knowledge, which they use to make the lessons exciting and interesting, particularly by

introducing real life scenarios to activities to make the learning relevant. This was demonstrated, for example, when Years 3, 4 and 5 pupils made outstanding presentations of planned enterprise projects in a 'Dragons' Den' –type of activity to governors and other adults that clearly demonstrated their confidence in public speaking, and their business and numeracy skills. This clearly demonstrated that the school prepares pupils very well for life in a modern democratic society.

- There is a high level of challenge in most lessons, helped by clear planning for the range of abilities. This approach is used throughout the school and builds a maturity of thinking and high levels of involvement by pupils in their lessons.
- The school believes strongly that teaching must develop pupils to be independent in their learning. It makes extensive use of assessment frameworks for pupils to shape their own learning. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, outstanding learning resulted when pupils devised their own versions of these frameworks and then used them to assess each others' work.
- Marking, feedback and personalised learning targets are very well used across the school to help pupils move their learning forward. The school also makes parents aware of their children's progress against learning targets across Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 through a secure section of the school's excellent website. This makes possible the ongoing awareness of pupils' needs and achievements and helps accelerate their learning noticeably.
- Teaching makes a very strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is especially the case within the topic lessons that make very good use of information and communication technology to develop pupils' research skills and understanding of the wider world.

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

- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. It is managed consistently very well, via calm, firm and caring actions.
- Pupils' pride in their school is shown by their excellent conduct within lessons and around the school, and by their politeness, good manners and willingness to help each other.
- Pupils clearly enjoy coming to school. Attendance has been consistently well above average for many years and punctuality is very good. Exclusions are very low.
- Pupils' sense of right and wrong and their awareness of what constitutes bullying and unacceptable behaviour is excellent. Trained pupil councillors contribute strongly to this. Through the 'Good to be Green' initiative classes work towards 'compliments' that result in agreed class rewards. When rare instances of either poor behaviour or bullying occur, pupil representatives visit other classes to experience the high standards the school expects and then help recover any failures to meet these. Such sharing of expectations and practice very strongly builds a common set of values across the school, reflecting its faith ethos and contributing to pupils' personal development considerably.
- The number of parents who responded through Parent View was very low but discussions with parents collecting their children from school and evidence from the regular and extensive school surveys shows that the vast majority of parents are highly supportive of the school. They consider that it keeps their children safe and looks after them very well.
- The school council is active in representing the views of pupils about the school, and is regularly consulted about aspects of its work. Representatives from this group talked enthusiastically to one inspector about how they have helped reshape the menus, helped design the adventure playground and joined in discussions with teachers about the school curriculum, all of which reinforces their sense of involvement within it.

### **The leadership and management** are outstanding

- The headteacher is an inspirational leader and has the total support of her staff. Morale within

the school is rightly high as it continues its drive for further improvement.

- Since the previous inspection, the pursuit of excellence in all of the school's activities has resulted in the rapid rise from broadly average to the highest levels of attainment and achievement, and the maintenance of this thereafter. The school has also improved significantly in the areas of pupils' behaviour, the quality of teaching and in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This uncompromising drive to strongly improve is apparent at all levels of leadership and management, with the result that the local authority has operated the very lightest touches of support over the last four years.
  - Leaders focus relentlessly on improving teaching and learning. The school's view of its performance is accurate and based on a comprehensive and rigorous analysis of pupils' progress and frequent checks on the quality of teaching and learning. Senior leaders are very well supported by subject and phase managers, who use the regular pupil progress meetings and their excellent subject knowledge, to ensure that high levels of learning and the welfare of pupils are maintained.
  - The procedures to manage the performance of teachers and their progress up the salary scale are excellent. Staff are set ambitious targets to improve pupils' achievement and the school provides clear next steps in its advice to its staff, as well as high quality training, to help them progress as professionals. This is particularly the case with teaching assistants who have undertaken significant training to support the teaching of writing to very good effect.
  - The curriculum is well managed and its impact regularly reviewed. Literacy and numeracy are clear priorities and are greatly enhanced through the teaching of topics and themes across the other subjects. In this way, the arts, sport, French and the humanities all contribute very effectively to pupils' wider learning, helped by a wide programme of visits and visitors. There is also a good range of after-school clubs and activities that enrich pupils' experiences of school significantly.
  - The school involves parents very well through regular communications and its comprehensive website, as well as its online reporting of pupils' progress facility. Parents consider the school to be very well led and managed, with one commenting to an inspector when collecting her child from school that she 'is amazed at the rise in standards in her daughter's reading and her enthusiasm for coming to school every day.'
  - The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
- The governing body is highly effective in its leadership of the school. It is highly skilled and has a very good understanding of the school's performance, helped by very transparent and detailed reporting to it by the school. The governors hold leaders to account for that performance very well, questioning the achievement of various groups of pupils robustly and seeking clarification and improved outcomes where it thinks this is necessary. Governors are particularly well-informed about how the pupil premium funding is spent, and that it is leading to good levels of attainment for those pupils eligible. This leads to the excellent deployment of staff and resources to the benefit of all groups of pupils.

## 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>	106252
<b>Local authority</b>	Tameside
<b>Inspection number</b>	400834

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>	234
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Galvin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Deidre Reeves
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 March 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 3363322
<b>Fax number</b>	0161 3205187
<b>Email address</b>	head@st-marys-denton.tameside.sch.uk



Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)  
[Store St](#)  
[Manchester](#)  
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2013

