

St Mary's Church of England Primary School

Inspection dates

22–23 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- There is not enough good teaching. Many of the inconsistencies in its quality arise from planning that does not take accurate account of what pupils need to learn next and tasks that are not challenging enough for the most able.
- Not enough higher-ability pupils reach the highest levels in both English and mathematics by the time they leave Year 6.
- Systems for managing staff performance are not consistently applied. Teachers are not held to account sufficiently for the impact of their teaching on learning.
- Some teachers' marking lacks precision about what pupils need to do to improve their work. Pupils do not always know their targets well enough, and there are not enough opportunities for pupils to correct their mistakes and to reflect on the next steps in their learning.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is variable and, as a result, children's progress, especially in writing, is limited.
- The governing body is unsure where teaching is strongest and where it requires improvement. It does not monitor the link between how well staff performance is linked to the salaries they receive.

The school has the following strengths

- Many opportunities for spiritual, moral and social development are provided, especially through well-led assemblies. This aspect is supplemented by exciting curriculum enrichment, such as musical activities, and other lessons which encourage pupils to explore different faiths and cultures.
- The school works well with parents and carers to support children's learning.
- Children's progress in mathematics is
- Behaviour is good. Pupils are eager to learn and there is a strong sense of 'community'. Pupils make confident contributions when engaged in interactive group work, and they are courteous and polite, both to adults and to each other.
- The school provides appropriate support for disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those for whom English is a second language.

improving because the subject is now well led and managed.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 25 lessons, four of which were jointly observed lessons, carried out with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. Inspectors undertook a series of short visits to other lessons across the school, observed two assemblies and listened to children read.
- Meetings were held with staff and pupils. The lead inspector spoke to the representative from the local authority and the Chair of the governing body by phone.
- Inspectors took account of the 37 responses to the on-line Parent-View survey, one letter from a parent as well as the views of the parents they met. Inspectors also considered the 33 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans, pupil performance data, safeguarding policies, and records and documents relating to staff performance.

Inspection team

Lesley Leak, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Carol Jones

Additional Inspector

Robert Arnold

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average primary school which has expanded to three forms of entry in the Reception and in Year 4 since the previous inspection. There are currently two classes in all other year groups from Year 1 to Year 6.
- A significant number of pupils join and leave the school part way through their primary education.
- The proportion of children who are eligible for the pupil premium is average. The pupil premium is additional funding for certain groups including children in care of the local authority and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of pupils who come from minority ethnic groups is very high.
- The proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language is well above the national average. Many of them are at an early stage of learning English.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are in line with the national average. The proportion supported through school action is lower than the national average.
- The school meets the government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- There have been a number of changes to the school's staff since the last inspection in June 2009.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teaching is consistently good by:
 - using the school's assessment information to plan lessons which match the pupils' needs and abilities, especially of the more able, more precisely
 - ensuring teachers check pupils' understanding and progress during lessons and make adjustments if the rate of learning slows or if pupils are ready for more demanding work
 - improving the effectiveness of teachers' marking, so that all pupils not only know their next steps and how to achieve them, but are routinely given opportunities to act on their teachers' comments and work on their corrections.
- Ensure that pupils' achievement is consistently good across all subjects across the school by:
 - making sure that the most able are challenged to secure higher standards in writing at Key Stage 1 and to ensure that all abilities reach their potential in reading at Key Stage 2
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge and to extend their writing in a range of subjects.
- Ensure that all leaders, including members of the governing body, rigorously check the school's performance so that they make a greater difference to improving the quality of teaching by:
 - ensuring that the governing body has a better understanding of how good teaching is so that it is more effective in helping the school to improve
 - ensuring that leaders regularly check teaching and learning and ensure improvements are made.
- An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because not enough higher-ability pupils make rapid progress in writing at Key Stage 1 and in reading at Key Stage 2. As a result, the proportion of pupils securing the higher levels in both English and mathematics by the time they leave school is not high enough. Attainment in English and mathematics at the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2 has remained broadly average over the last three years.
- Progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage has fluctuated in recent years because many children join and leave the school part way through the Early Years Foundations Stage. Most children enter Nursery with a level of skills well below those expected for their age. Although most children catch up by the end of Year 2, reaching standards expected for their age, the higher-ability pupils do not make sufficient progress in writing.
- Some pupils' progress with reading slows at Key Stage 2 with many pupils at the very highest and lowest ability ranges making fewer gains in reading than others. Well – embedded teaching of phonics (the sounds letters make) in Key Stage 1 and the Early Years Foundation Stage impacts positively on children's ability with reading unfamiliar words in Year 1. The phonics checks for six-year-olds in 2012 and 2013 demonstrate above-average reading skills, but there is insufficient attention paid to promoting independent reading further up the school. Older pupils do not always use a range of strategies to find out what unfamiliar words mean.
- The school's numeracy intervention programme has been generally effective at supporting pupils who need extra help and has contributed to pupils' better progress in mathematics at Key Stage 2. This has resulted in increasing numbers of Year 6 pupils achieving the highest levels in mathematics.
- Termly checks on pupils' progress mean that anyone who needs extra help is identified quickly and provided with specific support. Consequently, most pupils who are disabled, those with special educational needs, and pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress from their lower starting points because they benefit from extra help to achieve well.
- Pupils supported through the pupil premium funding, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, are reaching standards above the national average and, although a term behind their peers, in English and mathematics at Key Stage 1, catch up by Key Stage 2. This is because the funding has been well spent on meeting the needs of identified pupils through additional support such as the 'Numbers Count' programme and other small-group and one-to-one activities provided in English and mathematics.
- The school makes good use of the government additional funding for sport through its local sports partnership with a nearby secondary school. As a result, pupils are keen to learn a wide range of sports and to take advantage of the many opportunities available to participate in competitions and tournaments. The sports partnership provides training for staff to ensure that this provision will remain ongoing.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement as its quality is too inconsistent and, as a result, rates of progress are not fast enough for some pupils.
- Not all lessons meet the needs of each pupil and teachers do not always plan sufficiently demanding tasks for the more able. Teachers do not always check their pupils' understanding and therefore miss opportunities to set harder work for pupils when they are ready. Overall teachers' expectations of what their pupils can achieve are not high enough.
- There are insufficient opportunities, in subjects other than English, for pupils to write at length and thereby improve their confidence with a range of writing styles.
- Additional adults who support pupils in need of extra help, including pupils who have special educational needs or who are in the early stages of learning to speak English as an additional

language, are effective in meeting their pupils' specific learning needs, often through in-class support or one-to-one tuition.

- Marking is regular, but in some classes, pupils are not always clear about their targets or which next steps to take, and too often there are missed opportunities for pupils to reflect on their teachers' guidance, to correct their mistakes or to attempt further challenges to build on what they have learned.
- Where teaching is more effective, teachers set work that accurately meets their pupils' needs and well-pitched activities move pupils' understanding on at a brisk pace. In these lessons, teachers and other adults ask challenging questions which move the pupils' learning on. In one well-taught Year 4 poetry lesson, pupils were given tasks, appropriately matched to their differing needs, which enabled them to generate a bank of useful descriptive words to describe the effect of the wind. Challenged to improve his writing still further, one boy perceptively described the wind as, 'Zooming through gardens destroying flowerpots.'
- The teaching of mathematics has improved in most year groups because the subject is now better led and managed. Activities are usually matched appropriately to pupils' abilities. For example, in one highly effective Year 6 mathematics lesson, more-able pupils were handling very challenging numbers to determine place value in decimals such as 137.2×12 . Others were working out what happens to a number when it is multiplied by 0.1 and 0.2. All eagerly worked together in their groups to identify as many methods as possible for achieving the right answers.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Parents and carers, and staff, agree that behaviour in lessons and around school are good. Pupils are eager to learn and take a keen interest in what is around them. They are confident with speaking to a wide range of audiences and are consistently kind and courteous to each other. Their attitudes to learning are generally good, except in lessons which do not engage their interest, and on occasion, this can lead to lapses in concentration and some minor low-level disruption.
- All pupils feel safe and well cared for. The playground is well organised with an exciting range of equipment, where pupils act responsibly and manage their own risk well. Older pupils are considerate to the needs of younger pupils and playground 'buddies' ensure that anyone feeling in need of a 'friend' is well supported.
- Pupils fully embrace the school's 'Rights Respecting School' initiative and, as a result, rarely need prompting to behave well.
- Pupils value the many opportunities to take on important roles and responsibilities, such as the school council, which has been highly effective in its work to improve the Key Stage 1 playground. Pupils enjoy participating in forums to bring about change.
- No concerns were expressed about behaviour and safety by parents and carers, staff and pupils. Pupils have a good awareness about different forms of bullying, including learning about internet safety, and say that on rare occasions when it happens, it is dealt with swiftly by the school.
- Pupils enjoy taking part in daily assemblies where their individual and collective achievements are valued and celebrated. They respond well to assembly themes which encourage reflection on moral, cultural and spiritual issues. During this inspection, Black History month had provided a springboard for many exciting activities with an arts focus.
- Pupils are happy at school and consequently their attendance is above average.

The leadership and management require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because they have not brought about

improvement in the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement rapidly enough.

- The headteacher, governors, and senior and middle leaders know the school's strengths and weaknesses, and there is a suitably focused plan to tackle areas of improvement. However, the pace and quality of change is not rapid enough in some areas identified, especially in relation to the systems for monitoring of the quality of teaching.
 - Systems for managing staff performance are not yet fully established. The school is aware of the need to strengthen the identification and effectiveness of performance targets, ensuring they are formulated on the basis of rigorous evaluations of teaching alongside pupils' learning outcomes.
 - Newly qualified teachers benefit from a comprehensive induction programme which enables them to improve their classroom practice and secure better outcomes for their pupils.
 - The curriculum meets the needs of most pupils well and is successfully broadened by a wide variety of enrichment activities including Spanish and music lessons, residential trips, sports coaching and other exciting clubs and visits. However, there are not as many opportunities for pupils to solve 'real-life' mathematical problems or to write at length in other subjects.
 - The development of pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is highly successful. Pupils celebrate the diversity of different cultures and faiths, and care for one another well. They enjoy their part in promoting 'eco-awareness' and learning about gardening as well as preparing exciting menus with the produce they have grown.
 - The school works well with parents and carers to ensure they are fully aware of the school's work, including details of curricular provision, and it provides training for parents and carers to support their children's learning at home. Almost all parents and carers who responded to the Parent View online questionnaire or who spoke with inspectors were supportive of the school and felt it reached out to the whole community.
 - Following on from the previous inspection judgement, the local authority has provided light-touch support for the school.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Since the previous inspection, there has been a high turnover of members within the governing body and a new chair has been in post for the past month. The governing body has become more effective in its ability to challenge and support the school. Members of the governing body attend regular training sessions to increase their expertise. They are now well informed about pupils' progress, and this has enabled them to ask challenging questions and probe the school about the achievement of different groups of pupils. They know that the pupil premium funding is used effectively to support the pupils it is provided for, to close the gaps in their performance. However, they are less sure where teaching is strongest and where it requires improvement. The governing body has yet to establish the link between how well staff perform and the salaries they receive. The governing body ensures that safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements and holds the school to account for the way it manages its finances.
-

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	109995
Local authority	Cambridge Education/MottMacdonald
Inspection number	429500

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Controlled School
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	520
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	The Reverend Andrew Allen
Headteacher	Gwendy Morrison
Date of previous school inspection	23–24 June 2009
Telephone number	01753 534791
Fax number	01753 512452
Email address	head@stmarys.slough.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. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email 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, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: 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.

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
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

