

St Matthew's CofE Primary School

Cottenham Park Road, London, SW20 0SX

Inspection dates 28–29 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
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.

- Pupils achieve well. They make good progress from their starting points to reach standards that are above average in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The overall quality of teaching is good. As a result, all groups make good progress, including disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and those for whom the school receives the pupil premium.
- Teachers check pupils' understanding carefully. They plan work carefully and use questioning to extend pupils' learning.
- Governors play an integral role in supporting leaders to continually improve the quality of the school's work. This has ensured that the quality of teaching has gone from strength to strength.
- Pupils are exceptionally courteous and respectful because the school places a great emphasis on thinking about how you would like to be treated and how to treat others.
- Pupils say they love school and this is reflected in their above average rates of attendance. They have very positive attitudes to learning.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well. Pupils are well prepared to move on to secondary school.
- Since the previous inspection the school has developed the range of subjects and activities on offer to pupils. This plays a huge role in driving pupils' progress because it affords them opportunities to deepen their understanding by making real, purposeful links across subjects.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- There is not enough outstanding teaching to ensure that pupils make rapid and sustained progress across all year groups.
- Marking does not always give pupils precise enough detail on the next steps they need to take to move their learning on and to make rapid progress.
- Pupils do not always have opportunities to respond to comments teachers make when marking their books.
- Clear expectations are not always set for how much work pupils must complete and in what time span, which limits progress for some.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons or parts of lessons, including the teaching of phonics (letter patterns and the sounds they represent), mathematics and guided reading. Every full-time teacher was seen and one of the observations was conducted with a member of the senior leadership team
- The inspection team attended an assembly, listened to pupils read, observed pupils at playtime and lunchtime, and looked carefully at pupils' work in lessons, as well as the work they have completed over time in their books.
- Discussions were held with staff, governors, pupils and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 85 responses to the online Parent View survey, as well as informal discussions with parents and carers before school and the results of previous surveys commissioned by the school. Thirty questionnaires completed by staff were also taken into consideration.
- The inspection team looked at a range of documents, including those related to safeguarding and child protection, the school's view of its own work, development plans, checks on the quality of teaching, information about pupils' academic performance and logs relating to behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Jeanie Jovanova, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Philip Littlejohn

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a slightly smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those with special educational needs supported through school action is nearly half the national average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional funding for children looked after by the local authority, those eligible for free school meals and those with a parent or carer in the armed services) is much lower than average. Currently, at this school, it only applies to pupils who are eligible for free school meals.
- Over a third of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, higher than the national figure, with 13 different ethnic groups represented in varying proportions.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is similar to that found nationally. A very small number 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.
- The school has achieved the Gold Standard School Sport Mark.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching so that pupils make rapid and sustained progress across all year groups by:
 - ensuring all marking indicates to pupils what they need to do next to move their learning forward
 - creating opportunities for pupils to respond to comments teachers make in their books
 - setting clear expectations for the amount of work to be completed in a specified time period.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are broadly typical of those expected for three and four year olds. Some aspects of their personal and social development are lower than one might expect but they quickly make progress in these areas because staff establish routines well and create a calm and conducive environment for learning.
- The proportion of pupils who achieve the expected level in the phonics screening check in Year 1 is similar to the national figure. Phonics is taught particularly well in Year 2 which ensures that pupils leave Key Stage 1 with a secure grounding in the skills that underpin their above average attainment in both reading and writing by the end of Year 6. Such confidence and fluency also ensure they develop a love of books because they can make the most of the copious reading opportunities they are offered throughout their time at the school.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics is significantly above the national average. In mathematics, the proportions reaching the very highest levels are above average because the school caters very well for its more-able pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well because highly skilled teaching assistants support them to access carefully planned activities.
- Pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium funding make similar progress to other groups in school. The small numbers in the school mean that national comparisons are not wholly representative but, last year, pupils were just over two terms behind other groups in school in mathematics, reading and writing. This is slightly narrower than the national gap and much narrower than the in-school gap the previous year. The school is using the funding judiciously to improve achievement for these pupils.
- The school places a strong emphasis on correct use of the English language and has high expectations that pupils will use appropriate terminology in different subject areas. This supports all pupils and is particularly helpful in ensuring pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve as well as others in school.
- Pupils from different starting points and different ethnic groups achieve equally well because the school is committed to tackling discrimination and ensuring equality of opportunity.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good because teachers carefully check the performance of pupils from different groups to ensure they make equally good progress. Staff are judiciously deployed to support those pupils identified as needing extra help to ensure they do not fall behind. Pupils at the early stages of learning English are well supported to acquire the language they need to enable them to learn and make good progress in their lessons.
- Teachers plan lessons taking into account what pupils already know and can do. Plans outline key questions that ensure pupils are challenged to think deeply. Teachers continually check on pupils' understanding throughout lessons and any misconceptions are successfully tackled. For example, in a mathematics lesson on coordinates in Year 2, the teacher circulated among pupils checking that they had placed their picture in the correct box before giving her next instruction. This enabled all pupils to consolidate their understanding and make rapid progress.
- Reading is taught well because books are given a high priority and time is made for pupils to read for pleasure as well as to use books as an integral part of their learning.
- Writing is taught exceptionally well because strong links across different subjects give pupils a real purpose to their writing. Regular exposure to subject matter in lessons as diverse as art and geography ensures that pupils have deep knowledge of these subjects and the appropriate vocabulary to write with great depth and accuracy. For example, pupils were referring to notes they had made following a trip to Hampton Court when writing in the role of Tudor estate agents to ensure the descriptions in their brochures were historically accurate.

- Teachers mark pupils' books regularly and ensure pupils know what they have done well. However, they do not always indicate precisely what pupils need to do to improve, nor give pupils time to absorb the comments they have made and respond where appropriate. This limits the impact of teachers' marking in terms of how rapidly it drives progress.
- Teachers do not always indicate how much work they expect pupils to complete, nor give a clear time frame. Consequently, at times some pupils work too slowly and this can limit the pace of their progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils apply themselves well when working as a group and particularly when working on tasks away from the direct supervision of the teacher. Behaviour is not outstanding because there are points during a small minority of lessons where some pupils lose focus, usually when the teacher is addressing the whole class. Attitudes to learning are good rather than exemplary.
- Pupils are exceptionally courteous and considerate as they move around the building, when they are playing outside and in the lunch hall. This makes playtimes and lunchtimes harmonious and enjoyable for all.
- Parents and carers are highly positive about behaviour and almost all agree that their children feel safe at school. Pupils themselves say they feel safe and are very knowledgeable about ways in which to stay safe, particularly when using the internet and other new technology.
- Pupils are adamant that bullying does not occur. They understand clearly the different guises in which bullying can manifest itself but say that there is no such behaviour in school. Pupils further report that any minor incidents can usually be dealt with among themselves, and that if they do go to teachers with any issues, these are dealt with swiftly and effectively.
- The school's high level of commitment to equality and to developing pupils' social skills ensures that excellent relations are fostered among pupils and adults alike. Consequently, pupils treat each other, adults and the school environment with great respect.
- There are rarely any serious behavioural issues because behaviour is managed well over time. Documents show that measures put in place to support pupils who have particular behavioural needs have been effective because the number of incidents those pupils are involved in have reduced to zero.
- The school has worked successfully to continue to improve rates of attendance and punctuality so that they are now high in relation to national figures.

The leadership and management are good

- Senior leaders and governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and plan well for its continued improvement, setting ambitious long-term goals.
- Teachers' performance is managed well. Leaders at all levels check the quality of teaching and learning in a range of ways, for example by scrutinising work in books or by observing lessons. They give staff detailed feedback that supports them to make improvements to their practice.
- Subject leaders carefully evaluate the quality of work within their subject areas so that they know what they need to do to improve. For example, in this school, which has been recognised for its sporting excellence, the member of staff responsible for physical education has identified that there is scope to develop the staff's skills in teaching gymnastics. Plans have been put in place to use the additional government sports funding to plug this gap. The funding is also being used to ensure that groups of pupils that tend to access fewer sporting activities are targeted for specific support to increase their participation and improve their physical well-being.
- The curriculum affords motivational opportunities to develop key skills across a range of subjects which contribute significantly to pupils' good achievement, especially in writing. For example, pupils studying water as their overriding topic wrote poems based on famous oil paintings of the sea and letters to persuade others to use less water, made all the more convincing because of

the high level of background knowledge pupils had about how much water we use in different aspects of our lives.

- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development particularly well. The curriculum ensures pupils learn about a range of cultures in depth. Moral and ethical issues are deliberately debated so that pupils begin to develop a social conscience, as seen in the work on water that prompted pupils to ponder the inequities of global water availability and usage. A broad range of trips and visitors into school further enhances cultural understanding and strengthens concepts being taught across a range of subjects.
- The local authority and the school have a mutually beneficial relationship. The local authority uses the school's expertise to provide support to other schools in embedding the teaching of writing across the curriculum. The school in turn avails itself of training provided centrally.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are highly ambitious for the school. They have drawn up a detailed plan covering the steps needed to ensure the school continues to improve until it is outstanding. They are able to do this because they know the school well, understand how it compares to similar schools and have identified key priorities for improvement. They offer challenge and support to senior leaders in a range of key areas. For example, they are clear that for teachers to receive a pay rise they must meet stringent targets based on pupils' outcomes and know that, in some instances, pay rises have not been awarded. Governors know that the quality of teaching has improved because they understand the impact teaching has on standards. They can see that, because of current targets, teachers are eliciting increasingly high rates of progress for their pupils. Governors ensure that funding is spent judiciously, ensuring maximum impact on pupils' achievement. For example, they know that the pupil premium is being used to increasingly narrow the gaps in achievement between eligible pupils and their peers and that the sports funding is being spent to improve the quality of teaching in gymnastics. Governors take safeguarding seriously and ensure, through regular, high-quality training, that all statutory requirements are met. Governors are aware of the strengths of individual members of the governing body and allot roles accordingly. Training provided by the local authority and external organisations ensures they keep abreast of current educational thinking.

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	102664
Local authority	Merton
Inspection number	429471

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	224
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Garth Theron
Headteacher	Mary Jane Taylor
Date of previous school inspection	17–18 November 2010
Telephone number	020 8947 7227
Fax number	020 8947 8612
Email address	office@st-matthews.merton.sch.uk

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