

St Margaret's Church of England Primary School

St Margaret's Grove, Plumstead, London, SE18 7RL

Inspection dates 10–11 December 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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, many start school with below age-related levels of skill and the majority leave in Year 6 with results that are well above the national average in mathematics and English.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage gives children a secure, sound start to school life.
- Teaching is good over time and enables pupils to acquire the skills to make good progress in the core subjects.
- The early stages of reading are developed well through good phonics (letters and the sounds they make) teaching and the excellent small-group support for those who fall behind.
- Pupils, including those who find it very difficult to concentrate, understand the importance of learning and flourish through the positive relationships they develop with staff.
- The leadership and management of the school, including the governing body, have driven very successful improvements since the last inspection in both teaching and pupils' achievement.
- The governing body has successfully increased its knowledge of the school and its effectiveness. It now plays an important role in holding senior managers to account.
- St Margaret's works successfully to support pupils' behaviour, and consequently behaviour is good.
- Pupils develop a strong understanding about social, moral, spiritual and cultural aspects of life. One pupil wrote movingly about spirituality saying, 'It's when I am calm and quiet. Mum calls it daydreaming but I call it thinking!'
- The Forest School engages and inspires pupils very successfully.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Teachers do not always give pupils enough opportunities to respond to marking.
- The curriculum does not provide enough exciting and imaginative opportunities to enhance pupils' learning and achievement further.

Information about this inspection:

- Twenty lessons and part lessons and group activities were observed. Many of these observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority, middle and senior leaders, including the inclusion manager and the reading recovery teacher.
- Several pupils were heard to read and many also talked to inspectors about their experiences of school life.
- Thirty-three parents and carers responded to Parent View and one parent or carer wrote to the inspection team.

Inspection team

Penny Holden, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Stephen Schwartz	Additional Inspector
Margaret Coleman	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- The school admits 40 pupils per year group and consequently most pupils are in mixed-age classes.
- Ten per cent of pupils in the school have special educational needs supported through school action, which is below average. Another 20% of the school's pupils are supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, which is well above average. Their needs vary but many are linked to speech and communication difficulties.
- About a quarter of the pupils are eligible for pupil premium funding and this is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who do not speak English as their first language is higher than average.
- The largest group of pupils is Black African and others are from many other ethnic heritages.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that pupils have enough opportunities to show that they have taken note of their teachers' careful marking so that they benefit fully from guidance showing how to improve their work.
- Enable more teaching to be outstanding by:
 - implementing an imaginative curriculum that develops exciting cross-curricular links and gives pupils frequent opportunities to practise and apply basic mathematics and literacy skills work in interesting contexts.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the Nursery with skills that are below age-related expectations. They make good progress during the Early Years Foundation Stage because of the secure and motivating learning environment and the good quality of teaching.
- Progress is consistent across year groups, with all groups in Key Stages 1 and 2 making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In 2012 the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels (Levels 5 and 6) in English and mathematics in Year 6 was significantly above the national average and the figures for 2013 are similarly high.
- There were good results in 2012 in the grammar, spelling and punctuation tests, where seven out of 10 pupils achieved the expected Level 4 or higher; six out of 10 obtained the higher Levels 5 and 6. Again, figures for 2013 are similarly high.
- Pupils from the wide range of different ethnic backgrounds make similarly good progress, including Black African pupils. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make progress in line with their peers.
- Pupils with special educational needs also make progress in line with their peers overall, but with those supported through school action plus making particularly rapid progress.
- Year 1 phonics screening check results have improved this year significantly, with more than eight out of 10 achieving the expected standard. This has been achieved through the introduction of a more rigorous and proficient approach by staff involved.
- Those pupils who are supported by the pupil premium make good progress and by the end of Year 6 the great majority attain in line with their peers in both English and mathematics.
- The great majority of pupils eligible for free school meals make similar progress to that of their peers.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage and helps pupils make excellent progress. They start school with skills at below the levels expected for their age and by the time they enter Year 1 they have achieved levels equal to those of pupils of the same age nationally.
- The majority of teaching over time is good in Key Stages 1 and 2 and this leads to pupils' good progress. The teaching of phonics is strong, due to the training undertaken by staff, the common approach adopted, the effective materials used, and to the well-targeted daily sessions.
- Teachers and other adults want the very best for their pupils and expect all, including those with special educational needs, to do well. They spend a great deal of time and thought working with pupils outside the regular class time. This contributes effectively to their learning.
- Teachers have good information about the progress of groups and individuals in their classes and use this to plan appropriate work. This is of particular relevance in this school as most classes have pupils from two year groups.
- Teachers are well organised and systematic in their teaching of basic skills and this prepares pupils thoroughly for achieving well in the end of key stage tests. Reading, writing and mathematics are taught effectively. There are too few opportunities in the planned curriculum for teachers to practise these skills in interesting topics.
- Reception pupils love wrapping up in warm clothes and going outside to explore, observe and write about the natural world in the outside planted area.
- Where teaching is particularly interesting and challenging for pupils, they achieve especially well. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, the teacher combined mathematics and geography. She selected a task linked to hockey and football matches that required pupils to solve mathematical problems using information from several tables of data and a map of the United Kingdom.

- Pupils are clearly very strongly motivated by some of their learning experiences. For example, one girl at lunch explained vividly why Anne Boleyn was her hero. Another group talked excitedly about the spooky overnight sleepover Year 6 had in school to encourage their writing.
- In classrooms there is a generally positive climate for learning and, in several classes, teachers are very skilled at managing challenging behaviour in a quiet, efficient way that still ensures everyone is engaged in learning.
- Additional support and intervention are very effective, with teachers using ingenuity, patience and knowledge well to engage and help even the most challenging pupil.
- Some classroom environments are exceptional in promoting learning, high expectations, love of work and personal achievement through the highest quality of display.
- Teachers mark work thoroughly, although pupils are not always given sufficient opportunities to show that they have taken on board teachers' suggestions for improvement.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well around the school and in class and contribute greatly to the overall positive climate of the school. They are spontaneously friendly and welcoming, happy to talk to visitors and to share their work. They are extremely polite and respectful, opening doors and greeting everyone they meet.
- Secure, well-established behaviour management procedures are well understood by pupils, parents, carers and staff. Any incidence of poor behaviour results in reflection time which pupils take very seriously. The school's records show a marked improvement in behaviour since the introduction of these procedures.
- There is a positive atmosphere around school, and pupils, who together chose the school motto 'Live, Love, Learn', happily explain what this means to them. Relationships are good and there is an absence of discrimination.
- Pupils understand about different types of bullying and what they should do about it. The few instances of bullying that have occurred have been well managed by the school.
- 'Stranger danger' and how to keep themselves safe from risks are understood by pupils. They have a basic understanding about e-safety, how to use computers and other devices safely, and they have a broad understanding of the hazards of using social media.
- Pupils feel safe in school and love attending; this is borne out by the very good attendance which is much higher than average.
- Some pupils can get unfocused and fidgety in class which leads to low-level disruption; however, these are mostly pupils with particular learning difficulties and the school has excellent and effective programmes to address problems that arise. Many teachers are exceptionally skilled in managing these pupils in lessons so that not one second is lost from learning.
- The school has worked quietly and patiently with families where pupils have significant barriers to learning and these partnerships have been highly effective in changing pupils' behaviour. Some parents and carers expressed concern about behaviour generally, but this poor behaviour was not evident in records or reflected in interviews of pupils, or in inspectors' observations around the school.
- Pupils speak enthusiastically about opportunities to help run the school through a variety of jobs and responsibilities. They are particularly proud of the spiritual area created in the playground and how they help ensure it is used as a place to reflect and be calm.

The leadership and management are good

- Those leading and managing the school have high aspirations for all pupils and have a strong commitment to the school being a truly welcoming and supportive place where pupils thrive academically and personally. There has been a successful drive for improvement since the last inspection.

- There is now a very robust approach to regular and systematic monitoring of teaching and learning by middle and senior leaders which is securely moderated and accurate. This has identified areas for improvement in teaching and has allowed remedial action to be put in place to quickly improve the learning of affected pupils through team teaching, booster classes or the intervention of the deputy headteacher. Consequently, achievement has improved since the last inspection.
- Equality of opportunity is mostly promoted well. Detailed analysis of results and tracking of individual progress have also led to improvements in achievement. Action to improve disappointing phonic screening in 2012 was swift, decisive and very effective, so that pupils did well in 2013. The pupil premium funds have been used appropriately to improve eligible pupils' skills.
- Capacity to improve is good because improvement plans and school policies are based securely on well-founded evidence and ensure the school pursues the right objectives. The senior leadership team follows initiatives through and ensures that the impact is measured so that it is clear about successes. The school has worked effectively in partnership with the local authority and the Diocese of Southwark and others to secure these improvements.
- The school is keen to involve and include parents and carers in its work; attendance at parents' evenings and educational workshops is high. The new parents' forum, chaired by parents and carers, has worked effectively to improve the quality of school meals and hopes to continue to improve aspects of the school. Successful efforts are made to develop relationships with parents and carers who find talking to the school difficult. Areas of concern raised by parents and carers are acted upon quickly where possible.
- Performance management is well organised and structured, focusing effectively on pupils' achievement. The headteacher's targets feed into teachers' targets appropriately and good evidence is accumulated to ensure robust and accurate judgements are made leading to professional development and appropriate salary structures.
- The curriculum is understandably focused on developing pupils' achievement in the skills of mathematics, reading and writing, but it also gives some wider opportunities through topics in other subjects, extra-curricular trips and clubs such as gardening club. There are good opportunities for developing pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural understanding. However, much of the skill development work given to pupils is not linked to real-life opportunities or to aspects of the broader curriculum and is consequently less interesting to them. The Forest School has been a great success in inspiring and involving Nursery and Reception children in the outdoors.
- The school currently employs a sports coach to ensure that pupils develop physical skills to a good level, and all pupils benefit from these opportunities. In the future, sports funding is planned to provide training to improve teachers' own skills.

Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors have taken the need for their own improvement very seriously, by attending training to improve the way they work and by asking more challenging questions. They now have a clearer understanding of the success and areas for development in the school. They speak with authority about pupils' standards, including performance data, and the impact individual teachers have on these. They have a good understanding of the quality of teaching in the school and of the use of performance management, including how underperformance is tackled. They are knowledgeable about initiatives that have been taken and, in most respects, about the impact these have had on achievement. Governors are keen that the sports funding they have received is to be spent on improving staff skills so that improvements in physical activities for all pupils will be sustainable. They ensure that statutory duties such as safeguarding are met and that financial resources are managed appropriately.

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	100170
Local authority	Greenwich
Inspection number	425497

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	289
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Clive Welham
Headteacher	Mr Jeremy Lunnon
Date of previous school inspection	2–3 November 2011
Telephone number	020 8854 3924
Fax number	020 8854 4403
Email address	sao@stmargaretce.greenwich.sch.uk

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