

St Mary's Lewisham Church of England Primary School

329 Lewisham High Street, Lewisham, London, SE13 6NX

Inspection dates 1–2 April 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement.

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because they do not make enough progress as they move through the school. As a result, pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 has fluctuated in the last three years although it remains broadly average.
- Standards in reading and mathematics are lower in Years 3 to 6 when compared to standards in writing.
- The quality of teaching requires improvement because too often teachers' expectations are not high enough. Work does not closely match their pupils' abilities, especially for the most-able pupils.
- Governors have not yet ensured that the additional sports funding allocated to the school is used effectively.
- Over time, the leadership and management of the school have not been rigorous in assessing the school's effectiveness. Members of the governing body did not challenge the leadership enough to ensure that pupils' achievement improves quickly.
- Subject leaders do not use the information on pupils' progress effectively enough to monitor the achievement of individuals and groups of pupils.
- Pupils do not maintain their concentration in some lessons and so do not produce work of sufficiently high quality.
- The school has not dealt fully with some of the areas for improvement from the last inspection, including making sure that work builds well on pupils' earlier learning.

The school has the following strengths:

- The new senior leaders have put in place effective systems to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and pupils' progress and are making significant improvements.
- They are creating a culture of high expectations among all staff in the school.
- Parents, carers and staff are united behind the new leadership team.
- Pupils feel safe and attendance is above average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 13 parts of lessons, three of which were jointly observed with the executive headteacher and head of school. Inspectors undertook a series of short visits to other lessons across the school, observed two assembly sessions and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with staff and pupils. The lead inspector met with the Chair of the Governing Body, a member of the diocese and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 17 responses to the online Parent View survey, as well as the views of the parents and carers they met. Inspectors also considered the 17 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including national test results and the school's own information about pupils' achievement, the school's checks on how well it is doing, the school development plan, safeguarding policies, and records and documents relating to the work of the governing body.
- The inspection team also looked at pupils' work, records of behaviour and incidents, the school's website, data dashboard, records of the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and the additional sports funding action plan.

Inspection team

Kewal Goel, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Kanwaljit Singh

Additional Inspector

Janice Williams

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Mary's Lewisham is a one-form entry primary school with a diverse school community. The school is of average size with a decrease in role since the ending of one and a half forms of entry at the end of the last academic year.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises two part-time Nursery classes and one full-time Reception class.
- The overwhelming majority of pupils are from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. Pupils from Black Caribbean and Black African heritage make up the largest groups in the school.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much higher than average. Some have little knowledge of English when they join the school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those from forces families and those looked after, is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- Following the unexpected early departure of the previous headteacher in July 2013, the governing body acted over the autumn term to secure the partnership with another local school, and secured the services of an executive headteacher from an outstanding school and a new head of school from January 2014.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards for Year 6, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by:
 - providing more challenging tasks for the most able pupils so that they make rapid progress
 - ensuring that teachers have precise expectations for pupils when completing tasks
 - making sure teachers' comments in exercise books consistently provide appropriate advice that is linked to pupils' learning and creating more opportunities for pupils to read and respond to those comments
 - enabling pupils to sustain their focus in lessons to produce more extended pieces of work
 - making sure that best practice within the school and across the partnership is shared with teachers that need further development.
- Accelerate pupils' progress in reading and mathematics by:
 - providing opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of reading text
 - setting work at the right level for pupils in mathematics.
- Develop leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - subject leaders use pupils' progress information more effectively to identify areas where pupils need to make more rapid progress, especially in reading and mathematics
 - the school's policy on managing behaviour is implemented consistently
 - governors are aware of how the sports funding will be used and rigorously evaluate the effectiveness of the funding in improving pupils' physical well-being
 - an external review of governance is undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils make inconsistent progress as they move through the school and do not always reach the levels they are capable of achieving. Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 is average. In Years 3 to 6 there is a variable trend in attainment and progress.
- In 2013, the proportion of Year 6 pupils who attained expected and more than expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics was in line with the national average.
- Pupils' work and the school's checks on pupils' progress show that progress is inconsistent across the different year groups because of the variations in the quality of teaching.
- The attainment of the most able pupils requires improvement because they are not given enough challenge. As a result, they make less progress than they should by the end of Year 6 in reading and mathematics.
- Most children in the Early Years Foundation Stage enter the Nursery with skills and knowledge lower than expected for their age. Children make good progress in all areas of learning because of a good focus on communication and language development. By the end of Reception, the majority of pupils secure a good level of development.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is well organised with pupils getting focused support in small groups. The national checks for six-year-olds in 2012 and 2013 demonstrate above average skills in phonics for the majority of pupils.
- Progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is variable because their progress is not checked and followed at regular intervals.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language and those from minority ethnic groups make expected progress. However, in some year groups they make better progress than their peers because of good planning and targeted support by additional adults.
- In 2013, the attainment of pupils supported by the pupil premium was approximately two terms behind that of their peers in reading, writing and mathematics. In the most recent assessments, the gap is narrowing in some year groups because of the targeted and effective small-group support.
- Pupils read often and widely by the end of Year 6. Younger pupils have good knowledge of phonics and read fluently. However, their vocabulary skills are limited and they do not read for meaning.
- The new leadership team has introduced regular checks on pupils' progress so that any pupil who needs extra help is quickly identified and provided with specific support.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because some teachers do not always check pupils' understanding regularly and adjust their plans to provide more challenging activities to accelerate pupils' progress.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities in lessons to produce extended pieces of work.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils know and can do are not consistently high enough and the tasks set are not always demanding, especially for the more able pupils.
- There is good and sometimes outstanding teaching to be seen in the school but it is not consistent. Evidence in pupils' books shows that in some year groups, pupils, including the less able, are making good progress. However, there are few examples of extended pieces of work.
- Pupils learn well where teachers plan an exciting range of engaging activities, check pupils' understanding and maintain a brisk pace throughout the lesson.
- Many staff mark pupils' books regularly and suggest next steps in learning but this is not consistent across the school. In some classes there are good examples of pupils' responding to teachers' feedback but overall pupils are not given structured time to read and respond to

teachers' comments to ensure they do not repeat their mistakes.

- Relationships between adults and pupils are positive. When pupils are given opportunities to work with their peers or work in groups, they work very well together.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is variable. In an outstanding Reception lesson, children made excellent progress in their communication skills because of a sharp focus on phonics, writing words and sentences, vibrant displays, and good paired talk.
- The contribution of additional adults in lessons and in sessions outside of lessons is good. They support pupils well and challenge them appropriately. However, teachers do not manage the work of the additional adults well enough.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement because many pupils are not provided with sufficient opportunities to develop the necessary skills to take responsibility for their own learning. Too often, pupils are over-reliant on adults for guidance.
- Behaviour tends to fall short of good when teaching requires improvement. At these times, pupils lack resilience and concentration, especially when work is not set at the right level.
- Sometimes pupils need to be reminded of how to behave when moving around the school, especially during lunchtime.
- Pupils are aware of different forms of bullying. Pupils say that there is some bullying and name calling in the school; 'worry boxes' in classrooms are not used well. When they report incidents of bullying to teachers, sometimes they are not always dealt with effectively.
- Pupils are prepared for each lesson, bring the right equipment and most pupils respond quickly to staff's instructions.
- There have been recent improvements in the behaviour across the school. This is because new leadership team has high expectations of behaviour and zero tolerance of breaches of school rules. The leadership team has done much to monitor and improve behaviour across the school. This is reflected in the low number of incidents recorded during this term.
- There are caring and positive attitudes in the school, which are building confidence among pupils and staff.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel safe and parents and carers who responded to the Parent View survey and spoke to inspectors indicate that their children are safe in the school. Relationships are good, enabling those from different backgrounds to get on well together.
- Attendance is above average and has been so for the past three years. However, persistent absence and fixed-term exclusions are above average. The school has introduced effective measures that have led to a sharp fall in fixed-term exclusions and the number of persistent absentees. Pupils are well supported when they find it difficult to manage their behaviour.

The leadership and management

require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because leaders and managers over time have not successfully addressed some of the areas for improvement from the last inspection. The quality of teaching across the school is inconsistent and requires improvement. Systems for monitoring teaching and performance management have lacked rigour and the training for staff did not closely match the needs of the school and individual staff members.
- The new leadership team has taken significant steps to raise expectations and drive the school forward. Through their checks on the quality of teaching across the school, they have correctly identified clear priorities for improvement. These have been set out in the new school development plan that is focused strongly on improving the quality of teaching and raising

achievement. However, it is too soon to see the full impact of their actions.

- Leaders monitor the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' progress rigorously and set targets for improvement. The appraisal process is now closely linked to pupils' progress. Individual staff are held to account when pupils underachieve, and decisive action is being taken against weak teaching.
 - Subject leaders rely heavily on the new leadership team and the impact of their own work is limited. This is because they have not had the opportunity prior to this term to check pupils' progress in their subject. Neither have they contributed sufficiently towards the analysis of pupil progress information.
 - The school has a good policy to teach phonics but there is lack of focus on developing pupils' understanding of text.
 - The curriculum is well planned and takes account of pupils' needs. There is a strong focus on improving pupils' literacy skills. Literacy is at times well taught across different subjects although not always. However, opportunities to use numeracy across other subjects are not well planned.
 - The school's caring and supportive values provide many opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural experiences. The school has strong links with a school in Sri Lanka. A strong example of cultural development was when children in the Reception class were learning about Floppy's visits to different countries and wrote a postcard to children.
 - The pupil premium funding is used to provide extra support in literacy and numeracy through booster classes. Leaders have also used this funding to enrich pupils' experiences in art and music by employing a music and art specialist, but it has not impacted on their progress.
 - The school leaders have prepared an action plan for the use of the government's additional funding for sports but it has yet to be implemented to improve pupils' health and well-being.
 - The school has a range of strategies for engaging parents and carers. The school communicates with them in numerous ways, including half termly newsletters, text messages, and through invitation to class assemblies and invites for a cup of tea afterwards. The new leadership had a successful workshop for parents and carers on school values and vision, to which parents and carers contributed very well. There is an active parent-teacher association in the school.
 - The school promotes equal opportunities increasingly successfully, tackles discrimination and values the differences in backgrounds and beliefs of pupils.
 - In the past, the local authority has given the school a light touch review, which has mainly been confined to checking on the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. During last year the local authority was actively involved in supporting the governing body in creating a partnership with an outstanding school and in the appointment of the new leadership team. The level of support from the local authority is set to rise.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governors are supportive of the new school leaders and work closely with them. They have a good understanding of how the school is performing compared to other schools locally or nationally. In the past there was too much reliance on school leaders providing the governors with information, particularly on the quality of teaching and the impact of leaders' actions. They did not challenge the leadership effectively.
 - Governors are very well organised through committees and challenge the new leadership team by asking probing questions. They are aware of teachers' salaries, and procedures to manage the performance of the new head of school are in place. They have good understanding of teachers' standards and how underperformance is tackled. Finances are managed effectively.
 - Governors know about the use of pupil premium funding and its impact on improving the progress of pupils eligible for the funding. At the time of the inspection, governors were not aware of how the sports funding would be used by leaders and its impact on pupils. They have not kept up to date with relevant professional training.
 - Governors ensure that safeguarding arrangements and other statutory duties are met fully.
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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

Unique reference number	100730
Local authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	440932

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	250
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kate Ward
Executive Headteacher	John Goodey
Date of previous school inspection	19–20 June 2012
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