

St Mary's C of E Primary School

Church Street, Droylsden, Manchester, M43 7BR

Inspection dates 17–18 September 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Outstanding leadership from the headteacher and deputy headteacher, together with the promotion of traditional values of mutual respect and tolerance, are key to success in this school.
- From their starting points, all groups of pupils make at least good progress in writing and mathematics and progress in these subjects is outstanding in Key Stage 2.
- Standards are consistently above average in writing and mathematics and average in reading by the time pupils leave in Year 6.
- Children make a good start to their learning in the Early Years because of the close attention adults give to developing the social and personal skills of the children.
- The quality of teaching is good and an increasing amount is outstanding. Key to this are the outstanding care and support provided by all the adults for pupils' individual needs.
- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. They are polite, mature, very keen to learn and extremely respectful towards adults and one another.
- Pupils say, and their parents overwhelmingly agree, that they feel extremely safe and well-cared for in school.
- The exciting curriculum with an excellent range of out-of school-opportunities in sports, music and the arts provides extremely well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Middle leaders are fully involved in checking that all pupils achieve as well as they can in all subjects of the curriculum.
- All staff and governors have a determination to make the school outstanding. As a result, the school is well placed to continue to improve.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils do not achieve as well as they could in reading, particularly in Years 1 and 2 and for the most able in all classes, because they do not have a wide enough range of opportunities to apply and extend their reading skills.
- Marking in books does not consistently guide pupils as to what they need to do to improve their learning and achieve the best they can.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 14 lessons or parts of lessons. They also observed two lessons jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, staff, members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and a consultant working with the school, as well as with groups of pupils.
- The inspectors listened to pupils in Years 1 and 6 read and spoke informally to pupils during playtimes and lunchtimes.
- They took account of the 23 parent responses received at the time of the inspection from the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), as well as the views of the parents that inspectors spoke to and those expressed through the school's own parental survey.
- Inspectors took account of the 20 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Clare Henderson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

David Fann

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils disadvantaged and therefore eligible for the pupil premium is average. (The pupil premium funding is additional funding for those pupils eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.)
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those with special educational needs supported through school action is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school met the government's floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in 2013.
- The school runs a breakfast- and after-school club.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' attainment and accelerate the progress they make in reading by:
 - providing them all, and particularly the most able, with a wider range of opportunities to apply and extend their reading skills
 - giving reading a high prominence in the early years classrooms.
- Ensure that marking of pupils' work consistently shows them how to improve and teachers provide them with enough time to act upon the advice given.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Senior leaders have high expectations of what pupils can and should achieve. Staff share these views and have worked closely together to set and achieve the areas identified for improvement at the last inspection.
- Senior leaders provide well planned training for all staff, particularly in checking that all groups of pupils in their class achieve the best they can. Teaching has been effectively supported. As a result, the quality of teaching in English and mathematics has improved since the last inspection. Performance management is well managed through effective appraisal, and pay awards are dependent upon teachers' performance in relation to pupils' progress.
- Middle leaders are clear about their duties and responsibilities and are fully involved in checking that all pupils make at least good progress in their learning.
- Leadership is not outstanding overall, because pupils' achievement in reading, and particularly that of the most able, is not as good as it could be. This is because pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply and extend their reading skills.
- Strong leadership from the special educational needs leader ensures that those disabled and those with special educational needs make at least good progress in all year groups.
- Pupils find the curriculum topics very exciting and these promote their love of learning well. The actions the school takes to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is outstanding and evident in many lessons. The subjects taught are enhanced by many extra-curricular opportunities, for instance, playing an instrument such as a ukulele, belonging to the school choir or the many clubs, for instance, in sports, drama or zumba.
- The primary school sport funding is managed very well and provides more sporting opportunities for pupils through better trained teachers and more resources. These are ensuring that pupils are taught skills more effectively and have more opportunities to participate in sporting events involving other schools. As a consequence, pupils are developing healthy lifestyles.
- The local authority has had to provide very little support to this good school and has confidence in the leaders' ability to carry on making improvements. Partnerships with the parents, parish, diocese, consultants and other schools are very effective and have enabled the school to continue to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement since the last inspection.
- The pupil premium funding has been used successfully to provide additional support to enable this group of pupils to access the whole curriculum and make at least good progress in their learning.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors work successfully with senior leaders to improve the school. They are frequent visitors to the school, so they get first-hand experience of the life of the school, including the quality of teaching. They understand how teachers' performance is managed, and how any underperformance is tackled. They contribute well to identifying priorities for improvement and to making sure that plans to improve the school are effective.
 - As a result of the training they have received they understand what information on pupils' performance tells them about how well the school is doing compared to others nationally. This means they are able to hold school leaders to account to improve the school further. Governors check the school's budget meticulously and recently addressed an overspend so successfully that the school budget is now very healthy. They understand how extra funding, for example from the pupil premium, and school sport funding is spent, and to what effect. Safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements and members of the governing body carry out regular checks to make sure that pupils and staff are kept safe.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. In class, they approach tasks with great anticipation and are keen to learn whether they are working on their own or in groups.
- Those groups of pupils inspectors spoke to in formal meetings or informally say that they thoroughly enjoy school and feel safe and happy. Their enjoyment of school has an extremely positive effect, particularly on their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- School records and pupils' behaviour observed during the inspection in classrooms and around the school show that this is outstanding in classes and over time. This has a strong influence on pupils' good

achievement.

- Pupils are extremely proud of their school and this was seen in the impeccable way they move around the school, behave in church, assembly, take care of each other and the school equipment.
- Their outstanding behaviour is seen in practice in the very well organised before-school club, where pupils learn to care for school equipment and to attend to the needs of each other in a very caring way.
- Pupils enthusiastically welcome the responsibilities given to them, such as being school councillors, playleaders, prefects or house captains. Such roles help them to learn to act responsibly and to support each other's learning extremely well.
- Systems for recording and for following up any incidents of the very rare occasions of misbehaviour are consistent and secure.
- Pupils say bullying and racism are 'not tolerated' in their school and that they very feel confident that staff will sort out any concerns that may arise. The school's records also confirm this. Pupils have an outstanding understanding of different forms of bullying, including Internet bullying and those based on prejudice.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Pupils say, and their parents agree, that they feel very safe and supported in school and understand how to keep safe. They say 'any adult would help if you had a problem' and that adults have helped them to understand how to take care of themselves on the roads or when using the Internet.
- Pupils enjoy school, as reflected in their currently above average levels of attendance. They benefit from an exciting range of before- and after-school clubs, including sports, art and music. These contribute very well to their physical development and personal well-being.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teachers have strong subject knowledge and specialist teachers and teaching assistants, for instance for physical education, computing and creative writing, ensure that pupils make at least good, and often outstanding, progress in these subjects.
- Questioning is used effectively to test and extend pupils' knowledge and skills. Teachers generally use information about how well pupils have learnt to plan future work at the right level for them. However, teachers do not plan enough opportunities for pupils, especially the most able, to use their reading skills or to become enthusiastic readers.
- Writing is taught well and pupils make at least good progress in their time in the school. A contributing factor is the many opportunities provided to extend pupils' writing skills in topic work such as in writing scripts for the plays they perform and in using these skills to design programmes for the shows. As a result, they develop a high level of resilience, confidence and skills in performing.
- The teaching of mathematics, particularly for the most able in Years 5 and 6, is consistently strong. These pupils are provided with additional support and activities which stretch their mathematical skills very effectively, because they have opportunities to apply their numeracy skills in the other subjects they study.
- A strong feature of teaching is the contribution made by the skilled teaching assistants. They support pupils who are disabled, have special educational needs or are disadvantaged effectively. This targeted and nurturing support is provided without stifling pupils' imagination and creativity and enables them to make at least good progress.
- Marking systems are of a good quality overall and are often used effectively by teachers. However, this is not fully consistent in all year groups and work in pupils' books is not always marked in a way that provides them with helpful advice to extend their learning further.
- Parents overwhelmingly believe that their children are taught well.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Achievement is good. Although pupils are beginning with a better level of development this year, in previous years they have generally started in Year 1 with skills below those typical for their age.
- In 2013 and in this school year, in the Year 2 national tests in writing and mathematics, standards were average for all pupils, including the disadvantaged pupils. This represents good progress from pupils' starting points in writing and mathematics. However, they did not achieve as well in reading and standards were below average, particularly for the most able.

- At the end of Year 6, standards were above average in writing and mathematics, although average in reading in the national tests in 2013 and 2014. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 made outstanding progress in writing and mathematics, whilst their progress in reading was good.
- Progress is not as rapid in reading in all classes, but particularly in Years 1 and 2, because pupils do not always have a wide enough range of opportunities to practise and extend their reading skills.
- The most-able pupils in Years 1 to 6 achieve well in writing and mathematics. This is because of the opportunities they have to extend their writing skills within the topics they study and to apply and extend their mathematical skills in a range of problem-solving situations, such as designing sets for their Christmas productions. They do not achieve as well as they could in reading, because tasks are not always demanding enough to enable them to achieve the best they can.
- In 2013, a large majority of pupils did not reach the expected standard in the Year 1 national screening check on their knowledge of phonics (letters and the sounds they make). However, a more consistent approach to the teaching of phonics in 2014 resulted in a significant rise in the proportion achieving the expected standard.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make at least good progress in their learning. This is because of the effective additional support and guidance they are given by teachers and teaching assistants.
- The gap in average point scores between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2013 was a term in mathematics and reading and half a term in writing. The gaps between these pupils and others in the school in 2013 were three terms in mathematics, half a term in reading and one term in writing. Currently the gaps are closing and for a large proportion there is no gap or indeed the disadvantaged pupils achieve better than other pupils in the school.
- Overall, because all pupils make good progress from their starting points, this clearly demonstrates the school's commitment to, and success in, tackling discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity for all pupils.

The early years provision

is good

- The overall quality of the early years provision is good. Children begin school with skills that are significantly below those typical for their age. They make a good start in the Nursery class and quickly settle, because adults pay close attention to developing the social skills of the children through exciting play opportunities.
- Children are safe and cared for well. They rapidly learn to share and to get along with each other. During the inspection, which was their first week in school for many children, they were observed playing happily with each other in the home area, acting out the roles of mummy and daddy learning what is needed to take care of their 'families'.
- Children's behaviour and respect for staff and each other is good. As they move through the Nursery and Reception classes, they rapidly learn to listen to one another, to share toys and play well together. This extends their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- The few children who, because of their learning needs, find it more difficult always to behave well are managed very well by the adults and as a result, quickly learn to conform to the school's high expectations of behaviour.
- Children's number recognition and counting skills are developed well through rhymes, counting and sorting activities. They are learning to recognise numbers to five and beyond. However, at times, activities are not sufficiently challenging for the most-able children.
- Children show good progress in developing confidence and concentration skills, as they begin to explore letters and sounds and develop their reading and writing skills. However, opportunities are missed to extend children's interest in reading fully and extend these skills by giving reading a high enough prominence in the classrooms.
- Children's physical skills and their health and well-being are developed well through a broad range of activities. Learning to ride bicycles, to follow instructions or develop skills using arm and hand movements to paint contribute well to this development.
- The proportion of children beginning Year 1 having achieved a good level of development rose in 2014 and met broadly the expectations set in 2013.
- The early years is led and managed well. The leader is focussed well on improvements. She uses an accurate understanding of current strengths within the provision and areas for development to drive forward improvements well.

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	106247
Local authority	Tameside
Inspection number	439528

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	236
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	S Marsh
Headteacher	Kathryn Hampson
Date of previous school inspection	5 May 2009
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