

St Mary's Church of England Aided Primary School

Church Lane, Chessington, KT9 2DH

Inspection dates 7–8 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
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

- Children learn quickly in the Early Years Foundation Stage, especially in speaking, listening and personal development.
- Pupils of differing abilities achieve well across the school, especially in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils behave well and are keen to learn.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding and the high level of care provided by members of staff is greatly appreciated by the parents.
- Teachers are knowledgeable, manage behaviour well and, together with the teaching assistants, help the pupils to learn quickly.
- Strong leadership and management, including by governors, are ensuring that the school is improving rapidly. Teaching and pupils' achievement have improved since the previous inspection.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision supports pupils well so that they can become considerate and thoughtful young citizens.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils make frequent mistakes in their spelling and grammar. Provision for these aspects of literacy is not ensuring that pupils are helped to correct their mistakes quickly.
- Pupils are not always expected to do their best when writing in subjects other than literacy lessons.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed teaching and learning in 24 lessons, of which 12 were joint observations with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, teachers, pupils and members of the governing body. A discussion was held with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors took into account the 86 responses to the online survey, Parent View, and held informal discussions with a random sample of parents.
- The inspectors considered the views expressed in the survey responses from 19 members of staff.
- A range of information supplied by the school was scrutinised, including the school's own information about how well pupils are doing, planning documents, checks on the quality of teaching, the school development plan, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding procedures.

Inspection team

Alison Cartlidge, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Mo Galway	Additional Inspector
Gordon Jackson	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Mary's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- There is a Nursery and Reception class in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children are part time in the Nursery and full time in the Reception class.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium, which is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after, is broadly average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is broadly average.
- The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- There have been several changes in teaching staff since the last inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of pupils' spelling and grammar, by:
 - making sure that pupils make use of their knowledge about spelling patterns when writing new words and check their work for spelling mistakes
 - strengthening the support for pupils so that they use grammar correctly in their speech and writing.
- Sharpen teachers' expectations for pupils' written work in subjects other than literacy, so that they all consistently produce work at the right level.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher work together effectively and have a shared vision for the school. There is a clear understanding of what works well and what remains to be done to make the school even better.
- Expectations for behaviour, good attendance and learning are made clear to members of staff so that the school can continue to develop. Leaders are good role models for other members of staff and the pupils so that good relationships are fostered and good behaviour can flourish.
- Leaders check up on teaching thoroughly, and provide the right training and support so that teachers improve rapidly. For example, three teachers have developed sufficiently since the previous inspection to be promoted to senior positions in other schools. Teachers are enthusiastic about discussing their lessons and are self-critical showing that they are accustomed to thinking about how they can improve next time.
- The school promotes equal opportunities and tackles discrimination well. Pupils who are eligible for additional funding receive good support socially and academically according to their needs. For example, they have access to additional clubs and visits and are given one-to-one support when there are gaps in their learning. Consequently, gaps in their attainment have closed in mathematics and are closing rapidly in reading and writing.
- Middle leaders play an important role in supporting other teachers and checking that they are doing well. There are new plans to show what needs to be taught in various subjects. However, leaders do not always make sure that these are always sufficiently adjusted in class so that all pupils learn as quickly as they can when writing.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is provided for well. Pupils are prepared for life in modern Britain because they learn about other cultures and celebrate festivals such as the Chinese New Year and Diwali. They have good opportunities for thoughtful reflection in assembly and discuss values such as sharing and thankfulness.
- The new curriculum beyond English and mathematics is being delivered through a range of interesting topics, which encourage pupils to make rapid progress.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements. All adults in school are checked for their suitability for working with pupils and are trained in how to keep them safe. The school works especially hard at supporting pupils with specific needs. For example, parents speak highly of the support the school offers when children have been absent due to illness.
- The diocese and local authority provide good support and as a result this is a rapidly improving school.
- The special funding to improve physical education and sport has been spent wisely on additional specialist help, staff training, resources and new clubs. Pupils are even more involved in sporting activities than in the past, and activities provided contribute well towards their healthy lifestyles. In addition, pupils with poor attendance in the past now come to school regularly so that they can benefit from some of these new activities.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are knowledgeable about teaching and know how good teaching is at the school. They are clear about the arrangements for improving teaching, know that they are rigorous and understand that pay is linked to performance. They know how good teaching is being rewarded and what steps are being taken to support weaker aspects of teaching. They understand information on how well groups of pupils are doing and check that funding is having the right impact on learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good enabling them to concentrate well in lessons. They are keen to take part in discussions and help each other when working with a partner and sharing good ideas. Pupils can be trusted to find their own resources and to get on with their work with little fuss. However, these good attitudes to learning are not yet leading to outstanding achievement.
- Parents and pupils agree that behaviour at school is good. Pupils demonstrate good social skills. They are polite and friendly, understand the importance of being fair and show each other respect. They demonstrate their strong feeling of belonging by trying hard for their teams in sport.
- A variety of equipment at playtime is enjoyed and used sensibly by the pupils. As a result playtimes are harmonious.
- Rates of attendance are improving and are now above average, demonstrating that pupils are wanting to come to school to learn.
- Pupils enjoy the challenge they are given in mathematics and typically say, 'if it is too easy you are not learning anything'. In contrast, they do not always push themselves hard enough when they are writing, so that they can reduce their mistakes in spelling and grammar.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. All parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire agree that pupils feel safe at school. Pupils say that bullying is rare and is dealt with to their satisfaction.
- Pupils have a very strong knowledge of how to stay safe and discuss safe behaviour with each other as a matter of course. For example, pupils are quick to remind each other of the dangers involved in running with your hands in your pockets.
- The school provides a very detailed programme about health and safety issues and is vigilant in keeping pupils safe. Pupils are aware of how to stay safe when using the internet and understand about the different types of bullying and why they are wrong.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. Teachers form strong relationships with the pupils and use praise well, enabling them to manage behaviour positively.
- Teachers share their good subject knowledge with the pupils and provide resources that support pupils' learning. For example, in Year 4, pupils shared the good features of writing through a passage about Theseus and the Minotaur.
- Clear instructions and good advice through marking enable pupils to know what they are to do and learn. Most work provides the right level of challenge, especially in mathematics. In reading, home/school records provide an opportunity for teachers to share the pupils' next steps with parents so that they can help their children at home. Phonics (sounds that letters make) are taught well and pupils are happy to use this knowledge when tackling new words.
- Checks are not always made on whether pupils use their knowledge about spelling patterns to help spell unfamiliar words, or whether pupils have made avoidable mistakes. Pupils are not always shown the correct use of grammar in their speech or in their writing.
- Teachers plan interesting topic work across two year groups. This ensures that they cover a breadth of information and skills, although at times work is not sufficiently fine tuned so that all pupils complete work that provides enough challenge.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' progress is improving rapidly and their achievement is good over time. Attainment has risen since the previous inspection and is now broadly average by the end of Year 6, in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils do slightly better in reading and mathematics than in writing. In reading, pupils gain a firm understanding of the sounds different letters make and they use this knowledge to help them read unfamiliar words. In mathematics, pupils are especially enthusiastic about their work and rise to the challenges provided in most lessons. For example, in Year 6, pupils enjoyed challenging each other when discussing cubing and squaring numbers.
- In writing, pupils learn various skills but do not consistently make good use of what they have learned about spelling and grammar. For example, they do not always remember the similarity of spelling patterns in certain groups of words or check their work for avoidable mistakes. In addition, they do not take enough care by using the right tenses when writing about the past, present or future.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress from their differing starting points. They are supported well in their learning and social development by teachers and teaching assistants. Work is carefully planned and specific to their needs.
- The attainment of pupils eligible for additional funding is catching up with other pupils and they make good progress. In 2013, they were a year behind others in the school and nationally in writing, half a year behind in reading but the same as other pupils in mathematics. The attainment gaps narrowed further in reading and writing this year.
- The most able pupils make rapid progress, although occasionally when working as a whole class they finish more quickly than other pupils and could move on to something more difficult.
- Pupils' literacy and numeracy are suitably developed to support their learning and to prepare them for the next stage of education. Although they make good progress in all subjects, their writing in topic work does not always match their differing abilities well enough.
- Sports provision is ensuring that pupils reach the levels of which they are capable. For example, in Year 4, pupils sustained activities well showing their improved fitness levels and increased agility by jumping and picking up cones.
- Pupils' positive attitudes towards learning have helped them to learn quickly.

The early years provision is good

- The vast majority of children have skills and knowledge below the levels expected for their age when they join the Nursery class. Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, especially in speaking and listening and personal development. They achieve well and the majority reach a good level of development when they start in Year 1.
- Teaching is effective. Relationships between members of staff and the children are strong enabling children to settle quickly and to become confident and independent. Members of staff are skilled in asking questions to check up on the children's learning and to encourage speech. For example, children enjoyed discussing their baking when making bread and flapjacks for harvest.
- Daily opportunities to practise manipulating materials are improving the children's hand control. For example, they thread beads, sew and use small construction toys to improve their eye and hand co-ordination and to prepare them for learning to write.
- Children are provided with a wealth of interesting activities inside and outside, although occasionally when working on tasks they have chosen for themselves learning does not move forward quickly enough.
- Children behave well and are polite. For example, in the Reception class one pupil said, 'excuse me, I need a little help'. Members of staff make sure that the children are kept safe and are aware of how to stay safe. For example, children know to wash their hands before handling food to prevent getting germs.
- Strong leadership and management are ensuring that children make a good start to their education and that their learning is checked up on so that they can build on what they already know and can do.

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	102593
Local authority	Royal Borough of Kingston
Inspection number	442143

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	271
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jenny Ward
Headteacher	Linda Rainbow
Date of previous school inspection	26–27 February 2013
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