

St Mary's Church of England Primary School

Broomfield Drive, South Reddish, Stockport, Cheshire, SK5 7DR

Inspection dates 26–27 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- Leadership and management are good. The headteacher's clearly articulated vision and ambition for the school are shared by all members of its community. The school has grown in popularity and is now oversubscribed as more families have chosen it for their children.
- The good quality early years provision gives children a happy, confident start to their school life. They make good progress in all aspects of their learning.
- All groups of pupils make good progress and achieve well in Key Stages 1 and 2. Improvements made in the last two years have reversed a previously downward trend in standards since the school was last inspected.
- Behaviour is good and pupils feel safe and well cared for. They love coming to school, enjoy their lessons and respond positively to the learning challenges provided for them.
- The quality of teaching is good and teachers are committed to continually improving their skills. Lessons are well planned. The work of teaching assistants and other support staff makes a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.
- Strong leadership is resulting in further improvements to the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. Governors have a good knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They provide effective support and challenge to senior leaders.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The quality of teaching does not yet result in outstanding achievement for pupils. There are minor inconsistencies in the extent to which teachers ensure that all pupils' learning is moved on to make at least good progress in lessons and over time.
- Not enough pupils are making rapid and sustained progress in reading, writing and mathematics over time in order to reach standards that are consistently above or well above average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 10 parts of lessons, most of which were observed jointly with the headteacher. In addition, inspectors conducted shorter visits to all classes to look at the quality of the curriculum and observed staff teaching pupils in small groups.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' workbooks during most lessons and examined records of their attainment and progress. They also carried out, alongside the headteacher, a scrutiny of work by groups of pupils in Years 2 and 6 to verify the accuracy of the school's records of their achievement.
- They listened to pupils read in Years 1, 2 and 6 and discussed with them their views about reading.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and reviewed a wide range of documentation, including the school's view of its performance, the school's improvement plans and documents related to pupils' behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior and middle leaders, teachers, groups of pupils and members of the governing body. They also met with a representative from the local authority and spoke with a number of parents as they brought their children into school in the morning.
- Inspectors took account of 26 responses given in Parent View, the online questionnaire for parents.

Inspection team

Marguerite Murphy, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Faheem Chishti

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school, although it has grown in size across most year groups over the last few years, as it has become a one-form entry school since the previous inspection. Consequently, a higher than average proportion of pupils joined the school at other than the usual times.
- The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds and most speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is just below average overall but varies between different year groups. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school provides a breakfast club each day.
- The school's Reception class provides full-time early years provision.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' achievement further so that the standards they reach in reading, writing and mathematics rise to be consistently above or well above average by:
 - building on the improvements already made in the quality of teaching across the school, until more is outstanding and no teaching is ever less than good
 - ensuring that, as a result of these improvements, more pupils make rapid and sustained progress over time from their starting points.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher demonstrates high expectations and has promoted a positive climate for learning that has energised staff and governors, who are similarly enthused and committed to doing their best for the pupils. The headteacher is very well supported by the recently appointed deputy headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team.
- Leaders have taken rigorous action to tackle a potentially downward trend in standards and pupils' progress in the last two years. The successful outcome is that standards are rising and all groups of pupils have equal opportunities to reach their potential.
- Significant factors in this are senior leaders' actions in tackling underperformance, setting high expectations and making improvements to the quality of teaching. This is enhanced by the renewed enthusiasm and positive ethos across the school, with strong staff teamwork and commitment.
- Middle leaders have a good range of skills and are developing these well to keep a close check on the effectiveness of provision in their subjects or aspects of responsibility. Leadership of the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is a particular strength. It ensures that pupils' individual needs are known by all staff and taken into account, and that regular communication with parents is maintained as a vital element in the home-school partnership.
- The school's accurate tracking of the achievements of all groups of pupils across the school helps leaders to identify quickly where there are gaps in learning or if some pupils are not progressing quickly enough, so that actions can be taken quickly.
- Through careful checks on the school's performance, particularly in teaching and learning, leaders identify the right priorities for improvement and these are reflected in the school's development plans. Progress against action plans is reviewed regularly so that modifications can be made. For example, additional staffing resources are used flexibly according to pupils' changing needs and leaders monitor the impact on pupils' progress to ensure support programmes are successful and therefore provide good value.
- Teachers are held to account by leaders for the achievement of their pupils through rigorous performance management and appraisal arrangements. Teachers' pay progression is linked to the progress made by pupils as well as their contribution to whole-school improvement priorities. Professional development and training opportunities are planned well to meet staff and whole-school needs.
- The school uses additional government funding effectively. For example, use of the primary physical education and sports funding is contributing towards increasing pupils' participation in a range of sports, including competitive events, and resources for additional after-school physical activities.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well both within lessons and more widely through a variety of opportunities such as assemblies, visiting speakers and trips to different places of worship. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong and the key values of democracy, equality and justice are promoted within the curriculum as appropriate to pupils' age and understanding. As a result, the school helps pupils to be suitably prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The school's allocated local authority improvement adviser visits termly to offer challenge and guidance as well as checking the effectiveness of leaders' actions. Following a period in the recent past when additional monitoring and support was deemed necessary, it is appropriate that the school is moving back to a 'light touch' approach from the authority.
- Improvements made in the leadership of, and provision in, the early years have contributed to the school's increased popularity and the fact that the Reception class is now oversubscribed.
- Parents are very happy with the school and most also consider that they receive good information about their children's achievements and how they can help them at home.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body scrutinises the work of the school, asking questions of leaders and holding them to account and are therefore fully aware of the school's strengths and areas for development. This represents improvement and a culture shift since the time of the last inspection, when governors were not sufficiently involved in evaluating progress or challenging the school.
 - Governors ensure that pupil premium funding is used appropriately and check on the impact it has on the progress made by disadvantaged pupils. Governors are aware of their statutory duties with regard to safeguarding children and the school's arrangements meet requirements. They know about the quality of teaching in the school and use this information to inform their decisions about teachers' pay.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The vast majority of parents who responded to the Parent View questionnaire agree that the pupils are well behaved and that the school deals effectively with bullying.
- Teachers and other adults have high expectations of behaviour to which pupils respond positively. Most pupils behave consistently well in lessons, at break times and around the school. This is supported by the fact that the school provides a happy, family-style environment and pupils know that they are valued and cared for.
- Where there are instances of individual pupils having difficulties managing their behaviour, they are well supported, including where relevant by partnerships with, and advice from, external agencies.
- Pupils are courteous and friendly to visitors. They are happy to talk about their school and like to ask questions themselves because they are curious and eager to learn. This is also reflected in pupils' positive views on the school's homework policy, in which they are invited to do independent research and self-chosen activities in their own time without pressure. They are, nevertheless, keen to complete tasks and receive feedback from teachers. As a result, homework makes a good contribution to their learning and independence.
- Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities and helping each other, for example through roles on the school council or as play leaders supporting younger children.
- Attendance is just above average. The school leaves no stone unturned in monitoring and following up any absences to make sure that attendance improves for those with lower than average rates of attendance. There had previously been a high number of days lost by some families taking their children on holiday in term time, which interrupts learning. This is not tolerated now and these figures are much lower than before. Pupils are punctual to school and lateness is not a problem.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. All parents who responded to the Parent View questionnaire, as well as those who spoke with inspectors, agree that their children are happy and feel safe at St Mary's.
- Pupils speak highly of their school and say they feel safe. They are taught how to stay safe in and out of school and understand how to keep themselves safe when using the internet, for example.
- Pupils are aware of the different forms of bullying but say that it is rare and the only problems that may happen on occasions are usually due to misunderstandings or rough play rather than deliberate actions. They know that racist or homophobic name-calling is wrong and do not consider that it goes on in their school.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and prepare their lessons well. They make appropriate use of information and communication technology (ICT) as a teaching resource to enhance presentations and promote pupils' motivation and learning. Effective teaching of reading, writing and mathematics ensures that pupils make good progress in their basic skills.
- Teachers are conscientious in the time they spend marking pupils' books and providing good quality feedback about their work and what would make it even better. This is supported by verbal feedback, particularly for younger children and time is given for pupils to respond to the feedback by improving their work.
- The curriculum is good and pupils enjoy the range of relevant and interesting topics they are taught that are planned well by teachers. Literacy and numeracy are promoted and applied across a range of subjects. An emphasis on developing problem-solving skills is used to good effect in mathematics and other lessons. Pupils appreciate the trips, visitors and 'collapsing the curriculum' events that enhance their learning, including the activities outdoors.
- Teaching assistants are deployed effectively to contribute to pupils' good progress, whether in whole-class or group situations, and all adults work together as a team to achieve this.
- The now well-established method of providing four tasks at various levels of difficulty (the 'Chilli Challenges') from early on in lessons is managed well by teachers. Consequently, pupils are becoming more self-aware and independent, making appropriate choices based on their skill levels. It also promotes resilience as pupils push themselves to 'have a go' at the next level up without feeling they have failed if they decide to move back when a challenge proves too much. Where this method works best, there is clear progression in the difficulty levels of the tasks and clarity about what the pupils should learn,

understand or do better by the end of the lesson.

- Teachers are keen to continually improve their skills. Occasionally, however, teachers do not use their detailed knowledge about pupils' prior learning and current attainment to question pupils deeply enough to push their learning on and so make more rapid and sustained progress.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Standards reached in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 have been typically in line with national averages for the last five years. There are minor variations as the number of pupils on roll has grown and their starting points have fluctuated. For example, a higher proportion in some years has entered the school with additional learning, communication or social and emotional needs.
- The changes in the school's circumstances in recent years have now stabilised; there are fewer pupils entering mid-year in various classes and standards are rising at the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2. Year 6 pupils in 2014 attained broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. This represented at least good progress for those pupils when taking into account their starting points and the additional needs or difficult circumstances of some pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because their individual learning, communication or social needs are effectively met. Similarly, lower-attaining pupils are enabled to reach their potential. A well-planned range of group or one-to-one teaching support strategies are effective in giving targeted help in specific aspects of literacy or numeracy where needed for planned periods of time.
- The most able pupils achieve well, particularly as they respond positively to the higher-level challenges set for them and enjoy stretching themselves to tackle these. Inspection evidence, including scrutiny of work in the current Year 6 class indicates that the most able pupils are on track to reach the higher Level 5 in reading, writing and mathematics. Although at the end of Key Stage 1 there are fewer pupils than nationally reaching the higher Level 3 in mathematics, the school has actions in place to improve this. In-school tracking also shows that the most able pupils across the school are making good progress towards their challenging targets.
- In the 2014 Year 6 cohort, disadvantaged pupils' attainment in English and mathematics was over a year behind that of other pupils in the school and non-disadvantaged pupils nationally. Their progress was not significantly different to the others in the school or national figures, however, as the attainment of a very small number of pupils was affected by specific issues or external difficulties. Inspection evidence shows that disadvantaged pupils in the school make good progress in line with those who are not disadvantaged.
- Pupils' achieve well in their writing across different subjects and are taught the appropriate spellings, grammar and punctuation for their age. Leaders recognise that there is room to improve the quality and consistency of some pupils' handwriting or the presentation of their work in books, including in mathematics and the use of rulers.
- Reading is taught well and promoted throughout the school. Children learn phonics (letters and the sounds they make) and how to combine these to successfully read words in Reception and Key Stage 1. Their skills are developed well by staff so that they understand the meaning of the books they read, and begin to access higher levels of text as they move through Key Stage 2. Pupils say they enjoy reading, and show enthusiasm and interest in a good range of different texts, expressing their preferences and their knowledge of different authors.
- Pupils' progress occasionally slows because their capabilities and prior knowledge are not built on sufficiently well to secure consistently good achievement.

The early years provision is good

- The overall effectiveness of the early years is good. There are particular strengths in the quality of teaching and leadership that ensure expectations are high and the provision is continuously improving for the benefit of the children. All adults work well together to make the best use of resources and their time to move children's learning on from the moment they arrive in the setting.
- There are fluctuations from year to year in children's skills on entry to the Reception class. Currently, a high proportion entered with skills below those considered typical in listening and attention, understanding of the world and speaking. In other areas, such as early reading, writing and mathematics, they enter with skills that are similar to those typically seen in children of this age.
- By the end of Reception, children have made good progress with some particularly positive gains in, for

example, their speaking, listening and self-confidence. The proportion reaching a good level of development is in line with the national average and they are well prepared for the next stage of their learning in Year 1.

- Staff check children's learning on a day-to-day basis to identify strengths and next steps. They communicate regularly with parents as partners in their child's learning, which helps to ensure that children are happy, settle well and make good progress, whatever their starting points or specific needs may be.
- Children learn to share and they get along with each other and all the adults who teach and look after them. They clearly feel very secure in the safe routines and expectations of Reception class and its vibrant, attractive learning environment. The recently developed outdoor area and its equipment, although much enjoyed by the children, does not yet closely mirror the quality and impact of the learning opportunities used indoors.

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	106106
Local authority	Stockport
Inspection number	448293

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	199
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Elaine Small
Headteacher	Elizabeth Irvin
Date of previous school inspection	15 March 2010
Telephone number	0161 4804736
Fax number	0161 476542
Email address	headteacher@st-marys-reddish.stockport.sch.uk

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