

# St Mark's Church of England Primary School

Harleyford Road, London SE11 5SL

<b>Inspection dates</b>	3–4 December 2015
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The leadership team, governors and staff are ambitious for the school and have worked hard to make sure that the school has improved. The rate of improvement has increased this term.
- Pupils achieve well because they are well taught. They work hard and make at least good progress from their different starting points.
- Pupils' work is well marked and they are given time to follow up on the guidance they are given. They use this time well to improve their work.
- When pupils leave the school, attainment matches national averages, and some pupils are attaining above this in reading and mathematics.
- Disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress, as do those at an early stage of learning English. This is because their needs are analysed accurately and they are given the right support.
- Teaching is good as a result of high-quality training and support. Teachers plan interesting work which pupils say they enjoy.
- Relationships are good. Pupils feel safe and behave well because they are well cared for and understand what is expected of them.
- Pupils learn to take responsibility for themselves and respect each other.
- The school's values, which also reflect British values, are well understood and put into practice by adults and pupils. This strongly supports pupils in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Governors support the school well. Governance has improved since the last inspection and governors now provide the school leaders with a good balance of support and challenge.
- Surveys of parents' opinions show a high level of satisfaction with the school.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Though the quality of teaching is improving, there is not enough outstanding teaching to ensure outstanding achievement.
- The improvements seen in Years 1 to 6 are not as secure in the early years class, with the result that achievement there is not as good.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Building on the expertise within the school and the federation, raise the overall quality of teaching from good to outstanding by:
  - capitalising on pupils' enthusiasm for learning to raise their own expectations, and those of their teachers, for what they can achieve
  - making better use of information from question and answer sessions during lessons to adjust the work to meet pupils' needs more effectively and increase their rate of progress.
  
- Ensure that the developments underway in the early years provision are securely embedded by:
  - more systematically recording progress, particularly in writing and mathematics, and using this to plan children's next steps in learning
  - making more effective use of both the indoor and outdoor areas to support learning

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The school has undergone major changes in leadership and management since the previous inspection and is now part of a federation with Archbishop Tenison's School. This is at a relatively early stage of development but the positive impact is evident in the increase in the pace of improvement since it started and the raising of expectations for what can be achieved.
- The executive headteacher and the head of school lead a strong senior team who are determined to ensure that every pupil has the opportunity, and is challenged, to achieve as well as he or she possibly can. Good systems for checking on pupils' progress enable them to identify where pupils need to be making faster progress and make changes which will help them to achieve this.
- Ensuring high-quality teaching is seen as key to improving outcomes for pupils; consequently, the management of teachers' performance is closely linked to achievement. Teachers know that they are accountable for the progress their pupils make, and that they will be supported by high-quality training and professional development. This is carefully planned to support whole-school priorities as well as individual teachers' needs. Staff are well motivated, are proud to be a member of staff at the school and enjoy working there.
- The curriculum is enriched by visits to places of interest, visitors to the school and many opportunities for extra-curricular activities, such as sport, music and drama. Pupils also start to learn Spanish in Key Stage 1. Lessons in English, and to a lesser extent in mathematics, are supported by work in other subjects; for example, work in history helps pupils to develop their literacy skills.
- The curriculum strongly supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their understanding of British values. For example, the school council members talked about how they had been elected to their positions and showed a mature understanding for their age of the importance of rules. This understanding, together with the culture of respect and tolerance which underpins all the school's work, prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- Primary school physical education and sport funding has been used effectively to widen the range of activities on offer and improve participation in sport. This has included a good partnership with Surrey Cricket at the Oval and training for teachers to improve their coaching skills.
- The school uses its additional funding very well to ensure that disadvantaged pupils do as well as other pupils academically. Their progress is monitored closely and the gap between disadvantaged pupils and others has closed by the time pupils leave the school.
- As a result of effective leadership, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. Regular reviews of progress ensure that programmes are tailored well to pupils' needs and are adjusted to take account of how well they are achieving.
- The local authority provides an appropriate level of support to the school, as does the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education. Both have worked closely with the school to help leaders make the improvements identified at the previous inspection.
- **The governance of the school**
  - Led by an experienced Chair of the Governing Body, governors have responded very positively to the issues raised in the previous inspection. They are now much more effective in holding the school leaders to account.
  - Governors know the school and the pupils well. Through regular visiting and taking responsibility for different areas, they make sure that statutory requirements, including those relating to special educational needs, finances and safeguarding, are met.
  - Governors are kept well informed about the quality of teaching and the outcomes for pupils; they have tackled underperformance effectively. They ensure that performance management is used to set appropriate targets which are linked to pay and promotion.
  - The governors have responded very positively to what the federation brings. They are working with the executive headteacher and the head of school to see that the opportunities for support are used to greatest effect.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. School leaders ensure that they meet statutory requirements and keep pupils safe at all times.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teaching is good and promotes good learning. The evidence from pupils' work, and from the school's own checks on the quality of teaching over time, shows that expectations for what pupils can achieve have been raised.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and a secure understanding of how pupils learn. They know their pupils well and are clear about what they should be achieving at different ages. New learning is explained carefully so that pupils understand what they are expected to achieve.
- Teachers plan carefully to ensure that the activities will interest pupils and encourage them to work hard and achieve well. Work is usually well matched to different needs. Different subjects support the use of literacy and numeracy skills as, for example, in the work in science, though occasionally there is too much emphasis on literacy and not enough on the subject being studied.
- Teachers check pupils' progress through question and answer sessions during the lessons. Where this is most effective, pupils make really rapid gains in knowledge and understanding. In a Year 1 mathematics session, the most-able pupils were confidently using what they had learnt to solve more difficult problems and could explain the reasoning behind their answers.
- Sometimes the pace of lessons can be a little slow and teachers are not sufficiently exploiting pupils' enthusiasm for learning. The questioning does not stretch pupils and extend their thinking sufficiently, and teachers' expectations for progress are not as high as they could be.
- Teachers use the school's marking policy very effectively to check pupils' progress and guide them on their next steps. The work in their books shows that the marking is having a very positive impact and helping to raise standards. Pupils are given time to respond to marking promptly, which helps to reinforce their learning.
- The systematic teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 gives pupils a good foundation for literacy. They learn to read well and apply their skills in other subjects, as well as in reading for pleasure.
- Writing is a whole-school focus for improvement and the work in books shows that this is having a positive impact. Pupils are being expected to write at greater length and for a wide variety of purposes; they are generally keen to do so. Opportunities are also provided for pupils to write in other subjects.
- Lessons are orderly and, from an early age, routines are well established. Relationships throughout the school are positive. Consequently, pupils enjoy their learning in an atmosphere of mutual respect. Instances of low-level disruption are relatively uncommon and are dealt with immediately.
- Teaching assistants support pupils' learning effectively. They plan with teachers and leaders, and know what they are expected to do in class and when working in small groups. They are particularly effective in supporting the good progress made by disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils grow into confident young people who enjoy learning and take it seriously. They learn to work successfully in a variety of ways, such as independently, in pairs or in teams, both in and outside the classroom.
- Pupils' attitudes towards learning are good from the Reception class onwards. One pupil commented: 'The school is great because you learn more and more until you are ready for secondary school.' A younger pupil said: 'We do lots of fun learning.'
- Pupils get on well with each other irrespective of the different ethnic, social and cultural backgrounds. They show respect and tolerance, supporting each other well both in lessons and at playtime.
- The staff promote a culture where pupils feel safe and learn how to stay safe. They understand about different types of bullying, and learn what they should and should not do when using modern technology and social media. Pupils trust adults to look after them and are confident that staff will respond to any concerns that they may have. Bullying is relatively rare and school leaders deal with it rapidly and effectively, should incidents arise.
- Pupils thrive on taking responsibility and have many opportunities to do so in classes and in the school as a whole. For example, the school councillors spoke convincingly of the role that pupils play in preventing bullying as well as in deciding on playground equipment.

- The school's arrangements for safeguarding are suitably detailed and kept under review. All staff, governors and volunteers have undertaken relevant training to ensure that pupils are kept safe.
- Parents are positive about the school's provision for their children's personal development as well as their academic achievement. A very high proportion of those responding to the online survey would recommend the school to other parents.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are friendly, polite and behave well in lessons and around the school at breaks and lunchtime.
- There is little low-level disruption in lessons, largely because pupils find lessons interesting and make very good use of lesson time. They appreciate the opportunities provided for them. Occasionally, when the work is less interesting, they can become restless.
- Expectations for behaviour are consistent across the school. They are made very clear and pupils understand the system of rewards and sanctions. Parents and staff who replied to the online questionnaire showed no significant concerns about pupils' behaviour. This matches the school's own survey of parents' views.
- Attendance is around the national average but varies from year to year, particularly in relation to persistent absence. The staff monitor attendance closely and work with parents to try to improve it. Leaders know that they have not yet succeeded in ensuring that all parents fully understand the implications of taking their children out of school during term time.

## **Outcomes for pupils**

**are good**

- By the end of Year 6, most pupils have made good progress from their different starting points and are achieving outcomes that are at least in line with national expectations. In 2015, a higher proportion of pupils in the school made better than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics than others nationally. Their progress in mathematics was particularly good, with the most-able mathematicians achieving the higher Level 6.
- Current pupils are making good progress across Key Stages 1 and 2, with only slight variations from year to year. This means that they are well prepared for the next stage in their learning.
- Many of the developments evident in Years 1 to 6 are also present in the Reception class but are not yet as secure. As a result, the children are not making as much progress as they are higher up the school.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good, and sometimes better, progress compared with their classmates. By Year 6, the gap between their achievement and that of other pupils has closed.
- Disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those are an early stage of learning English also make good progress relative to their starting points. These pupils are supported well in classrooms and when working in small groups; staff understand their individual needs and tailor their support accordingly. Leaders and staff check carefully to make sure that the extra support is effective and make changes when it is appropriate to do so.
- Pupils make generally good progress in reading. In the annual Year 1 phonics screening checks, most pupils achieve the expected standard, which gives them a good foundation for reading unfamiliar words. Pupils enjoy reading and are well motivated.
- In mathematics, pupils learn to apply their knowledge successfully. In Year 6, pupils were confidently using what they knew about percentages and fractions to create accurate pie charts. The most-able moved on quickly to solving more complicated problems.
- The whole-school focus on writing is resulting in all groups of pupils making better progress than previously. Pupils enjoy writing and their work in grammar, spelling and punctuation has improved the quality of their writing. As pupils gain in confidence they begin to write at greater length and in more depth. For example, pupils in Year 2 were thoroughly enjoying writing letters to 'alien' visitors and the most-able pupils were using quite complex sentence structures and paragraphs to ask questions and explain differences.

## **Early years provision**

**requires improvement**

- Children start in Reception with skills and understanding that are generally below expectations for their age. They settle well and enjoy what they do, but their progress has tended to be inconsistent from year

to year. In 2014, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development across the areas of learning matched the national outcomes but in 2015 it was below national levels. Children currently in Reception are making progress but not as fast as in some other year groups.

- Outcomes for the children vary considerably from year to year. In some years, children have made very rapid progress and have been more than ready to start Key Stage 1, but in others it has been slower and they have had to catch up in Year 1.
- Children quickly develop good attitudes to learning and join in enthusiastically in the activities. They are encouraged to develop these further in their own play. However, the level of challenge for them is not always well enough matched to their needs. Records do not consistently provide enough information, particularly in relation to reading, writing and mathematics, about what children have achieved and what the next steps should be.
- The outdoor area is relatively small, which limits some aspects of the curriculum. It is too small to allow for the use for wheeled toys, but its potential to support progress across the different areas of learning is not fully exploited.
- The strengths seen in other parts of the school in behaviour and personal development are very evident in Reception. Children understand how they are expected to behave and learn to become independent in a variety of ways. Parents speak highly of the work done before their children started school to ensure that they would settle happily into the class.
- Staff support children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well in the Reception Year. They encourage children to express their ideas and the children join in whole-school celebrations.
- The leadership team and governors have a clear and ambitious view of how they intend the early years provision to develop, for example in the establishment of a Nursery, but this is long term and has not yet had enough impact on current provision.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	100619
<b>Local authority</b>	Lambeth
<b>Inspection number</b>	10001983

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	181
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Revd Canon Stephen Coulson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Elizabeth Sims (executive headteacher) Sola Ingram (head of school)
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7735 1467
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stmarkscofeprimarylambeth.co.uk/">www.stmarkscofeprimarylambeth.co.uk/</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:admin@st-marksceofe.lambeth.sch.uk">admin@st-marksceofe.lambeth.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	12–13 December 2013

## Information about this school

- The school is smaller than most primary schools, with one class in each year group. Children start school in the Reception Year.
- The number of pupils who join or leave the school throughout the year is higher than average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by pupil premium funding is well above the national average. Pupil premium is additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- Almost all the pupils come from minority ethnic groups, the largest group being from Black African heritages. Most pupils speak English as an additional language and a small number are at an early stage of learning English. A few pupils are of White British heritage and about a third come from Other White backgrounds.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has been part of a soft federation with Archbishop Tenison's School since September 2015. The two schools share an executive headteacher but each has its own head of school and governing body. The current executive headteacher and head of school took up their posts in September 2015.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 14 lessons, including four jointly with the executive headteacher or the head of school
- The inspectors observed morning playtime and lunch breaks and also attended an assembly.
- A meeting was held with the school council, and many other pupils were spoken to during lessons and breaktimes.
- The inspection team met with governors and a representative of the local authority. The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with Director of the Southwark Diocesan Board of Education.
- The inspectors held meetings with school staff, including senior leaders.
- The inspectors took account of 14 staff questionnaires.
- The inspectors also took account of 34 parents' responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the school's own surveys of parents. Both inspectors also spoke informally with a number of parents.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including: the school's own data on pupil progress; school improvement planning; leaders' checks on the quality of teaching; local authority checks of provision and pupils' progress; records relating to behaviour and attendance; and documents relating to safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Grace Marriott, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Sarah Jones

Ofsted Inspector



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