

# St Mary's CE Primary School

Cornhill Road, Davyhulme, Urmston, Manchester M41 5TJ

<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 April 2016
<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	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- A culture of high expectations and ambition is shared by all who work and learn in this harmonious school community.
- All leaders and staff work well together under the strong direction of the headteacher. St Mary's is now a good school and it continues to improve.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good. All teachers are keen to share what works well to help pupils learn best.
- Well-planned, engaging lessons capture pupils' interests so that they are eager to learn.
- Pupils achieve well. They make at least good progress throughout the school in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Effective leadership in early years provides an exciting curriculum and prepares children well for learning in Year 1.
- Reading skills are developed well. Standards in phonics are above average.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are of a very high standard. They show great respect for adults and each other.
- This is a happy and very caring school. Pupils' personal development and welfare have a high priority and safety is important to all staff.
- Almost without exception, parents are highly positive about the education provided for their children and the care they receive.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills are developed very well, especially through the school's Christian ethos.
- Governors are committed and knowledgeable. They challenge senior leaders effectively and have supported the school well on its journey to becoming good.
- Subject leaders play an active role in securing improvements in their areas of responsibility.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although closing, some gaps remain in pupils' grammar, spelling and punctuation skills.
- School plans for improvement are not focused sufficiently on the most important things.
- Teaching is not yet outstanding. Occasionally, the most-able pupils are insufficiently challenged in their learning.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of teaching in order to raise pupils' achievement further by:
  - making sure that pupils, including the most able, are provided with work at the right level of challenge to enable them to make even greater progress and deepen their learning in reading, writing and mathematics
  - ensuring that teachers continue to reduce, and eventually eradicate, the gaps in pupils' learning in grammar, spelling and punctuation.
  
- Ensure that the school's plans for improvement focus on the actions that will make the most difference to the achievement of pupils.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher, staff and governors are ambitious for the school. They share a determination to build further on the improvements brought about in all aspects of the school's work since the previous inspection.
- The new headteacher has quickly built on the work of the previous headteacher. Since her appointment, she has rapidly secured the confidence of pupils, parents and staff. She is supported very effectively by the deputy headteacher. Staff work as a team and morale is high.
- Parents are exceptionally positive about the staff and leadership of the school as well as the safe and caring environment it provides for their children.
- Senior leaders hold regular meetings with class teachers to discuss the progress made by pupils and identify those who need additional support. Leaders track pupils' progress thoroughly, so pupils at risk of being 'left behind' are identified quickly. Well-targeted support is put into place to help them get back on track.
- The provision for pupils who have special educational needs or disability is led well. Additional learning and emotional needs are identified quickly and individual learning plans are put into place. Links with external agencies and partners are well established and provide good support for pupils in the school.
- Pupil premium funding is deployed effectively to support the small group of eligible pupils. Targeted well-planned provision improves the progress of these pupils.
- The primary school sports funding is used well to increase the opportunities for pupils to take part in a wider range of sports. Pupils' sporting skills are developed well by specialist sports coaches who also provide regular training for school staff.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills are developed very effectively through the curriculum, assemblies and school values. These activities make an excellent contribution to pupils' personal well-being and academic development.
- Teachers plan subjects carefully to engage pupils' interests and spark their enthusiasm for learning. Learning is enriched by a good range of after school clubs, visits and visitors. Many activities extend learning beyond the classroom and help pupils learn new skills. Regular visits beyond the school gates strengthen pupils' sense of belonging within their local community. Senior leaders correctly identified that the attainment of boys was below that of girls at times. Changes made to the curriculum to engage boys' interests more fully are having a positive impact and gaps in attainment are closing.
- Knowledgeable subject leaders of English and mathematics have played a key role in improving outcomes for pupils. They check on the provision and provide high-quality training and support for teaching and support staff. Other subject leaders are enthusiastic and this year have eagerly taken responsibility for the subjects they lead. This is helping to bring about improvements in all subjects. However, the priorities in school plans are too broad; they are not focused tightly enough on pupil outcomes to enable the best progress possible to be made.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has worked closely with the local authority, diocese and local partner school. Staff meet with a local primary school to share practice and training sessions. Pupils of both schools take part in sporting events and learning competitions, including 'spelling bees'.
- **The governance of the school**
  - Governors know the school well and take their roles seriously. They have a clear understanding of pupils' progress, including that of different groups. Governors make regular visits to the school to gain first-hand views of its work and diligently review the performance reports provided by senior leaders. Minutes of governing body meetings show that governors ask challenging questions of school leaders, holding them to account well.
  - The governing body ensures that teachers' pay is dependent on successful pupil outcomes and governors have high expectations of staff who are paid to take on extra responsibilities.
  - Governors have a firm grasp of the school's finances. They ensure that additional funds are spent appropriately. This includes the pupil premium, which is deployed well to support disadvantaged pupils.
  - Governors are proud of the school's improvement since the previous inspection. However, they are keen to do even better and are aware that there is further room for improvement. The governing

body, supported by the local authority and diocese, managed the appointment of the new headteacher well so that strong senior leadership was maintained in the school.

- Safeguarding arrangements are effective. The school's leadership of safeguarding is very good. Staff are well trained. They know how to raise any concerns they may have and where to go for advice and support. All adults who work with pupils are checked to ensure their suitability. Visitors' checks are robust. Staff have a secure understanding of the indicators of abuse and neglect, including the most recent guidance about radicalisation. Staff know the procedures they should follow if they are concerned about a child's welfare.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment** is good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved since the previous inspection. Observations of learning and teaching and scrutiny of pupils' work throughout the school and across a range of subjects show that pupils make consistently good progress.
- Well-planned lessons carefully build on what pupils already know and can do. Teachers and teaching assistants skilfully question pupils to check understanding and clarify misconceptions. They encourage pupils to think for themselves, allowing them to learn with confidence and develop as independent learners. For example, in a Year 5 lesson pupils were working in pairs, creating model camshaft mechanisms. A real buzz of learning was evident as pupils tackled this tricky task. It demanded great levels of cooperation, concentration and perseverance. Pupils' reasoning skills were tested as they sought solutions. The class teacher skilfully supported learning with carefully targeted questions. Pupils were totally engrossed and attitudes to learning were exceptional.
- The support for pupils who have special educational needs or disability is of good quality. Leaders ensure that pupils' needs are identified quickly and appropriate support is put in place swiftly. As a result, these pupils make good progress from their starting points.
- Where pupils are struggling with their learning, teachers deploy an effective range of learning activities. Leaders regularly check that these pupils are making the rapid progress needed to catch up with their peers and as a result, almost all pupils make good progress over time.
- Since the previous inspection, the senior leaders' key focus on developing pupils' basic skills in mathematics has proved successful. There are growing opportunities for pupils to reason and think for themselves when tackling problems.
- A focus on writing has led to improved progress and standards in this subject. Grammar, spelling and punctuation skills are now taught systematically across the school. However, a legacy of underachievement caused by some earlier weaknesses in teaching means that some gaps remain in pupils' knowledge and this prevents them achieving even more highly in this subject.
- The teaching of reading is a strength of the school. Pupils particularly enjoy the way their teachers weave different texts into class topics. Year 6 pupils who spoke to the inspector were very knowledgeable and passionate about poetry. They could talk about the different techniques authors use to engage the reader and could explain how they use these strategies in their own writing.
- Teachers regularly check where pupils are up to and make effective use of the school's marking policy in all subjects. Pupils are provided with clear guidance about their next steps in learning. On occasion, teachers do not spot quickly enough when pupils, particularly the most able, have grasped what is being taught. As a result, at times, the level of challenge is not high enough to enable pupils to make the progress of which they are capable.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare** is outstanding

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils say that adults and pupils are kind and bullying incidents are exceptionally rare. School records support this view.
- Pupils say they feel very safe and well cared for in school. Older pupils help the younger ones and the buddy system is popular with everyone. Pupils know well how to keep themselves safe, for example when using the internet. They understand the importance of keeping active and eating healthily. Many participate in after-school sports clubs and work hard in physical education lessons.

- Pupils thrive on the regular responsibilities they are given and many make an excellent contribution to their school community. Those who are members of the eco-committee, for example, take their role in caring for the environment very seriously, including making sure their school recycles resources and materials where it can.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils take a great pride in themselves and their school. They show great respect for each other, their teachers and their environment. Together with their parents and the school staff, pupils all feel part of the St Mary's 'family'. Pupils are trusted by their teachers to take responsibility for their own and others' behaviour. All understand and follow the school's rules, usually without the need of reminders from an adult.
- Despite the limited space, the playground provides a calm, well-organised and well-supervised area where pupils of all ages can run, play and socialise happily together.
- Behaviour in lessons is exemplary. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers and teaching assistants. They move between activities quickly and efficiently and with little fuss. This excellent behaviour enables learning to remain focused throughout lessons. The neat presentation and the good quantity of work in pupils' books show that they work hard, take a pride in their work and concentrate well.
- Many pupils are resilient learners. They regard making mistakes as a natural part of learning and use these occasions to reflect maturely on what they are doing. Throughout the school, 'being stuck' is seen as something positive. Pupils and adults use the word 'bamboozled' when this happens. All classrooms display a helpful range of strategies to use at those times.
- Pupils love coming to school. Attendance is high and there is no persistent absence.

### Outcomes for pupils

are good

- From starting points which are generally typical for their age, pupils make good and increasingly better progress in reading, writing, mathematics and other subjects by the end of Year 6. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Early reading skills are taught well. In 2015, almost all Year 1 pupils met the national standard for phonics (letters and the sounds that they make).
- At the end of Year 2 in 2015 standards in reading, writing and mathematics were higher than when the school was previously inspected. Checks made by inspectors on the latest school performance information show that standards have continued to rise and pupils across key stage 1 are progressing well in all subjects.
- In 2015, standards attained by pupils at the end of key stage 2 in reading and writing were above average. They were average in mathematics and grammar, spelling and punctuation. Again, checks carried out by inspectors on work in pupils' books show that improvements are continuing. For example, an improved focus on teaching the basic skills in mathematics is paying dividends and standards in this subject are now similar to those in reading and writing.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils in the school is too small to make a meaningful comparison with other pupils in the school or nationally.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability make good progress because their needs are identified quickly and accurately and provision is good.
- The most-able pupils make good progress and generally achieve above-average standards. Nevertheless, senior leaders know that consistently higher challenge is required to enable the most able to maximise their progress and deepen their learning in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Due to some previous weaknesses in teaching, pupils' grammar, spelling and punctuation skills are sometimes not as strong as they should be when they write. Leaders are aware of this and have taken steps to improve the quality of teaching in this area of the curriculum but there has not yet been enough time to close these gaps completely.

## Early years provision

is good

- Effective leadership of the early years has ensured that the proportion of children reaching a good level of development has increased each year since the previous inspection. In 2015, the proportion of children entering Year 1 equipped with the skills and abilities required for the next stage of their education was above average.
- The quality of teaching is good. Children learn in well-organised and stimulating indoor and outdoor learning and play areas. Adults make best use of the space to provide a range of activities that respond to children's interests, capture their imagination and encourage them to explore the world around them. For example, when outdoors, children play cooperatively, creating wonderful dishes in the mud kitchen and building mysterious dens from the materials provided.
- Indoor provision is clearly linked to different areas of learning. Children enjoy working on construction 'projects', creating castles for the giant in 'Jack and the Beanstalk' and lots of opportunities are available for children to work creatively with paint and other materials.
- Adults use their good subject knowledge to enable children to make good progress. This was demonstrated during a phonics session where children listened carefully; they sounded out words clearly and recorded them with great concentration on writing boards. The teacher and teaching assistant carefully built on what children already knew, skilfully checking for any misconceptions and correcting these quickly, ensuring that no learning time was lost.
- Since the previous inspection, the achievement gap between boys and girls has widened. In 2015, for example, girls did much better than boys in many areas of learning, including reading and writing. However, decisive action taken by senior leaders has led to accelerated progress for boys in the current year. For example, changes to the curriculum mean that boys are now eager to write. During the inspection they used their good understanding of phonics to write labels for their building block constructions. The writing 'sacks' which contain a range of writing implements and small notebooks are worn proudly as they play in the different learning areas and are regularly put to good use.
- The teacher and teaching assistant know each child well as individuals. Regular checks are made on how well children are doing. Information from ongoing assessments is recorded electronically and shared with parents. As a result, parents are well informed and, in return, share their child's development and progress at home with school staff.
- Parents hold highly positive views about the school and its staff. They say that their children are kept safe and are cared for well.
- Welfare arrangements are thorough. Staff ensure that the same rigorous safeguarding arrangements in place in key stages 1 and 2 are applied in the early years provision.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	106349
<b>Local authority</b>	Trafford
<b>Inspection number</b>	10002193

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>	201
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Neil Edgar
<b>Headteacher</b>	Alison Daniel
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 912 2728
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stmarysprimarydavyhulme.co.uk">www.stmarysprimarydavyhulme.co.uk</a>
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<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	19–20 November 2013

## Information about this school

- The school is smaller in size than most other primary schools. The proportion of boys and girls varies across the school. In some year groups around two thirds of pupils are boys.
- There are no Nursery classes. Children attend the Reception class full time.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is similar to the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for support through pupil premium funding is declining and is much lower than that found in most other schools. The pupil premium is additional funding provided for those who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- Around a third of staff have joined the school since the previous inspection. A new headteacher took up her post in September 2015. Several members of staff have had extended periods of absence due to maternity leave. Two classes are currently covered by teachers on temporary contracts.
- A private provider offers term-time before- and -after-school childcare on the school premises. This provision is subject to separate inspection arrangements. Inspection reports may be viewed on the Ofsted website.
- The school has been supported by a local partner school since the previous inspection.
- The school meets the requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors gathered a range of evidence to judge the quality of teaching, learning and assessment over time. They observed learning in classes and when pupils learned in small groups, including a number jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspectors looked at examples of pupils' work and talked to them about their work. They listened to pupils read and observed the teaching of reading skills. Inspectors talked to pupils about the books they have enjoyed and those that they are currently reading. Inspectors took note of displays around the school and the learning taking place outdoors.
- Inspectors talked with pupils informally as they played at break times, visited the dining hall at lunchtime and observed pupils' behaviour as they moved around school. They met formally with three groups of pupils.
- Inspectors met with four governors. They spoke to a representative of the local authority and met with members of school staff.
- Inspectors spoke to a number of parents at the start of the school day and took account of 49 responses to Parent View (Ofsted's online questionnaire) and the school's most recent surveys of pupils' and parents' views. Seventeen returns to the staff questionnaire and 37 responses to the pupils' questionnaires completed during the inspection were considered.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents, including information about pupils' progress, school improvement and external views of the school. Inspectors also scrutinised records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding completed by school staff.

## Inspection team

Lyn Pender, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

John Daley

Ofsted Inspector



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