

St Mary's C of E Primary School

St Mary's Road, Moston, Manchester M40 0DF

Inspection dates

25–26 May 2016

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders have yet to ensure that the quality of teaching is consistently good. Consequently, pupils are not consistently building on the good progress being made in some areas of the school. In year groups where progress is more limited, questioning is not probing enough to challenge pupils' thinking.
- There is not enough opportunity for less confident learners to improve their work. This means that their learning is not fully secured before they move on to new learning. Teaching assistants are not always used effectively in some classes.
- Although standards are improving, the attainment of pupils in key stage 1 is below that expected for their age in writing and mathematics. As a result, pupils are not always well prepared for their next stage in learning.
- Boys' attainment, although improving, is lower than that of girls across the school, particularly in reading and writing. In a number of year groups, gaps between boys and girls are closing, but this is not the case in all classes in the school.
- Assessments of the amount of progress pupils are making towards reaching the expected standards are not yet fully secure. Recent systems initiated to assess the progress of pupils are not currently fully understood and used reliably by all staff.
- Teachers do not give pupils enough chances to use their skills in writing and mathematical calculations in other subject areas.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders, including governors, through regular monitoring, have improved teaching since the last inspection, despite disruptions to staffing.
- Children get a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes and make increasingly good progress. Teaching is good and children settle quickly and happily to their learning.
- Governance has improved since the last inspection. Governors offer a much-increased level of challenge to school leaders and this is beginning to have an impact on raising standards.
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are improving steadily at the end of key stage 1. Pupils' improved progress in reading in this key stage is supported by the effective teaching of phonics (letters and the sound they represent).
- Behaviour, personal development and welfare are good. Relationships are strong and pupils are confident that staff will help them if they need it.
- Attendance has improved and is now above average.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve the quality of teaching and learning, to accelerate the amount of progress all pupils, particularly in key stage 1 and, particularly for boys across the school, make from their starting points in reading, writing and mathematics by:
 - building on the increasingly strong skill development secured in the early years, as children move on from Reception
 - ensuring that the pupils have a chance to secure their learning where needed before moving on to new learning
 - using the expertise of teaching assistants effectively in all classes
 - ensuring that questioning is probing and makes pupils think
 - ensuring that pupils have regular opportunities to use and apply the skills they learn in a variety of ways and across all areas of the curriculum.

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that leaders' and teachers' assessments of pupils' progress towards age-related expectations are reliable for all year groups.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders and governors have a collective vision of high aspirations for school improvement. This is leading to raised outcomes for pupils. However, the pace of improvement, particularly in key stage 1, has been slow, and only recently have outcomes for pupils been seen to improve. In addition, routinely good teaching, leading to consistently good learning across all year groups and subjects, has not yet been fully achieved. This is why leadership requires improvement.
- There has been disruption to staffing since the last inspection, which has, no doubt, contributed to the variable quality of teaching, despite the regular monitoring undertaken by the headteacher and deputy headteacher over the past two years. Parents shared concerns with the inspectors about the impact that the change of teachers in some year groups across the school has had on their children.
- The school's vision and values promote equal opportunities for all pupils and staff. However, leaders have yet to ensure that boys make as much progress as girls, particularly in reading and writing.
- The system in place to measure pupils' progress towards age-related expectations is not yet fully understood and used with equal reliability by all teachers. Consequently, teachers' views of progress and those of senior leaders do not always match.
- Good leadership in the early years, together with effective support from an outstanding early years provider, the cluster of schools to which the school belongs, and help from the local authority, have resulted in good teaching and improved outcomes at the end of the Reception Year.
- The headteacher, together with the governors and deputy headteacher, understand what the school needs to do to improve. Teaching and learning, despite some remaining inconsistencies, have improved through regular monitoring and follow-up since the last inspection. The leaders have linked targets for teachers closely to the school improvement plan, and teachers are appreciative of the training and support from senior leaders and opportunities to visit other schools and observe other practitioners.
- The impact of the new behaviour policy and consistently applied rewards and sanctions has ensured that behaviour is now good and attitudes to learning are much improved.
- Leaders have created a wider leadership team to strengthen and improve outcomes for pupils. In addition, they have ensured that all staff clearly understand their roles and responsibilities.
- Pupils appreciate the curriculum, which is enriched with trips, visits and visitors. Part of the reward system in school results in pupils being able to choose a trip or activity. This has included camping in the school grounds, which was enjoyed by all who chose this reward. New reading books have been purchased to motivate pupils, particularly boys, to read.
- The headteacher is one of the designated safeguarding officers and he has ensured that all staff have undergone appropriate training on how to keep pupils safe from radicalisation and extremism, and understand what they have to do if they suspect a pupil is in danger.
- The majority of parents are happy with the school and say that their children are happy to come to school. A very small minority felt that communication between home and the school could be better and that they were not given enough information on their child's progress. The school was disappointed that parents felt this way, since this was not one of the issues noted, following a recent questionnaire sent by the school to parents.
- Leaders use the wider curriculum to develop pupils' awareness of different cultures in modern Britain and of British values, such as tolerance and respect. Children learn about the similarities and differences between faiths through religious education lessons, together with visits to other places of worship.
- The primary physical education (PE) and sports funding is used well to promote participation in sport and encourage children to develop healthy lifestyles. Qualified coaches teach a variety of sports. By working alongside these professionals, staff are able to develop their own expertise.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governance has improved since the last inspection. Governors have embraced the external review and training, supported by the local authority as well as an external consultant. They have taken every opportunity to develop their role and are now able to offer a much higher degree of challenge and support for school leaders.
 - Governors check that leaders' awards of pay increases to teachers reflect improvements in the quality of their teaching and in the positive difference in outcomes for pupils.

- Governors check that the pupil premium funding is appropriately spent. They are beginning to challenge school leaders to ensure that any gaps in pupils’ achievement are closing across the school. The school has used the funding in a variety of ways to provide personnel and resources. This is ensuring that, where gaps exist for these pupils, they are closing.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school works closely with external agencies and the school’s own pastoral staff to ensure that pupils and families are well supported. Records of pupils’ safeguarding needs are documented as appropriate and staff are regularly trained to ensure that pupils are safe at school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Teaching in the school is not consistently good. This means that pupils in some year groups are not making good progress.
- Teachers in all classes check how well pupils are doing. There are also some good examples in pupils’ workbooks where pupils are given advice as to how to improve. However, in some year groups, teachers are not using these checks to provide activities that meet pupils’ needs. This means that at times when pupils have not mastered basic skills, they are not given the chance to secure their learning before being introduced to harder concepts.
- Teaching assistants are not always used to best effect in supporting pupils’ learning.
- In some classes, teachers question pupils skilfully and have high expectations of the answers pupils give. Pupils realise that they should articulate their answers fully, giving reasons and using good English, using specific vocabulary to demonstrate their depth of knowledge. This leads to pupils having high expectations of themselves and challenging themselves to improve their learning. However, where questioning is not skilful, opportunities to deepen pupils’ learning are lost.
- The teaching of writing is not consistently strong across the school. Where the teaching of writing is strong, teachers use a range of strategies to support improving learning in writing, spelling, punctuation and grammar. They are given the chance to reinforce these skills in a number of ways through other areas of the curriculum, but this is not always the case across all classes.
- The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) is effective. As a result, a solid foundation is built, from which pupils can develop into confident, fluent and expressive readers. Daily guided reading sessions help develop their skills in reading, inference, deduction and comprehension. A range of new books has been bought for all classes to ensure the improving picture of reading continues.
- Pupils’ workbooks show that the majority of teaching in mathematics is based on number. A new calculation policy has been put in place and skills in numeracy are developing well. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to solve problems, engage in practical work and deepen their understanding in mathematics across the curriculum.
- Teaching assistants are skilled in providing good support for those pupils who need to catch up in lessons, including those who have special educational needs or disability. They are often used to ensure that less confident learners are able to access the learning when all activities given to pupils are the same.
- The school has developed a marking policy which is followed by staff. Some marking gives really useful guidance on how pupils can edit and improve their work. Some pupils engage in peer- or self-marking, building pupils’ skills of reflection on the work they have done.
- Relationships between adults and pupils, and between pupils themselves, are strong. Pupils often help each other with their learning and collaborate well.

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 say that they are safe and happy in school and the majority of parents agree. Pupils understand what it means to feel safe, and older pupils, particularly, can describe how the adults in school keep them safe. They learn how to keep themselves safe on the internet. They are aware that they should not give

out any personal details and should always tell an adult of any inappropriate content. Pupils are also taught about road and cycling safety as well as danger from strangers. The school's 'Urban Crew' have some responsibilities for safety and assessing risks in and around the school.

- The school rightly prides itself on the nurture of its pupils, including those with specific needs. This means that pupils are confident to offer their views and feel that they are well cared for. This is particularly evident in the respect pupils have for themselves, for the different groups of pupils and for adults.
- The work done to enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Pupils enjoy the opportunities to go on trips and meet visitors to the school. They say that they take part in school events that are exciting and useful for their learning. For example, the school held an international food evening which was well attended and enjoyed by all. In addition, the pupils' strong sense of social and moral development means that older pupils take responsibility for younger ones in the school and there is a clear understanding of how important they all are as individuals and as part of the whole school. Pupils learn about the different religions through religious education lessons and some visits to other places of worship, such as the Buddhist temple and a mosque.
- Pupils have plenty of opportunities to take on responsibilities in their class or for the good of their fellow pupils. The school has an active school council which is currently raising money to purchase bicycle racks for the children to use, while the eco committee looks after the environment and community.
- The school offers a breakfast club in the morning which is open to all pupils and which is always well attended.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils say that bullying is not a regular occurrence, but they say that if it does happen, it is dealt with swiftly by the adults in school.
- Pupils' attendance has improved and is now above average. Far fewer pupils than average are persistently absent and pupils' previously average attendance at the last inspection has been steadily rising.
- Attitudes to learning are positive and behaviour in class and around the school is good. Only in a minority of lessons, where pupils are less engaged in their tasks, does their attention begin to wander. The majority of pupils generally are keen to do their best and take pride in their work books, which are generally well presented and neat. They are happy to talk about their learning and are appreciative of the way adults support and help them.
- Pupils work together well and cooperate well in their learning across year groups. There are examples where pupils are used as 'coaches' for other pupils. This offers the opportunity for pupils to articulate their learning and consolidate their skills.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Pupils' outcomes at the end of key stage 1 are not yet good. This is the case in both writing and mathematics, where pupils' outcomes were much lower than is expected for their age. This means that pupils are not meeting national expectations in these key areas. Action taken by leaders in the restructuring of staffing means that currently, standards are set to rise this year.
- Outcomes across a range of subjects and between year groups vary. Consequently, pupils across the school do not consistently build on the good progress made in some classes.
- Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics over the past three years, by the end of Year 6 has been average. In 2015, standards reached by boys in reading and writing were below those reached by girls, boys' attainment being around a year behind that of the girls. In contrast, disadvantaged pupils attained as well as all pupils nationally in reading and mathematics, but in writing they were almost eight months behind. The strength in outcomes seen in certain classes is not apparent consistently across the school. Documentation provided by the school indicates that the proportion of pupils on track to reach age-related expectations at the end of Year 6 will be higher this year, although boys still have some way to go to catch up with the girls.
- The achievement of pupils with special educational needs or disability is similar to that of their peers. Where progress is good for all pupils, it is good for those groups who have additional needs. They are generally given effective support, targeted well to their needs. The support comes from a good

understanding of their needs by the special needs coordinator and other leaders, including the headteacher. Training opportunities have been provided for adults supporting these pupils in their learning.

- The number of children leaving the early years provision having reached a good level of development is increasing. In addition, outcomes of the phonics check at the end of Year 1 are steadily improving, meaning that an increasing number of pupils can read by the end of Year 1.
- Tracking by the school of pupils for whom English is an additional language indicates that they make similar progress to their classmates.
- Most-able pupils receive an appropriate level of challenge in most lessons. This is particularly so in upper key stage 2. For those pupils currently, evidence in books shows written work of a good standard and demonstrates that pupils have a well-developed knowledge of the art of writing for an audience.

Early years provision

is good

- Cohorts vary, but the majority of children join the school, in the Nursery, with skills and abilities that are below those typical for their age. They make good progress across the early years and are well prepared for Year 1, with increasing numbers of children reaching the expected skills in reading, writing and number.
- The teaching of children is effective, and children benefit from a curriculum that exploits their interests, providing tasks that excite and motivate the children. This includes regular opportunities to read, write and practise their skills in a variety of interesting activities. The outdoor provision is developing, following changes to the setting that have provided more space for children to move around and develop their learning.
- The work of the teachers and other adults is particularly good in responding to the needs of the children. They know just when to intervene and when to stand back.
- Every opportunity to assess and update children's skills is taken, so that tasks are effective in moving children forward in their learning. Intervention groups and small-group and individual teaching are planned for, to ensure that all groups of children have the opportunity to succeed. An appropriate focus on speaking and listening activities enables children, including those for whom English is an additional language, to develop their speaking skills.
- Visits by staff to the homes of children who are joining the school ensure that children feel comfortable and settle quickly in the setting. Nursery children are encouraged to visit the Reception class in order to achieve a seamless transition.
- Children trust the adults in the provision, and feel safe and secure. As a result, they are happy to speak to visitors about their learning. They are developing a good awareness of safety, with one child saying that he can run outside, but not inside as he might collide with another child and get hurt.
- The flexible way the early years teaches phonics is setting the foundation for the better reading skills seen across the school. Children are able to move across the groupings as their abilities change and develop.
- Children develop good routines. For instance, they know to use aprons for the water play and wellington boots for outdoors if it is wet. Adults in both the Nursery and Reception classes are good role models and consistently reinforce the good learning behaviours necessary for the children to succeed as they move through the school. Classroom routines, such as tidy-up time, are well established and help children to feel secure as they learn together.
- Leaders in the early years ensure that children are safe. The atmosphere is calm and purposeful. Children learn to share and take turns, working together on projects such as building with the bricks provided. Children behave sensibly, listen well and respond to instructions.

School details

Unique reference number	105545
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10012100

This inspection 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	233
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joyce Roberts
Headteacher	Paul Stephenson
Telephone number	0161 681 0407
Website	www.st-maryscofe.manchester.sch.uk
Email address	head@st-maryscofe.manchester.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15–16 January 2014

Information about this school

- St Mary's C of E Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Children in the early years receive full-time education in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The number of pupils from multi-ethnic groupings is above average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs or disability is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional government funding given to the school for disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for free school meals or are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- A breakfast club operates on the school premises.
- There have been disruptions to staffing since the last inspection. The headteacher took up his post in September 2014.
- Most of the requirements for publishing information to parents on the school's website are met. There are a few aspects of safeguarding that are missing from the published policy such as the school's tackling of different forms of extremism.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a wide range of learning activities across both key stages, in the early years and in a range of subjects. Two of the observations were jointly undertaken with the headteacher. Pupils' books from different year groups and subjects were looked at.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, pastoral leader and a subject leader. Inspectors met with two members of the governing body. A meeting was also held with a local authority representative. Two telephone conversations were held, one with an external consultant and one with an HMI who has provided short-term support. Inspectors also met with groups of pupils and spoke to pupils informally throughout the inspection.
- Inspectors considered parents' opinions through 11 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and eight free-text messaging for parents. Informal discussions were also held with parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors reviewed the 12 staff questionnaires and 74 pupil responses returned during the inspection.
- The inspection team studied information about achievement and assessment of learning. They examined records relating to behaviour and attendance and looked at a range of other documents used by leaders to monitor and evaluate the school's work.
- A review of safeguarding was carried out.

Inspection team

Yvonne Mills-Clare, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

David Deane

Ofsted Inspector

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