

St Mary's Catholic Junior School

Sydenham Road, Croydon, Surrey CR0 2EW

Inspection dates

10–11 July 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The school is well led and managed. Senior leaders, other managers and governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and where further development is needed. Together they have ensured that teaching and pupils' achievement have improved.
- Pupils achieve well. Standards in tests at the end of Year 6 in 2017 were above the national average, as they had been in the previous year.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make good progress in their learning as a result of effective support
- Teachers do not challenge the most able pupils consistently well. As a result, these pupils are capable of making better progress, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- The presentation of pupils' work varies throughout the school. Sometimes, teachers' expectations of pupils' presentation are not high enough.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils learn and work collaboratively in a calm and caring environment. They are very respectful towards their teachers.
- The school is a happy and friendly place to be. Pupils are proud of their school and have positive attitudes towards their learning.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well promoted in all aspects of school life.
- The role of middle leaders is developing. Some of these leaders are not confident in identifying the areas to tackle in order to improve the quality of teaching further in their areas of responsibility.
- Leaders have used a range of whole-school approaches to improve the quality of teaching. There is scope to build on the programme of professional development to enhance the skills of individual teachers and raise the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes still further.
- The knowledgeable governing body successfully supports and challenges leaders to maintain the school's good standing.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - middle leaders monitor the quality of teaching and learning consistently well in their areas of responsibility
 - leaders build on the programme of professional development to provide teachers with opportunities to develop their practice still further.
- Improve pupils' outcomes and the quality of teaching by ensuring that:
 - teachers provide the most able pupils with sufficiently challenging work, particularly in writing and mathematics
 - teachers' expectations of pupils' presentation are consistently high.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Members of the governing body, senior and middle leaders are all agreed that the strong and supportive leadership of the executive headteacher has helped them to develop and given them confidence so that everyone shares the same approach.
- Teaching is good as a result of leaders' effective checks on teaching and learning, which identify key areas for teachers to improve their practice. Teachers say that good-quality training has helped to improve their teaching and raise pupils' achievement. However, leaders recognise that a more personalised approach to develop teachers further will contribute to better teaching across the school.
- Middle leaders support the school's vision well and are keen to do a good job. Some of these leaders are developing in their roles. Their work to monitor the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes in their areas of responsibility is not consistently effective.
- Pupils' achievement is tracked very effectively. Pupils at risk of underachievement are identified promptly and the right actions are taken to accelerate their progress.
- The curriculum offers pupils appropriate opportunities to succeed and prepares them for the next stage in their education. The majority of pupils participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. These activities enhances the curriculum effectively. In particular, music is a strength of the school, where more than half of the pupils learn to play an instrument before they leave at the end of key stage 2.
- The school plans carefully how to spend the primary school sports funding. One use of the funding is the employment of a school swimming coach. Pupils benefit from additional swimming lessons, which have increased their levels of fitness. A wide range of out-of-school clubs open to all helps pupils to benefit from new experiences and improve their health and well-being.
- The school works closely with other schools to share good practice. Furthermore, the executive headteacher works with other leaders in the trust to review the quality of teaching in the school. This has had a positive impact on pupils' outcomes. Peer reviews undertaken with the executive headteacher, provides guidance in analysing school information so that the school can plan future actions.
- The school engages well with the vast majority of parents. This is seen in the school's own surveys of parental views and supported by the views of those spoken to by inspectors.

Governance of the school

- The governing body is very supportive of the school. Governors challenge school leaders to ensure the best possible provision for pupils.
- The executive headteacher keeps governors informed about pupils' outcomes. Governors check things for themselves by visiting the school to look at data, talk to staff and pupils and to join leaders in visits to lessons. As a result, governors have a

good understanding of how well the school is doing in comparison with other schools.

- Governors manage the school's budget well. They know how pupil premium funding is used and evaluate the difference it is making to pupils' outcomes. They check that money allocated for this purpose is used appropriately.
- Governors ensure that they meet their statutory duties, including those relating to the safeguarding. Regular visits to the school are undertaken where they focus on pupils' safety. They undertake tours of the school with leaders and check that the school's recruitment records and policies are compliant.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All leaders, including governors, place a strong emphasis on pupils' welfare.
- Leaders have ensured that all staff contribute to a strong safeguarding culture to ensure that all children are safe. Leaders work closely with external agencies, including children's services, to ensure that pupils and their families receive the support that they need.
- Staff training is up to date and they have an understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Staff are aware of the actions to take should they have any concerns about a pupil.
- Pupils feel safe and cared for at school. They are clear about what to do if they are concerned about their own or others' safety.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Leaders ensure that there is a coordinated approach between the infant and junior schools. Consequently, assessment information is shared promptly and teachers have an accurate understanding of pupils' starting points. Teachers use questioning well to check pupils' understanding and develop their vocabulary. For example, in mathematics, teachers insist on pupils using the correct mathematical vocabulary and do not accept simple terms.
- Although teachers plan activities that match pupils' abilities overall, sometimes the challenge for the most able pupils is inconsistent. Teachers' expectations of what these pupils can achieve in writing, for example, are not consistently high. Furthermore, sometimes pupils are not given consistently good opportunities to develop their problem-solving skills in mathematics.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are all well supported. The school has used its funding to provide these pupils with a good balance of small-group and whole-class teaching where the tasks are well matched to their specific needs.
- Pupils are enthusiastic about the different subjects they are taught. Visits related to the topics being studied help bring pupils' learning to life and generate excited discussion.
- Teachers support effectively pupils who speak English as an additional language. Teachers check pupils' understanding of new vocabulary and ensure that they model to them correctly spoken English.

- Teaching assistants are well deployed and contribute significantly to pupils' good achievement. They ensure that the support they provide for all abilities builds carefully on their current levels of understanding to accelerate pupils' learning and progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- It is guided by the school's strong ethos and values. Staff and governors are committed to ensuring that the school provides a safe, nurturing environment in which pupils can learn.
- Leaders, teachers and other adults ensure that pupils know how to stay safe online and in the local community. Leaders are proactive and respond to any emerging issues relating to online technology as they arise.
- Pupils model well the school's 'St Mary's Way' values of versatility, being aspirational, collaboration, independence and perseverance. During the inspection, there was substantial evidence of pupils demonstrating their understanding of these values. In particular, they showed collaborative working with each other.
- Staff treat pupils with consideration and ensure that the school makes everyone feel welcome and valued. Adults model respectful behaviour in lessons, around school and in the way they engage with pupils. As a result, pupils behave similarly and are thoughtful and compassionate citizens.
- The vast majority of pupils throughout school are happy to talk about their learning. Pupils told inspectors how proud they were of their school and how they were well looked after by adults.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are proud of their school. Typical comments from pupils include 'It is fun' and 'We love coming to school'. They are positive about their learning and enjoy taking on additional responsibilities.
- Exclusions from school are extremely rare. There are practically no incidents of bullying, racism or homophobic behaviour. Leaders promote inclusion and diversity among pupils at every opportunity.
- Leaders keep comprehensive behaviour records. Each term, they review any issues that have arisen to ensure that they improve pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning further.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons is good. There is rarely any disruption. However, sometimes when teachers do not challenge pupils sufficiently, pupils' attention drifts. Very occasionally, pupils lose focus, and this slows their progress.
- Pupils, parents and staff believe that behaviour is good. The school's behaviour logs

show that behaviour is typically good over time.

- Pupils show respect and work collaboratively with each other in lessons. They accept and embrace all the different cultures within the school.
- Pupils' attendance is above the national average. Leaders have worked hard at reducing absences and the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent is below the national average.
- Sometimes, teachers' expectations of pupils' presentation are not high enough. Consequently, the presentation of pupils' work in their books is variable.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Senior leaders' actions and the good-quality teaching have resulted in steady, sustained improvements in English and mathematics. The vast majority of pupils across the school make good progress.
- At the end of key stage 2 in 2017, the proportions of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing, mathematics, and grammar, punctuation and spelling were above the national average. The proportions of pupils reaching the higher standard in these subjects were also above average in mathematics, and grammar, punctuation and spelling. The 2018 attainment outcomes have not been verified although leaders' assessment information indicates a similar picture this year.
- Leaders have put a number of strategies in place, which have resulted in these positive outcomes. They have had a thorough look at the gaps in individual pupils' learning and made adjustments to teaching. For example, they introduced a greater focus on developing pupils' understanding of vocabulary. As a result, the school's in-year checks on progress, which are comprehensive, and the work in pupils' books confirms a positive picture of progress throughout key stage 2. This offers a strong indication that the school is confidently addressing the underachievement of previous years.
- Pupils' skills in English and mathematics improve well. Pupils develop a love of reading and talk enthusiastically about books that they enjoy. The least able pupils use phonics confidently to read new words.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress. They are well supported to achieve well, and make the same strong progress as other pupils in their year groups.
- The school has used the pupil premium funding well to provide small-group or individual support in lessons. Teachers know these pupils well and focus carefully on the progress that they make. Disadvantaged pupils make good progress in their learning.
- Although pupils make good progress in writing and mathematics overall, the most able pupils are capable of achieving more. Opportunities for these pupils to develop problem-solving skills in mathematics are not consistently strong. Furthermore, the quality of writing for these pupils is not consistently high. Teachers' expectations of the most able pupils' writing are sometimes variable. This hinders these pupils from making even better progress.

School details

Unique reference number	142226
Local authority	Croydon
Inspection number	10048398

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	229
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Marcella Touray
Executive Headteacher	Linda O'Callaghan
Telephone number	020 8688 4893
Website	www.stmaryscatholicprimaryschoolstrust.co.uk
Email address	office@st-mary-jun.croydon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection the school has become part of the St Mary's Catholic Primary Schools Trust. This school, and the infant school, are the only schools within the trust. The executive headteacher is headteacher of both the infants and the junior schools.
- St Mary's Catholic Primary School is an above-average-sized junior school.
- The majority of pupils are from Black or Black British African and Asian or Asian British Indian backgrounds, with pupils from any other ethnic background forming the next sizeable ethnic group.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below the national average. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is

above the national average.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for the attainment and progress of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all classrooms, and observed intervention groups.
- School leaders took part in joint observations with inspectors and attended all inspection team meetings.
- Meetings were held with school leaders, teachers and groups of pupils. Inspectors met with four governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- The inspectors worked in partnership with the school's senior leaders when analysing information about the school. The inspectors looked at pupils' outcomes, the school's evaluation of its own performance, minutes from governors' meetings, the school development plan, and monitoring and evaluation records. Behaviour and attendance records and information related to safeguarding were also checked.
- The inspectors walked around the school with pupils to find out more about their work from displays and extra-curricular activities. Inspectors interviewed groups of children from across the school to determine their views on behaviour and safety.
- Inspectors spent time in the playground at playtime, observed behaviour in the lunch halls, listened to pupils read and looked at work in pupils' books, alongside senior leaders.
- Inspectors took into account the views of parents by analysing the 13 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, as well as speaking informally to parents during the inspection.

Inspection team

Danvir Visvanathan, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Stephen Hall	Ofsted Inspector

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