



St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 102329
LEA Havering LEA
Inspection number 276697
Inspection dates 23 January 2006 to 24 January 2006
Reporting inspector Andrew Marfleet AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Hornchurch Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Hornchurch
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		RM12 4TL
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01708 448430
Number on roll	427	Fax number	01708 449807
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Liam Duffy
Date of previous inspection	11 September 2000	Headteacher	Mr Michael Coy

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 23 January 2006 - 24 January 2006	Inspection number 276697
-----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St Mary's is a larger than average primary school whose pupils are almost all Catholic and mostly from White British backgrounds. Small minorities are from Irish and other communities. Very few have a first language other than English, and none are at an early stage of learning English. Only a small number of pupils qualify for free school meals. The large majority join the school in the reception classes and remain until the end of Year 6. The school is oversubscribed, with waiting lists in all year groups. They have very strong links with the local Catholic community and with a wide range of other educational institutions. Most of the staff, including the experienced headteacher, have been at the school for some time. The environment has been enhanced by much rebuilding over the past ten years, and includes a good-sized indoor swimming pool.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school judges itself to be effective. Inspectors agree and find it provides good value for money. Pupils achieve high standards by the end of Year 6. They make a sound start in the reception year and make good progress in Years 1 and 2. From Year 3 to Year 6 they do particularly well. The Christian ethos of the school is reflected in the outstanding personal development of its pupils, whose well being is the result of the excellent standard of care and guidance it provides. Good teaching and the very positive attitudes of the pupils contribute to their good achievement. However, there are occasions when teachers talk for too long and pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to participate actively in the lesson. The school provides an interesting curriculum that meets the needs of the pupils well but the children in the reception classes do not receive a broad enough range of learning experiences to develop their independence. Teachers mark the pupils' work thoroughly and their good assessment and tracking procedures help pupils to improve. The school monitors and evaluates its performance effectively. It is very well led and managed and the good improvements since the last inspection are indicative of its capacity to improve further. The governors are extremely diligent.

What the school should do to improve further

* Ensure sufficient opportunities are available for pupils to actively participate in all lessons* Broaden the range of experiences provided for children in the Foundation Stage to promote more independent learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

When the children start school they have the knowledge and skills expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress in the reception classes and most reach the goals expected by the start of Year 1. In mathematical and personal, social and emotional development they exceed expectations. By the end of Year 2 standards are above average, and pupils have made good progress. From Year 3 progress is very good so that by the end of Year 6 standards are high. Boys and girls achieve equally well because teachers take care to treat them as individuals and meet their needs accordingly. The school sets challenging targets and monitors pupils' achievement closely. These high expectations and the good teaching they receive ensures pupils achieve well. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress because they are well supported and teachers take care to include them fully in lessons.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The personal development of pupils, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. The Catholic ethos of the school is reflected in all aspects

of school life. Attendance is above average. Pupils display genuine enjoyment of school: one parent reports that her son 'cannot wait to get to school each day'. Pupils behave well and have very positive attitudes to learning, which contribute to the good progress they make. The pupils say they feel safe, in spite of concerns of some parents about traffic on the busy road outside the school. They fully understand the importance of healthy eating and drinking water regularly. Year 3 pupils, via the school council, requested that, 'doughnuts are only served once a week'. They see exercise as extremely important and many participate in the good range of sports clubs the school offers. Through fund-raising for charity, they make a very significant contribution to the wider community. They also make a strong contribution to the school community, not least through the very effective school council. Pupils know how to use money sensibly, work as part of a team and acquire the basic skills they will need later in life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. As a result pupils achieve well. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, and is better where pupils are given opportunities for active, independent learning. However, this happens too infrequently. Good planning and strong subject knowledge ensure teachers present lessons confidently. They aim high and expect pupils to behave and achieve very well. Pupils respond positively and learn effectively. Relationships between adults and pupils are very positive, ensuring that pupils enjoy their learning. Marking is thorough and helps pupils to improve their work. Teachers use questions effectively to make pupils think hard. In most lessons tasks are well matched to pupils' needs, with good support for pupils with learning difficulties. In one outstanding lesson more able pupils planned their own adventure in the Greek underworld. The task challenged them to think very carefully about the features of a myth. By the end of the lesson their knowledge and understanding had grown significantly. A few lessons are not as effective as they should be because pupils are not given enough opportunity to get actively involved. Occasionally, teachers talk for too long and, consequently, restrict the time and the opportunities for pupils to contribute to lessons. Similarly, pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to make effective use of the interactive whiteboards in their learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

A good and broad curriculum ensures that the academic and personal needs of all pupils are very well met. Beyond the expected subjects, the school makes good provision for Italian at Key Stage 2 and for swimming from the Foundation Stage onwards. Music is a particular strength of the school, with many pupils having the opportunity for instrumental tuition. Well chosen topics provide good links between subjects and encourage the transfer of skills. The school has recognised that the curriculum in the Foundation Stage is not broad enough to provide children with sufficiently independent

or adventurous approaches to learning, to further raise their all round achievement, and has begun to improve the provision. Learning about health and safety is comprehensively covered by the curriculum and enhanced by visits from, for example, the police and fire services. Further very good enrichment is provided through an extensive range of visits, focused theme weeks, and the wide range of out-of-school clubs provided. These extend pupils' experiences and enjoyment of learning and contribute to their health and well being.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

'My children are always safe and well cared for', is a comment that sums up parents' views of the outstanding care the school provides. Pupils know that the school has their well-being at heart because they are treated as individuals who's every concern matters. Expectations of behaviour are high and minor incidents are quickly and sensitively sorted out. Pupils particularly appreciate the way they are trusted by the school and encouraged to be conscientious and responsible. Health and safety routines and risk assessments are fully in place and meticulously observed. Child protection procedures are clear, widely understood and fully applied. There are very good systems for tracking and supporting the progress of pupils, including those with learning difficulties, which help to ensure high levels of achievement. Literacy and numeracy targets inform pupils what they need to learn next. As pupils progress through the school, they become increasingly aware of these and of their progress in meeting them.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is very well led and managed, and has the capacity to go on improving. Very effective leadership from the headteacher and his deputy, whose skills complement each other well, contributes significantly to the high quality of care, to the good progress the pupils make and to their outstanding personal development. The leadership team know that they have a good school, although their otherwise accurate evaluation fails to acknowledge its outstanding features. Parents, governors and others involved with the school show less modesty about its strengths. There is a thorough programme for monitoring teaching and learning, which has led to staff being strategically deployed, as teachers and as managers. As a result, pupils are well taught and supported individually so that they achieve well. The school's commitment to both the initial and ongoing training of teachers leads to all being encouraged to reflect on how they teach. A team approach to professional development is frequently adopted to good effect, particularly in sharing good classroom practice. There is a very strong governing body, very active and always ready to challenge the school. Their role in appointments has been significant, and they oversee the budget with great diligence. The school uses its resources efficiently, providing good value for money. Parents play an active part in school life and raise considerable amounts of money for the school.

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
--	-----------------------	--------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I want to thank you for the very friendly welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you and seeing your work. We also enjoyed talking to your teachers and watching assemblies.

What we liked most about your school* You are extremely well looked after and show that you enjoy going to school* You are making good progress and getting good results, thanks to the effective work of your teachers and those who help them to provide good lessons* You are given interesting and useful things to learn and to do, in lessons * You behave very well, and are developing extremely well as young people* Your school has a very good headteacher; he, the deputy headteacher, and all the teachers who work together as a team understand well how the school works and are doing the right things to make it even better* Your parents are very happy with the school.

What we have asked your school to do now* Help you to join in more in lessons, so that you learn even better than you are doing now * Give the children in reception classes even more interesting things to do. We hope that you will continue to do your best and wish you every success in the future.