



St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 103085
LEA Waltham Forest LEA
Inspection number 276839
Inspection dates 12 June 2006 to 13 June 2006
Reporting inspector Judith Dawson AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Station Road
School category	Voluntary aided		Chingford
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		London E4 7BJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02085294723
Number on roll	219	Fax number	02085291012
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Richard Hopper
Date of previous inspection	26 June 2000	Headteacher	Miss Philomena Egan

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by 2 Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The majority of the pupils at this average sized Catholic primary school come from homes with favourable socio-economic circumstances. All pupils are Roman Catholic and the school aims to put Christian ideals at the heart of its work. 58% of the pupils are boys. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. Fewer than average have learning difficulties or disabilities [LDD] or statements of special needs. Very few pupils do not have English as their first language and none are at the early stages of learning English. There have been no exclusions over the last five years. There is a thriving parents' association. The school has just been awarded Healthy Schools status.

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, parents and pupils see St. Mary's as a good school and the inspectors agree. One parent says 'We feel privileged that our son goes to this school'. Pupils achieve well throughout the school and standards are generally well above average. Inconsistencies in the provision for Year 6 pupils in the past have resulted in a slight dip in standards this year but they are still above average. Pupils achieve well in the Foundation Stage and almost all achieve the early learning goals. Pupils' attitudes and personal development are outstanding. Pupils love to learn, work extremely hard and care for each other very well. Behaviour is exemplary. Teaching and learning are good. The excellent relationships generate a good ethos for learning. Teachers plan to meet pupils' diverse needs well. The quality of the teachers' marking varies throughout the school and pupils are often given insufficient guidance on how to improve their work.

The care, guidance and support within the school community is outstanding. There is a good curriculum which makes excellent use of the locality, visits and visitors to enhance learning.

The school is led and managed well and some aspects of leadership are outstanding. Recent deficits in the budget have been addressed and the school provides good value for money. Personnel problems have been addressed very effectively and measures put in place ensure the school remains effective. The many recent initiatives now need to be evaluated and the outcomes used to help the school prioritise future developments. Issues from the last inspection have been addressed successfully. Because of the excellent start made by the new senior management team and the commitment of the staff and pupils, the capacity for further improvement is very good.

What the school should do to improve further

- * Evaluate the impact of new initiatives and prioritise areas for development.
- * Ensure the quality of marking and target setting is consistent throughout the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The pupils achieve well throughout the school. Children' abilities are generally above average when they join the Reception class and well above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils meet their challenging targets. Although current inspection evidence suggests standards have dropped slightly from the high standards of previous years, they still remain above average by the end of Year 6. The pupils' good achievement is a direct result of the good teaching they receive and their eagerness to learn. As a group of pupils in Year 2 said, 'Learning is fun'. Many of the present children in the Reception Class joined the school with abilities that are broadly in line with those expected for their age. They settled quickly, made rapid progress and now the great majority of children exceed the expected goals. There is no significant

difference in the progress made by boys, girls or pupils of different minority ethnic background or ability.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils are helpful, polite, work well together and support others through charity fund-raising. Attendance is well above average and parents say that their children enjoy coming to school. More than one parent wrote of 'the happy atmosphere in the school'. This was reinforced by the pupils in discussions with inspectors. Their enjoyment of lessons leads them to work hard. Behaviour is outstanding and as a result, pupils rapidly grow in maturity and confidence. Their attitudes reflect the school's excellent spiritual, moral, and cultural provision. As pupils from different ethnic backgrounds join the school pupils learn about and celebrate their cultures. Pupils' social skills are very good. The school council has been successful in raising the issues of improved school dinners, and new playground equipment but they should be allowed to run their own meetings. The school has just achieved the Healthy School's Award and as a result pupils have a good understanding of how to stay healthy and safe, and why exercise is important. The good progress pupils make in literacy and numeracy, and their sound development of information and communication technology (ICT) skills, make a good contribution to their future economic wellbeing.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and pupils' learning are good throughout the school. There are excellent relationships between pupils and teachers and pupils' commitment to their work ensures that they achieve well. In one outstanding mathematics lesson, the pupils glowed with self esteem as the teacher was humbled by their achievements. They delighted in correcting her 'mistakes' and learning was rapid and, to quote one pupil, 'exciting'. Teachers meet the needs of pupils of all abilities well and plan work that is achievable and challenging, based on accurate assessments of pupils' abilities. Pupils with LDD are identified swiftly and have good support. Teachers give plenty of praise in their marking. Pupils know what they need to do to reach the next levels in English and mathematics but few have short, personal targets generated by the outcomes of their work or their own perceptions of their learning needs.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

There is a good curriculum with some outstanding features. The basic skills of literacy and mathematics are provided for effectively. Weaknesses in the provision for music and science identified in the last inspection report have been addressed well. Teachers

are starting to establish stronger links between subjects and plan more systematically for the use of computers to support learning. Provision in the Foundation Stage is very well planned with excellent use of visits to support learning, so that children get off to a very good start. The curriculum is well planned throughout the school, meeting the needs of all pupils, including those with LDD and the most able. An outstanding range of visits and visitors considerably enhance the whole curriculum. Pupils learn how to stay safe and healthy through personal, social and health education and in lessons in science and physical education. There is an excellent range and variety of out-of-school clubs and activities that are much appreciated by both pupils and parents.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Pupils are given outstanding care, guidance and support. The school provides a safe and secure working environment. All vetting and child protection systems are securely in place and effective health and safety procedures are regularly reviewed. The school works hard to ensure that all pupils attain their potential. The staff know their pupils very well and there are excellent relationships between pupils and teachers across the school. Parents are very supportive of the care taken of their children. As one parent wrote 'I am forever grateful for the teachers' support and couldn't ask for a better education for my child'. Particularly good support is provided for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities enabling them to achieve well. Guidance and support for pupils' spiritual and personal development is a significant part of the school's work. Pupils have targets for English and mathematics and they know what they need to do to achieve higher levels.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good overall and some aspects of leadership are outstanding. The new headteacher responded to the school's immediate needs with considerable skill, ensuring that problems with personnel had as little impact on pupils' learning as possible. As a result, standards remain above average in Year 6 in spite of some turbulence in their education last year and pupils meet their challenging targets. Many measures have been put in place to improve aspects of school life and the school is a happy, caring and hardworking community. Parents are involved in the life of the school and overwhelmingly support the new leadership and management. The governors are now fully involved in the management of the school and their expertise in many aspects of school life enables them to support and evaluate initiatives effectively. Subject leaders plan for improvement and have a clear understanding of the school's strengths. Very good systems for monitoring teaching have been put in place and the outcomes form part of the teachers' developmental targets.

The inspectors agree with most judgement that the school makes about its performance apart from the school's modest evaluation of pupils' personal development and wellbeing and its care, guidance and support, which are outstanding. Although the

school has many plans for development, the evaluation of the outcomes of many of the recent initiatives is limited. The senior management team needs to ensure that systems, such as the development of pupils' full potential through personal target-setting and running the school council, are fully effective. Also policies, such as the marking policy, must be fully embedded in order to have the maximum impact on pupils' learning. The evaluation of these initiatives should inform the school's priorities for development to ensure that it continues to build on its many strengths.

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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
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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	2	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	1	NA
The attendance of learners	1	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	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	2	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

Pupils

Thank you very much for making us feel so welcome. We really enjoyed talking to you and seeing how well you learn. A special thanks to the school council and those of you in Year 2 and Year 6 who talked to us and shared your views. You told us that you have a good school and we agree. We were very impressed with your behaviour and how hard you work. You have every right to be proud of your achievements in both your work and the way that you care for each other.

Your behaviour is excellent and those of you with responsibilities carry them out diligently. It is evident that you enjoy school. You are hardly ever absent from school or late for your lessons. You are taught well and have excellent relationships with your teachers and each other. This helps you to learn well. You learn about interesting things and the school gives you excellent opportunities to extend your learning by going on visits and having visitors to school. I hope that Year 3 have a chance to ask their questions in St. Albans. The school takes very good care of you all and makes sure you are safe and know how to care for yourselves by keeping healthy. I am sure that, after this week, there are some very safe cyclists on the streets of London!

Miss Egan leads the school very well and has worked very hard to make sure that you have all you need to help you learn. The leadership and management team and the governors run the school well and are excellent at taking action to improve the school when needed. The teachers could help you even more by making sure that the changes they make are working well so that you make the most of them. I am sure, for example, that the school council could be responsible for running its meetings. Some of your teachers do not give you enough information to help you improve your work when they mark your books. You could make your work even better if you had little targets that help you learn from your recent work. Many of you could make your own targets because you know what you need to do to improve.

Best Wishes

Mrs J Dawson

Lead Inspector