



# St Mary and St Giles Church of England Junior School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 110472  
**Local Authority** Milton Keynes  
**Inspection number** 278439  
**Inspection dates** 3–4 October 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Keith Williams

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Junior	<b>School address</b>	King George Crescent
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Stony Stratford
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11		Milton Keynes MK11 1EF
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01908 562186
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	220	<b>Fax number</b>	01908 566363
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Father Ross Northing
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Meirion Morgan
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 October 2000		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

St Mary and St Giles became a junior school in September 2005 and is of average size. The school serves an advantaged area, although most pupils live outside of the school's catchment and are from socially diverse backgrounds. The proportion eligible for free school meals is similar to that found in most schools. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The remainder are from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. None is at an early stage of learning English.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school. Good leadership, management, teaching and learning ensure that pupils are well cared for, achieve well and reach above average standards.

The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy head, staff and governors, provides very strong leadership that focuses on promoting pupils' all-round development within a Christian ethos. As a result, pupils, whatever their background or ability, are fully included and able to fulfil their potential. Their personal development is outstanding. Staff have very high expectations of how pupils should behave and present excellent role models for them to follow. Pupils rise to this challenge by behaving impeccably and they are eager and ready to learn. This has a significant impact on their progress and the standards they reach. Pupils enjoy, and play a full part in, all aspects of school life and are well prepared to be citizens of the future.

The school leaders have a good understanding of how well the school is doing because they keep a close check on teaching and learning and evaluate the results of tests and assessments thoroughly. This information is very well used to identify strengths and tackle areas needing improvement. Pupils' above average standards are reflected in the national tests for eleven year olds in recent years but, in 2005, results in mathematics and science fell. The school identified incisively what needed to be done and set about raising standards. Consequently, the results for 2006 show considerable improvement, particularly in the proportion of pupils exceeding the nationally expected level. While it is currently not possible to make a comparison with schools nationally, these results reflect a good level of achievement when pupils' average attainment on entry is considered. Pupils currently in Year 6 are on track to meet their challenging targets and also attain above average standards. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved and standards in Year 6 are now in line with what is expected for pupils of this age.

The partnership between teachers and the very capable support staff has been central to the school's efforts to raise standards. A particular success is the way that teachers use information from their thorough assessments to plan lessons that take good account of pupils' differing needs. As a result, pupils of all abilities achieve well. Those with learning difficulties or disabilities get the extra help they need, and more able pupils receive the harder work of which they are capable. There are some inconsistencies, however, but the school has suitable plans for dealing with them. For example, teachers sometimes allow pupils to present their work untidily. Similarly, inconsistencies in the setting of targets and the marking of pupils' work mean that pupils do not always know what they need to do to improve and their involvement in assessing their own work is limited.

Parents are very supportive of the school. Given the school leaders' successful track record, they have good capacity to secure further improvement.

## **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise pupils' awareness of how they can improve and involve them more in the assessment of their work.
- Iron out inconsistencies in marking and pupils' presentation of their work.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' achieve well and standards are above average. This is reflected in the national tests for pupils in Year 6 in recent years. The results fell in 2005, significantly so in mathematics and science, where too few pupils reached the higher Level 5. The school tackled this successfully by providing work that more closely matches pupils' differing needs and, where necessary, by enabling them to work in smaller groups under the guidance of an adult. This has been instrumental in enabling pupils of different abilities to make good progress so that, for example, those with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve well. The increased challenge for more able pupils is reflected in the considerably higher proportion who reached Level 5 in mathematics and science in 2006. Beyond the core subjects, pupils' art work is of a high quality. There is no significant difference in the achievement of pupils of different age or background.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development, including their moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. This has a significant impact on their progress. Pupils' spiritual development has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Relationships are excellent and pupils have mature attitudes to learning. They try hard, concentrate well and enjoy solving problems. Their high levels of enjoyment are reflected in a rate of attendance that is above the national average. Pupils are extremely proud of their school and explain that bullying and racist incidents are extremely rare. Those that do occur are dealt with swiftly. They feel that their views and ideas are taken seriously through, for example, the conscientious school council, and they participate willingly in raising money for charities. Pupils have a very clear understanding of how to stay safe. They choose healthy food and take regular exercise. Their good progress in literacy and numeracy and their improved ICT skills mean that they are well prepared for their future economic well-being.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Good teaching makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning and achievement. Teachers make lessons interesting and fun. They are clear about what pupils are

expected to learn, and their motto is 'nothing will get in the way of learning.' Pupils respond very well to these high expectations and are very eager to learn. As a result, lessons are invariably successful and this enables pupils to make good progress. Of particular note is the way that pupils are grouped according to their prior attainment. This means that they are provided with work that matches their needs and, often, they receive well-targeted support from the very capable teaching assistants. This strategy has been instrumental in raising the standard of pupils' work in mathematics and science. Inconsistencies in the way that targets are set and in the marking of pupils' work mean that pupils are not always sufficiently aware of what they need to do to improve. Weaknesses in teachers' knowledge of ICT have been dealt with, and interactive whiteboards are used imaginatively to capture and sustain high levels of interest in a wide range of subjects.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The school provides a good curriculum that successfully promotes pupils' all-round development. Many activities are planned to help them develop healthy and safe lifestyles. Pupils' enjoy learning French and there is a strong focus on promoting sport, art and music outside of lessons. A good range of visits and visitors enhance pupils' enjoyment and enrich their learning. Planning for ICT has improved and computers are used increasingly in other subjects. The school plans well for pupils of all abilities, including those who are identified as gifted or talented. This contributes to the good progress made by all groups of pupils. The school has rightly identified the need to modify its planning for teaching handwriting to clarify when joined writing will be taught. Parents appreciate what the school has to offer, one saying, 'The school has helped enrich my children's lives by offering a steady flow of activities in a wide range of areas.'

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school looks after its pupils well. Pupils appreciate the help and guidance they receive, one saying, 'Teachers listen to you and will help you when you need help.' All pupils are valued, whatever their age, background, ability or gender. Procedures to secure the health, safety and protection of pupils are effective and are reviewed regularly. Good liaison with many outside agencies supports pupils' welfare. Very effective use is made of the results of tests and other assessments to identify pupils' needs and provide support. However, they are not always given a clear understanding of what they need to do next to improve and their involvement in assessing their own work is at an early stage of development.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher ensures that every effort is made to enable pupils to learn in a safe, supportive and attractive environment. All staff share his commitment to raising standards. There is strong sense of teamwork amongst the adults in school and between teachers and pupils. Staff share the responsibility for co-ordinating subjects and they carry out their duties diligently. This contributes to pupils' good progress. A close check is kept on the work in lessons and areas for improvement are identified and tackled. The school has rightly identified the need to keep a closer check on the work in pupils' books to iron out inconsistencies in marking and presentation. Governors make a good contribution to the life and development of the school. They contribute very strongly to the information gathered to monitor the school's performance and, as a result, the school leaders have a good understanding of strengths and what needs to improve.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

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

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

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

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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for the friendly way you welcomed us to your school for the recent inspection. A special thank you goes to those of you who met with us to let us know your views. We enjoyed talking to you and watching you in lessons. You have given us lots of helpful information.

Many of you told us that you think you are getting on well. We agree. Yours is a good school and your headteacher, teachers and the other adults in school do a good job in helping you to learn well. This means that your work is better than we often find in schools like yours. We were particularly pleased to see that your work in mathematics, science and ICT has got better, and some of your artwork is stunning. Your teachers work hard to make lessons interesting. They make sure that those of you who need extra help get it. You told us that those of you who can do harder work get it and we saw for ourselves how much you enjoy this challenge. Your behaviour is excellent. Well done because this means that your teachers can concentrate on making sure that you understand the work and continue to get better. One of the reasons why you learn well is because you are so interested in your work and eager to learn. Keep it up! Your behaviour out of the classroom is just as good and we were pleased to see how well you play together.

Even though your school is doing well, the staff are keen to make it even better. There are two things that we are asking them to do. Firstly, we want them to make sure that you have a better idea of your targets and to involve you more in assessing your own work. Secondly, some of your work is untidy and the marking does not always help you to improve. We know you will work hard with your teachers to put these right.

Once again, thank you for your help and we wish you good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Keith Williams

Lead inspector