



St Mary's CofE Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 102139
Local Authority Haringey
Inspection number 286285
Inspection dates 8–9 March 2007
Reporting inspector Derek Watts

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Church Lane
School category	Voluntary aided		Hornsey
Age range of pupils	3–7		London N8 7BU
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8348 7805
Number on roll (school)	234	Fax number	020 8341 7284
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Rev G Seabrook
		Headteacher	Mrs Anna Cumbers
Date of previous school inspection	19 January 2005		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3–7	8–9 March 2007	286285

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St Mary's CofE Infant is an average size primary school. Nearly a third of the pupils are from a White British background. The remainder come from a wide range of other backgrounds with significant numbers from Caribbean, African and Other White heritages. Over a third of the pupils speak English as an additional language. Pupils come from a broad range of socio-economic backgrounds and the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is broadly average. Children's attainment on entry to the Nursery is varied but overall is in line with national expectations.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

St Mary's CofE Infant is a good school offering effective education for all its pupils. As a result, pupils achieve well and make good progress in their personal development. Parents hold very positive views about the school and give it good support. They make favourable comments about, 'the strong community spirit', 'the warm and caring ethos', 'the very approachable staff' and the fact that 'all parents are encouraged to play an active part in the school'.

Since the last inspection, pupils' achievement, teaching and learning and leadership and management have all improved from satisfactory to good. Good leadership and management are key factors contributing to the school's success. The headteacher provides clear leadership and direction. She is well supported by the deputy headteacher and other leaders. The school has a clear view of its performance and takes effective action to bring about improvements. Teamwork among the staff is strong. They plan and work well together to ensure that all pupils receive consistently good education and care. There is a commitment by all staff to raising achievement and making the school even better.

Recent improvements to the Foundation Stage mean that children in both Nursery and Reception classes get off to a good start. They make good progress in all areas of learning because of the effective and stimulating provision. This good progress continues in Years 1 and 2 because of careful assessment, good teaching and learning, and a well planned curriculum. A strength of the teaching is that tasks are well matched to pupils' different abilities and needs. As a result, all pupils are challenged well and make good progress. Standards by Year 2 are above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Whilst satisfactory, provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is not as strong and pupils' progress in this subject is sound rather than good. Pupils do not always have sufficient opportunities to acquire and apply ICT skills.

Good care, guidance and support contribute significantly to pupils' academic and personal development. In this positive school community, all groups of pupils are valued and effectively provided for. Pupils enjoy school and this is reflected by their enthusiastic participation in assemblies, lessons and other activities. Clear expectations, good relationships and positive rewards lead to good behaviour. Pupils show a good understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles and how to keep safe. There are good systems to assess and monitor pupils' attainment and personal development. Pupils at St Mary's are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve provision in ICT so that pupils' achieve as well in this area as they do in reading, writing, mathematics and science.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Throughout the school, pupils' achieve well. Children in Nursery and Reception enjoy their learning and make good gains in knowledge and skills. During the past three years, standards in Year 2 have improved from average to above average in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils who attained the higher Level 3 in 2006 was also above average. This is significant improvement because, at the time of the last inspection, higher attaining pupils were not sufficiently challenged. Good use of assessment, effective teaching and good support help to ensure that all pupils make good progress. The needs of pupils at an early stage of English language acquisition are carefully identified and effective help is provided. Tasks and support are well tailored to the needs of pupils with learning difficulties. Pupils make good progress in science through effective practical and investigative approaches, and reach above average standards. Pupils' progress in acquiring and applying ICT skills is only satisfactory because this area of the curriculum is less well developed. Despite minor weaknesses in ICT, pupils have developed good skills in literacy, numeracy and science. These, with their good team working qualities, prepare them well for their future economic well-being.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good because the school places a strong emphasis on the care, respect and understanding of others, including those from other cultures. Pupils speak about school with enthusiasm. Although attendance figures are below average, the school has effective measures to maintain an improving picture and to tackle punctuality. By the time they reach Year 2, pupils accept responsibility willingly and enjoy helping out, although the school recognises the need to involve them more fully in decision making and independent learning. Behaviour is good and pupils care for each other well. The few pupils who exhibit challenging behaviour are well managed by staff. Pupils have a good understanding of the need for a healthy lifestyle as demonstrated by their lunchtime choices. Pupils adopt safe practices. For example, even the youngest children use tools safely.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Effective teaching and learning contributes significantly to pupils' good achievement. Teaching in the Foundation Stage provides a good blend of direct teaching and opportunities for children to explore and work independently. Interesting and imaginative activities inspire the children. Throughout the school, teachers plan lessons well and make it clear what pupils are expected to learn. Assessment information is

used effectively to match tasks to pupils' different abilities and needs. As a result, pupils are challenged, their interest is maintained and they make good gains in their learning. Occasionally, teachers miss opportunities to enhance teaching and learning through the use of ICT. There is a generous level of support staff and this contributes well to pupils' learning. Teachers have good partnerships with teaching assistants who provide effective support to pupils who need it.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum provides interesting activities which recognise the pupils' cultural diversity. It enables pupils to make good progress and contributes well to their personal development. The curriculum is well tailored to all pupils' needs. Good emphasis is placed on literacy, numeracy and science. Strong links between subjects add meaning and relevance to pupils' learning. For example, pupils write for a variety of reasons including reporting what happened in a science lesson or describing Black History month. Links with ICT and other subjects are planned. However, not enough time is given to the application and development of ICT skills. Attractive displays of pupils' artwork, models and writing reflect the interesting range of activities provided. Visits and visitors enhance pupils' learning. Healthy lifestyles and personal safety are given good attention. The recently improved Foundation Stage curriculum provides stimulating activities and promotes good progress.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils are happy, valued and secure in this caring school. One parent commented, 'I feel the school has a strong identity and a community feel which helps my child feel cared for.' Staff have strong relationships with pupils and recognise and support their individual needs. Effective procedures ensure that pupils are well cared for, safe and secure at school. Good transfer arrangements ease pupils' move to junior school. The school has effective systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. Assessment data is used well to set challenging individual targets, particularly in writing and mathematics. As a result, most pupils, particularly in Year 2, are clear about what they need to do to improve. The school has rightly identified the need to involve pupils more in evaluating for themselves how well they are doing.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are successfully promoting good achievement, good personal development and continuous improvement. The headteacher and staff have created a positive and welcoming school atmosphere which is much appreciated by pupils, colleagues and parents. A positive approach has enabled the school to improve. Leadership responsibilities are effectively shared and a strong senior management

team use their collective expertise well. There is a clear commitment to equal opportunities so that all pupils and staff can thrive.

School self-evaluation is good although the school has been modest in assessing a few aspects of its work. Nevertheless, it has a clear overview of its strengths and its development needs. Effective monitoring of teaching, and support by senior leaders, have led to improvements in teaching and learning. Good assessment and tracking of pupils' progress mean that the school has a clear picture of how each pupil is doing. After successfully improving teaching and learning and raising pupils' achievement in English and mathematics, leaders have accurately identified that improving provision and achievement in ICT is the next priority.

The governors are committed, supportive and are now more challenging about provision and pupils' achievement. Governance is good. Improvements to leadership and management, teaching and learning and to the Foundation Stage have had a positive impact on pupils' achievement. The school has demonstrated a good capacity for further growth.

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	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

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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

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

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 so much for welcoming us into your school and showing us your work. We enjoyed the visit and would like to tell you what we have found. St Mary's is a good school and you can be proud of it.

These things are strengths of the school:

- you enjoy school and take part in activities with enthusiasm
- the school is an attractive and pleasant place to be
- children in Nursery and Reception get off to a good start
- teaching is good, which is why you learn so much
- you are making good progress in reading, writing, mathematics and science
- your behaviour is generally good
- the headteacher and senior staff run the school well
- you show care and respect for other pupils and adults
- staff know you well; they take good care of you and give you good support
- your parents are very pleased with the school
- you are well prepared for your junior school.

There is one area that the school has been asked to improve:

- some of you could make more progress in ICT.

Finally, thank you once again for all your help. We wish you all the best for the future.

With kind regards,

Derek Watts

Lead Inspector