



St Matthew's CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 102419
Local Authority Hillingdon
Inspection number 286370
Inspection date 15 September 2006
Reporting inspector Barry Jones

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	High Street
School category	Voluntary aided		Yiewsley
Age range of pupils	3–11		West Drayton UB7 7QJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01895442724
Number on roll (school)	404	Fax number	01895438370
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Ms Janet Duncan
		Headteacher	Mr Christopher Cole
Date of previous school inspection	14 October 2002		

Age group	Inspection date	Inspection number
3–11	15 September 2006	286370

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

St Matthews is a popular Church of England school which is located near to London Heathrow and serves an area that is more disadvantaged than is usually found. The number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds has increased in recent years and the proportion is now higher than in most schools. The proportion of pupils who do not join the school at the usual time is often higher than in most schools.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

St Matthews is an improving school that provides a satisfactory standard of education with some good features. It is friendly, welcoming and works well with other partners to provide good quality care. As a result, pupils' personal development is good. They feel safe and develop well into responsible young people. There is a good curriculum and this contributes to the positive attitudes of pupils and is one of the reasons they enjoy coming to school. The strong Christian ethos of the school underpins their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school is well regarded within the local community and as one parent wrote 'I am proud to say that my children attend at St Matthews'.

Pupils make a good start in the Nursery and the quality and standards in the Foundation Stage overall are satisfactory. Recent good appointments to the staff, enhancements to the accommodation and improvements to the curriculum means that the school is well placed to improve further. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 have mostly been average for several years and pupils' achievement overall is satisfactory. However, pupils taking the national tests at the end of Year 6 made insufficient progress given their good performance when they were in Year 2. Only a half of these pupils reached the expected level in writing and the most able pupils, particularly boys, did not do as well as they should have in mathematics, particularly boys.

The school has gone through a period when it experienced considerable difficulties in recruiting and retaining suitably qualified teachers. This has contributed to weaknesses in teaching in the past, resulting in the unsatisfactory progress made by some pupils in Years 3 to 6. The headteacher has spearheaded a vigorous and successful campaign to improve recruitment. He has also been instrumental in helping to develop the skills of existing teachers through a rigorous monitoring programme backed up by appropriate in-service training. Data collected by the school show that the rate of progress achieved by pupils has improved in the last year although it is not yet consistently good, particularly in Years 3 and 4. There has been a rapid acceleration in Year 6 as a result of good teaching. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but the school now has a much stronger teaching force. There are some outstanding teachers at the school who are capable of helping to improve matters further.

The headteacher leads the school effectively and leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The governors are supportive of the school. However, they have not been sufficiently challenging in exploring the reasons behind the underachievement by some pupils in the past. The leadership and management have not been able to raise pupils' achievement so that they make good progress. The school has maintained high levels of care, teaching is improving and the school is well led. There is, therefore, good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the achievement of pupils in mathematics in Years 3 to 6, particularly the most able boys.

- Raise the standards in writing throughout the school.
- Strengthen the procedures for checking the progress made by pupils and the ways in which the governors hold the school to account.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

On entry to Year 1, pupils score above the average for the local authority in personal and social skills, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development but below the average for communication skills. Standards at the end of Year 6 are average. Standards at the end of Year 2 are usually average but some years they are above average. The progress made by pupils in Years 3 to 6 has varied from good to unsatisfactory over the last few years. Raising attainment has been a priority for the school and as a result standards have risen. However, in the 2005 tests for Year 6, several of the most able pupils, especially boys, did not achieve their expected grade for mathematics and the provisional results for 2006 suggest a dip in performance. Consequently, raising attainment in mathematics remains a priority. In 2005, the school met its targets for English but narrowly missed one for mathematics. Achievement is improving, principally because of better teaching, and is now satisfactory. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make satisfactory progress. New improved procedures and support mechanisms in the last year have resulted in pupils for whom English is an additional language making more rapid progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. The Christian ethos of the school is reflected in the pupils' good spiritual and moral development. Children's social development is a strength in the Foundation Stage and this continues for the pupils' time in the school. Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles, behave well and contribute fully within the school and to the wider community. Pupils feel that their views are valued. For instance, the school council expressed concern that there were few activities at lunchtime and few facilities for play. A budget was agreed and equipment purchased. The pupils also perceive that this improved behaviour at lunchtimes. 'Buddies' feel that their support is appreciated by other pupils. Bullying is extremely rare and the pupils have confidence in their teachers to deal effectively with the isolated occurrences. As a result, pupils enjoy coming to school, feel safe and have positive attitudes. Pupils' economic well-being is satisfactory. Pupils do not attend as frequently as pupils in most schools. However, attendance is steadily improving because of strenuous efforts by the school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory and improving. Strengths of the teaching include good subject knowledge, clear and effective planning and good deployment of teaching assistants. Teachers use interactive whiteboards to add stimulus to the lessons which makes them more interesting for the pupils. The school does have some outstanding teachers and this has been recognised by the local authority who use them to support teachers in other schools. All teachers plan to meet the needs of individual pupils but not all do so effectively and vary in their ability to ensure all pupils participate fully in the lesson. The improvements in the teaching has not yet enabled all pupils to make up the ground lost when there has been unsatisfactory teaching in earlier years.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The provision in the Nursery has been improved in the last year including the planning of more structured outside activities. The curricula in the Foundation Stage and in the main school are good. The school gives considerable emphasis to developing the artistic talents of pupils and has made a productive partnership with a secondary school which enhances its work. There is good provision for health education and personal and social education is promoted well through circle time and other initiatives. Provision for information and communication technology is good. The school has a suite of computers and it is used well to develop pupils' computer skills and to support their work in other subjects. The school provides for gifted and talented pupils through booster classes and other activities but does not fully meet their needs in classrooms.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, support and academic guidance are good. The school regards care for each individual pupil as central to the work of the school. There is a dedicated 'inclusion' team and this is well led and coordinated. In several year groups the school has a high number of pupils who join the school at other than the usual starting times. The school has good induction procedures for these pupils and is persevering in its efforts to obtain information about them as quickly as possible. Consequently, these pupils make better progress than they do in most other schools. The school is robust in safeguarding the interests of pupils. The pupils know their targets well but the support does not yet ensure that they all make good progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. They have been successful in maintaining good levels of care but have not had sufficient impact on raising standards. The school has been through a difficult period with significant recruitment difficulties. The headteacher has shown good leadership to steer the school successfully through this time. He has initiated and overseen forceful and successful advertising campaigns. He has also carried out a rigorous monitoring programme of teaching quality and the school has taken robust action where weaknesses in teaching have been identified. A governor expressed the view that the school now has the strongest team of staff for as long as she could recall. The school has a very comprehensive system for tracking the progress of pupils that provides the school with valuable information. Some of the data has not been rigorously benchmarked against data for national trends with the result that some of the school's evaluations are too generous and this has hampered the effectiveness of the school's evaluations. Governors are supportive of the school but have not challenged the school sufficiently when statistics produced externally to the school appeared to show considerable underachievement by some pupils. The school is very responsive to the concerns of parents and they contribute to decision making. Parents speak very highly of the school.

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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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
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?	3
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	3
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	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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 very much for your help when I inspected your school. I had discussions with a group of pupils who had been school councillors or who were acting as 'buddies' at playtimes. They told me how your views are valued by the school. In particular, playground equipment had been bought at their request and this has made lunchtimes much more enjoyable. I met other pupils in classrooms and around the school. You all told me how much you enjoy coming to school, that you feel safe and most of you enjoy the healthy food. Your views are very much shared by your parents who were very positive in the questionnaires that they completed for this inspection.

My main findings are that St Matthew's provides a satisfactory standard of education with some good aspects and that it is improving.

What is good:

- the good care and support that you receive from your teachers and their helpers
- you behave well and develop into confident young people
- the rich range of activities that are on offer both inside and outside the classroom all the way through the school from the Nursery to Year6
- the leadership of your headteacher
- the school is well placed to improve.

What is satisfactory:

- the standards that you reach in your subjects
- the progress that you are making in your lessons
- the teaching that you receive
- the way in which the school checks how well it is doing.

What can be improved:

- the work that you do in mathematics in Years 3 to 6 and particularly boys
- your writing skills throughout the school
- the way in which the school and the governors check on how well you are doing.

For your part you can continue to work hard and behave well. A few of you need to attend more regularly. Make sure you understand in class and ask if you do not as your teachers are very keen to help you.

Yours sincerely

Barry Jones

Lead inspector