



St Mary's CofE Primary School

Inspection Report - Amended

Unique Reference Number 126024
Local Authority West Sussex
Inspection number 293438
Inspection date 12 September 2006
Reporting inspector Brenda Spencer

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Brookpit Lane
School category	Voluntary aided		Clymping
Age range of pupils	7-11		Littlehampton BN17 5QU
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01903 714325
Number on roll (school)	95	Fax number	01903 732017
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Sarah Tyrrell
		Headteacher	Janet Llewelyn
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2001		

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Amended Report Addendum

Report updated to resolve formatting inconsistency

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St Mary's C of E Primary School is a small village school which particularly welcomes pupils living in the local area. In addition, increasing numbers of pupils come from Littlehampton and neighbouring towns and villages. The overwhelming majority of pupils are of White British origin and all speak English as their first language. Their attainment on entry is average. No pupils are eligible for free school meals. The school is developing a distinctive character of being environmentally friendly and has achieved silver eco-school

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

St Mary's is an improving school which provides a satisfactory standard of education. The standards reached and the progress made by older pupils, and boys' standards in general, have been poor in recent years. This is no longer the case, and all except the few higher-attaining pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through Reception class up to the end of Year 6. Children's attainment standards on entry to school are average and the standards now reached by pupils in Reception, Years 2 and 6 are average except in writing, where standards are below average.

Good systems to keep pupils' progress under review produce data that allows the school to identify pockets of underachievement and to intervene with much success. Subject leaders also effectively identify which parts of the curriculum need greater emphasis in order to raise standards, for example, work on letter sounds. But they do not accurately analyse data to keep track of how well all groups of pupils are achieving and this contributes to higher attainers underperforming. Nor do they routinely look at how well planning is matched to meet the needs of the range of pupils' abilities. Boys are responding well to the curriculum which allows them choice in their activities and increases their enjoyment of learning. The curriculum is enriched well with clubs and sporting opportunities, although younger children do not have the benefit of a good outside environment. Teaching is satisfactory and the marking of pupils' work helps them understand how to improve and know what they have done well. Despite this, teachers' good knowledge of pupils' achievements is not consistently used well enough to plan lessons that always stretch higher-attaining pupils.

Pupils are happy in school and feel safe. This reflects the school's good care and support for their personal welfare. Older pupils enjoy the opportunities they have to contribute to school life through the school council and their work on the Eco Action Team. The good uptake of physical activities makes a strong contribution to their healthy lifestyles. Their good level of independence reflects the opportunities they have to make choices in their work.

Leadership and management are having a positive effect on pupils' achievement. This has borne fruit in the last year. Reorganisation of staff, playing to their strengths, is having a positive impact on learning. The school improvement plan does not often measure its success by the extent to which things have improved for pupils and this has drawn the school into overestimating some of its achievements. The plan does, though, correctly identify those aspects that are most crucial to raising pupils' achievement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve teaching by planning for and delivering lessons which always provide sufficient challenge for higher-attaining pupils.
- Raise standards in writing by improving the younger pupils' knowledge of letter sounds and the use of this knowledge in spelling by older pupils.

- Improve the work of subject leaders in monitoring the quality of provision in their subjects and the achievements of all pupils.
- Ensure that school improvement planning gives priority to checking and evaluating that developments have a positive impact on pupils' learning.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and is much improved over recent years. Children make satisfactory progress in Reception, reaching standards which are broadly average except in writing, where they are below average. As pupils move through the school the vast majority continue to make satisfactory progress. By the end of Year 2, standards are average in reading and mathematics but remain below average in writing. Relatively few children reach the higher levels. By the end of Year 6, standards are average in English, mathematics and science but writing continues to be an area of weakness and is now being addressed. The very small numbers of higher attainers do not always make the progress they should and, as a result, their achievement is unsatisfactory.

Some parents raised concerns about the progress their children make. This reflects the poor progress made in the past by older pupils and boys. Their progress in mathematics was particularly weak as they struggled to build on their attainment from Year 2. This is no longer the situation as systems introduced two years ago to identify each pupil's rate of progress and the partnership with the local authority to improve teaching and the curriculum in mathematics have brought about improvements.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils say they enjoy school and their attendance is above average. One parent commented, "my son is absolutely loving it." Over half take part in a sports club, setting themselves up well to have a healthy life. Pupils have a high opinion of behaviour and consider occasions of bullying to be rare and always quickly nipped in the bud. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and opportunities older pupils have to take care of younger ones give them a good sense of responsibility. Pupils participate in local village events and gain a wider perspective on life through their links with schools in Nepal and Sierra Leone. Preparation for their future economic life is satisfactory because pupils show strong independence and social skills, although their literacy and numeracy skills are less well developed.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning has improved significantly in the last year. Most pupils now build satisfactorily on their previous learning. They are helped to learn by the good feedback they receive when their work is marked. Praise identifies what is good and helpful suggestions show pupils how to improve their work. Staff know the children well but this knowledge does not always lead to effective planning of lessons, particularly in meeting the needs of higher attainers. As one remarked after completing a piece of work, "that was too easy for us." This can lead to these pupils responding by losing interest. In contrast, teaching can often challenge pupils with thought-provoking questions and gives time to discuss and develop their answers. For example, in a science lesson pupils had time to discuss and consider how the properties of materials influenced the way in which they were used. The standards of speaking and listening are rising partly because pupils are given time to air their ideas with a partner. This makes them feel confident to express tentative thoughts and to use the specialist vocabulary introduced in the different subjects.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and has many noteworthy strengths. It enables pupils to make satisfactory progress in English and mathematics, although the teaching time allocated to pupils in Years 3 to 6 is below recommendations. Children in Reception follow programmes expected to be covered by their age groups but they do not benefit from a rich outdoors environment.

Although it is a small school, pupils take up the good opportunities to participate in sports, arts and cultural clubs. There are also good opportunities to take part in sporting events. The school has adapted its curriculum to support pupils' personal development very well. They are involved in planning their own learning and this develops their sense of personal responsibility well. The school's analysis shows these opportunities are also raising standards of speaking and listening skills. Pupils enjoy the focus on first-hand and practical experiences and the development of skills, and this is particularly helping boys to have a positive attitude to school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The care, guidance and support of pupils are satisfactory. Pupils' personal welfare is in good hands. The school takes good steps to ensure suitable adults teach them, that the environment is safe and that unnecessary risks are avoided. Parents value the induction procedures for Reception children and the pairing of younger and older pupils as buddies is beneficial to both. There are good links with other schools and other agencies to work to the benefit of pupils and families. Class discussion times are

used well to support pupils with the difficulties of life. Academic guidance is only satisfactory, as it does not ensure that higher attainers consistently make sufficient progress. Marking provides pupils with useful information about their work. Pupils with learning difficulties are identified and supported well.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Governors also fulfil their role satisfactorily. The progress most pupils made was inadequate for several years but effective action taken by the leadership team means that now the vast majority of pupils build satisfactorily on their knowledge and skills year by year. Key to this has been the systems set up to measure individual pupils' attainment each year, the reorganisation of staff to play to their strengths and the support of the local authority in tackling poor standards in mathematics. The headteacher has identified well where pupils' learning needs to improve and focused her efforts mostly to good effect. Newly appointed subject leaders are developing their skills in analysing data about individual pupils' achievement and progress but they do not review the quality of planning and teaching or analyse data for groups of pupils. This limits the impact they are having on improving the quality of learning, particularly for higher-attaining pupils. The school's evaluation of its effectiveness is satisfactory and accurately identifies that much has improved in the last year. The improvement plan focuses on the key things which will raise achievement but does not outline how it will measure success in terms of the effect of action taken on pupils' learning. The capacity of the school to build on its success is presently satisfactory.

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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 effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
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	2
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?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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	3
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	3
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 for making us feel so welcome when we came to your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you. A particular thank you must go to those of you who gave up your lunchtime to talk to Mr Dukes.

We think your school is satisfactory. After talking to you and your teachers, looking at your work and visiting your lessons we think that most of you are now making steady progress in your learning. You are reaching the standards everyone expects for pupils of your age except in writing. Some of you find the work too easy at times and could do even harder work. You feel happy in school, know how to stay safe and be healthy and join in well in school and community events. We were impressed by how you get on with one another and agreed with you that usually you behave well.

The staff take good care of you and make sure that you are safe. They keep a close eye on how you are getting on with your work and use this to help most of you to improve, although they could help some of you to reach even higher standards. We can see you enjoy school partly because you are able to choose some of the things you do, because of the clubs you like to join and because your lessons are interesting. The staff are trying to make the school even better and they look closely at all the things that happen in school. We think they could do this better by looking closer at whether this is helping you to learn. We also want them to give some of you harder work and to make sure that younger pupils learn their letter sounds to help improve spelling. We know you are confident about giving your opinions so please tell them how changes affect you