

St Mary and St Michael Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131936
Local Authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	293894
Inspection dates	20–21 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Asyia Kazmi HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	451
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Michael Killington
Headteacher	Mrs Sue Faulkner
Date of previous school inspection	30 April 2001
School address	Sutton Street London E1 0BD
Telephone number	020 7790 4986
Fax number	020 7790 9343

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St Mary and St Michael School has a nursery and is larger than most primary schools. Pupils come from a diverse range of diverse backgrounds; the predominant group is White British with African heritage pupils making up a significant number of the school population. A third of the pupils speak English as an additional language. A quarter of the pupils joined the school after the normal age of entry, this is a high. Additionally, nearly half the teachers have joined the school in the last two years. The proportion of pupils with a statement of educational needs is higher than average, however, the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is below average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, at twice the national average, is high.

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 and St Michael School is a satisfactory school. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school; this is shared by senior staff and governors. They have worked hard to bring about improvements in pupils' behaviour and created a warm, caring and welcoming ethos in which pupils are ready and willing to learn. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school.

After recent restructuring there is now a complete senior leadership team who feel strongly committed to carrying through their vision of success for all children. A new leadership structure is challenging and is supporting teachers to improve their practice. The systems that have been set up are bringing about improvements but they are not fully embedded yet. The school has good capacity to improve further; senior leaders recognise what needs to be done in order to maintain the momentum.

Systems for checking the quality of the school's work are satisfactory. However, they lack consistency across the school. There are regular checks of the quality of teaching. This is identifying and tackling weaknesses and improving the quality of teaching and learning, which is satisfactory overall. Systems to regularly assess the progress pupils are making have been set up in English and mathematics but this is relatively recent. Additionally, these systems have not yet been extended to include all subjects.

Standards are below average at the end of Year 6. This represents satisfactory progress overall, because although pupils make good progress in mathematics, their progress in English is not as good. Senior leaders are committed to ensuring this improves and are taking the right steps towards this.

Pupils speak positively about the care all staff provide, this helps them develop into mature, sensible young people. They are polite, thoughtful and ready to work hard in lessons. Older pupils are rightly proud of the many ways they contribute to the life of the school; however younger pupils do not have as many opportunities to do this.

Children make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage. Careful planning and monitoring ensures that activities have a clear purpose. However, some adults miss opportunities to extend the children's speaking skills by not asking enough open ended questions.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise pupils' standards in English.
- Make consistent use of the assessment information to ensure all pupils make the best progress they can.
- Measure more precisely the effect of school's actions on improving the quality of education for all pupils.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next S5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The majority of pupils join the school with the knowledge and skills expected for their age. At the end of the Foundation stage standards in most areas are generally in line with national

expectations and higher in some, for example, dispositions and attitudes, and emotional development.

Standards at the end of Year 2 in 2006 were below average in writing, average in reading and above average in mathematics. Progress by the end of Key Stage 1 is good overall. Standards at the end of Year 6 are average in mathematics but below average in English and science. Senior leaders have identified pupils' progress in writing as an area of focus and put in place appropriate actions to improve it. Progress throughout Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall, but good progress is evident in mathematics.

As a result of careful identification of their needs and the support they receive pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make good progress. Gifted and talented pupils make satisfactory progress but not enough pupils are achieving the higher levels at the end of Year 6, particularly in English and science.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development are good. The youngest pupils are learning to understand their feelings and they become reflective and confident about expressing themselves as they move through the school. Pupils have strong moral values, which they demonstrate in lessons, as they move around the school and at play times. Pupils are very willing to work together in lessons and in play activities. The school prefects proudly talk about their duties, those who organise play activities and look after the play equipment are particularly effective.

Pupils have a say in how their school is run. For example, they have been responsible for the establishment of the tuck shop and of indoor activities at break times. Pupils enjoy their education and most participate and respond enthusiastically in lessons. They feel safe and free from bullying or harassment. They are clear about the kinds of behaviour that are unacceptable to them. The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles is good, they enthusiastically take part in the daily physical education programme. Older pupils make a good contribution to their school community, but links with the local community are less well established. Pupils are developing skills that will prepare them for their future lives, however, their literacy skills are not as well developed. Pupil attendance was an issue at the last inspection; this has improved and is now satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Overall teaching and learning are satisfactory, with some good features. Classrooms are vibrant and rich learning environments. Relationships between pupils and teachers are good. In the best lessons, teachers' planning is well matched to meet the needs of all pupils, however, this is not consistent practice.

There is a good focus on paired and group work, this helps pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills. However, the school does not monitor pupils' progress in developing their oracy skills. Not all teachers expect pupils to give extended answers and in some lessons teachers' questioning does not challenge the more able pupils. Teaching assistants, informed by teachers'

comments, provide good support to pupils who need it. However, sometimes pupils show too much dependency on them and wait too long for instructions rather than start their work.

Senior leaders have paid careful attention to improving teaching and learning. Although the impact of this can be seen in lessons, it will take longer for pupils to benefit from these improvements in their results at the end of key stages. Marking, particularly in English, is helpful to pupils in telling them how to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good curriculum which promotes pupil's enjoyment of learning. In the Foundation Stage there are plenty of exciting activities that broaden children's knowledge and understanding of the world and enable them to develop their skills. Throughout the school, pupils value the good range of exciting topics which are enhanced by visits and outings. They also engage enthusiastically in creative activities. Subjects such as history, geography, art and design technology, are taught in concentrated blocks of time so that pupils can get engrossed in their learning and use skills learnt in other subjects.

Pupils have good opportunities to participate in a range of enrichment activities which include visits from authors and artists. There is a good range of after school clubs. The school carefully monitors who attends and actively encourages pupils who will benefit from attending. Gifted and talented writers have the opportunity to attend a writers club, but provision in their normal lessons is not as well developed.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pastoral care and support for pupils are good, guidance is satisfactory. The school provides a safe and very supportive environment for its pupils and promotes their health and safety well. Staff demonstrate high levels of commitment to pupils, who know that they can speak to a member of staff if they have a problem. Pupils are confident their concerns will be taken seriously. Individual programmes are designed for those children who need extra help, for example, those who find difficulty in dealing with their emotions. Parents are consulted about and involved in their children's learning and there is a very caring ethos. One pupil told inspectors, 'The teachers give us confidence, they're supportive, they do love and care and we can learn from our mistakes.' Pupils are now benefiting from the targets teachers are setting them to reflect on and improve their progress, but these are recently established and their impact has yet to be seen in the results pupils achieve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management, after recent turbulence, are now more stable. All senior and middle leaders take responsibility for monitoring the work of the school. Governors know the school well, they are passionate about overcoming barriers to achieving high standards for their pupils. There is a clear emphasis on raising standards which is shared at all levels of leadership. An example of this is seen in the monitoring of aspects of the school's work such as in teaching. This has led to better support provided to improve some areas of weakness, such as in English.

However, these developments are recent and the results are not yet evident in pupils' work and progress.

The systems to check the quality of teaching are now well established, but the work of support staff is not fully monitored. There is detailed analysis of the progress pupils make in English and mathematics, but this is not extended to all subjects.

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Annex A

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?	3
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	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	3
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?	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.

Annex A

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

2 July 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Mary and St Michael Primary School, London, E1 0BD

Thank you very much for the warm and friendly welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. Thank you also for talking to us and telling us your views about the school, we very much enjoyed meeting you. I would like to share our findings with you.

Your school is giving you a satisfactory education. We were impressed with your PE skills in the morning sessions, your good behaviour and how you keep yourselves safe and healthy. We were also impressed with the work of the prefects.

We know that you make good progress in mathematics, we have asked your teachers to help you make better progress in English. One of the ways you can help is by making sure you always use your targets to improve your writing. We know your headteacher and the people who help her are making the right decisions in making your school even better, we have asked them to check all areas of the school's work so that they continue to improve.

Once again, thank you for your help. We know you will continue to help all the adults in your school in carrying on improving. We wish you and your school every success.

Yours sincerely

Asyia Kazmi
Her Majesty's Inspector