

# St Mark's Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101648
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bromley
<b>Inspection number</b>	307765
<b>Inspection date</b>	20 September 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Barry Jones

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	436
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Reverend S Varney
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs K Owbridge
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 September 2003
<b>School address</b>	Aylesbury Road Bromley BR2 0QR
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8460 0524
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8313 1038

---

<b>Age group</b>	4-11
<b>Inspection date</b>	20 September 2007
<b>Inspection number</b>	307765

---

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- Foundation Stage
- Achievement
- Behaviour
- Aspects of the provision that the school considered to be outstanding
- Leadership and management.

Evidence was gathered from performance data, external monitoring, observations of teaching and the work produced by pupils. Parents' questionnaires and discussions with parents, children, the chair of governors and staff also contributed to the judgements. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

St Mark's is a larger-than-average primary school that serves a community that is more advantaged than most. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is well below average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic background is average but increasing; few of these pupils are 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

St Mark's is a good school with outstanding features. Pupils consistently attain high standards. Standards of care are excellent and underpinned by the school's Christian ethos. The principal reason is the consistently strong leadership of the school. Consequently, the school is held in very high regard by the great majority of parents. As one parent wrote, 'The school has a wonderfully warm and caring atmosphere. The musical and Christian ethos is something they should all be proud of.'

Children make an excellent start in the Reception classes and continue to make good progress through the school. Consequently, high standards are attained at each key stage. The quality of teaching is good and effective monitoring by senior managers ensures that the consistency is maintained. Teachers are enthusiastic, plan their lessons well and have high expectations. However, some introductions to lessons are overlong and pupils do not participate as much as they should in these lessons. By the end of Year 6 pupils attain standards that are well above average. Given that their attainment was above average when they joined the school, achievement is good overall. Sometimes pupils make outstanding progress and attain exceptionally high standards. For instance, in 2006 almost four fifths of Year 6 pupils reached the highest level in English. The school attribute this to rigorous analysis of their 2005 results, specific programmes of intervention and support for particular groups, training for teachers and actions by senior managers to check on outcomes for pupils. The inspection confirms this but the monitoring does not always focus sufficiently on the progress made by pupils. Older pupils' progress in mathematics is not consistently good but the school is addressing this as a priority in the coming year. Younger pupils do better in mathematics and reading than in writing for which the standards are average. The school's efforts to narrow the gap has met with more limited success.

Pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is outstanding and is promoted successfully through the curriculum, assemblies and through the high expectations that permeate the work of the school. Relationships in the school are very good and the pupils are very considerate towards one another. Pupils are encouraged to be thoughtful. For instance, 'Fountain Court' is a place for pupils to be quiet and reflective during lunchtimes. Older pupils say they take care of younger ones in the playground. The school canvasses and acts upon pupils' views. For instance, behaviour is exemplary but the school responded vigorously to some concerns about bullying. During anti-bullying week the school took part in a media project with a local secondary school and has formulated an effective whole-school approach. Consequently, pupils say they feel very safe. They have a good understanding of healthy-eating issues. They have very positive attitudes to school. This is reflected by their high attendance and the very positive responses given in questionnaires administered to pupils. They are also very willing to contribute to school life and to the wider community. The school council is active, has its own budget and takes its role very seriously. The pupils' excellent personal qualities together with their very good basic skills, means that their preparation for transferring to secondary school is excellent.

The good curriculum contributes significantly to the pupils' considerable enjoyment. The school has responded well to the issue identified in the previous inspection but the work is not yet completed. It has done this by providing more opportunities for pupils to engage in creative activities and to use their own initiative. The introduction of a creativity week has been received well by parents and pupils. The school is seeking to ensure that similar opportunities are incorporated into schemes of work for subjects. The extensive range of extra-curricular activities

are well attended and are highly valued by pupils and parents. Pupils from the school excel in public musical performances.

Some aspects of leadership and management are very good. The staff work very well as a team and excellent pastoral arrangements contribute to the outstanding care. Staff have the interests of the pupils at heart and pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress because of their good support. There is very good tracking of individual pupils' progress and this information is used to provide extra support when needed. The central database is not readily accessible to staff which means that it is not used to its full potential. In particular, it is not used to identify trends in performance of particular groups in order to inform decision making by senior managers. The school does make effective use of external evaluations but the delay means that it does not take action as early as it might. This apart, the school's self-evaluation is good and there is good capacity to improve.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 1**

Children make an excellent start in the Reception classes. They join with skills that are higher than normally found for their age but the profile is changing. By the end of Reception they attain well and most are meeting or working above the Early Learning Goals. They make very good progress as a result of the outstanding provision. This includes an outstanding curriculum in which there is a good balance of teacher-directed activities and opportunities for children to learn through well-planned play. The quality of teaching is good, often outstanding and is well supported by skilled teaching assistants. There are very good induction procedures which mean that children settle quickly and parents comment very positively on the warm welcome. One parent summed up the feelings of many when she wrote, 'I have been delighted with the enthusiasm and care that the Reception teachers have shown towards this year's new intake'. The school is not complacent and is seeking to raise standards in writing even further.

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

- Raise the standards of writing for younger pupils.
- Make effective use of the data it collects on pupils' attainment to inform decisions taken by middle and senior managers.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------

### 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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

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

### 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?	1

<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.

## Annex A

**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	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

2 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Mark's Church of England Primary School, Bromley, BR2 0QR

Thank you for making me feel so welcome when I inspected your school. You told me that you enjoy school very much. As one of you said, 'Art is really fun but we are learning at the same time.' You appreciate the many opportunities to take part in activities after school. You speak enthusiastically about the public musical performances that have helped to build the school's high reputation. You feel very safe. Some of your school council members told me that their views are valued and, for instance, some were involved in the interviews for your new headteacher. You told me that St Marks is a good school. I agree, and in some ways it is outstanding.

The things I particularly liked are:

- Children in the Reception classes make an excellent start in the school.
- You do very well in your work and attain high standards.
- Your behaviour is excellent and you are considerate to one another.
- You have good teachers.
- All the staff take good care of you.
- The school is led very well.
- The school is a thriving community with close links to the Church.

The school is not complacent and is constantly striving to improve further. There are two things that I have asked the school to do to achieve this.

- Raise the standards in writing of the younger pupils.
- Use the information it collects on how well you are doing to check on the progress of particular groups of pupils.

I hope that you continue to play your part in making the school such a welcoming place. Make sure that you ask if you do not understand. The teachers will be very pleased to help you.

I wish you success in the future.

Yours faithfully

Barry Jones

Lead inspector