

# St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School, Malton

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	121653
<b>Local Authority</b>	North Yorkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	314071
<b>Inspection dates</b>	29–30 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Les Schubeler

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

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<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	98
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Stephen Parkes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr David Harrison
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	29 September 2003
<b>School address</b>	Highfield Road Malton North Yorkshire YO17 7DB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01653 692274
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<b>Age group</b>	4-11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This is a small school serving a rural town and the surrounding area. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. There are three mixed-age classes in addition to the Reception class. Three members of staff, including the headteacher, have joined the school since the previous inspection. The school has received the Healthy Schools Award.

## 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 is a good school with outstanding features. These include the inspiring leadership of the headteacher and the excellent quality of care and support, which help to promote pupils' good achievement and outstanding personal development.

Excellent leadership has been extremely effective in building on the previous strengths of the school and developing a very caring environment where all pupils thrive and thoroughly enjoy school. Effectively supported by colleagues in the school, the headteacher ensures that a strong commitment to improvement is at the heart of everything the school does. Significant improvements in standards at Key Stage 1 and recent improvement in achievement at Key Stage 2 exemplify the success of the staff's determined efforts.

Pupils make good progress throughout the school, reaching above average standards by the end of Year 6. Standards by the end of Year 2 have been well above average in each of the last three years. At Key Stage 2 in 2006 pupils did not achieve as well as expected in English. However, in 2007 achievement in English, mathematics and science rose to its highest level yet. Results in the Key Stage 2 national tests in the last two years were above average overall. However, the school has an effective programme of self-evaluation and it identified weaknesses in the standard of pupils' writing at the higher levels. These were below average, while in reading, mathematics and science they were above average. Measures have been introduced to bring about improvement, although it is too early to assess their full impact.

The quality of teaching is consistently good. Secure relationships, effective management of pupils and high levels of care successfully underpin the good teaching and learning. A well considered investment in upgrading information and communication technology (ICT) equipment has paid dividends in broadening teaching styles across the curriculum and extending pupils' learning. Rigorous systems to track pupils' progress help teachers to focus closely on the achievement of individual pupils. However, assessment procedures in the classroom have not yet developed to the extent where all pupils are confident in knowing how to improve their work.

Pupils are cared for extremely well. Excellent levels of both internal and external support are provided for vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Pupils enjoy life at St Mary's. They trust and feel highly valued by all staff. They feel safe, secure and happy at the school. Their views are typified by the comments: 'This is a brilliant school', and 'The work is hard, but fun!'

The school makes very good use of its links with external agencies, the local community and parents. Specialist teachers for physical education and music help pupils to develop their skills. External consultants are effectively used to check the accuracy of teachers' assessments, including those made in the Foundation Stage. Good curricular links have been developed with other schools. Parents place a high value on the work of the school. The strong bond between the school and parents is illustrated by those who say that the school 'has a fabulously happy and welcoming atmosphere', 'is a warm caring school with good moral standards' and 'breeds a culture of respect and caring for each other', or others who say quite simply, 'We are very lucky to have a school like this.'

Because teachers have been helped to develop their skills in monitoring the school's performance, there is now a shared vision for the future of the school. A cohesive team of staff is being developed to take on a wider management role and move the school further forward

with a common sense of purpose. Since the previous inspection, stability in staffing and very rigorous monitoring are contributing to higher standards and levels of achievement. Governors play a very active and highly effective part in determining the school's priorities and helping the school to provide very good value for money. The commitment of all to meeting pupils' needs, coupled with the improvements that have been made in recent years, ensures that the capacity for further improvement is very strong and the school can look to the future with great confidence.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

As the number of children in each year group is small, the overall level of their skills and understanding when they enter the Reception class can vary widely from year to year. In the last two years their skills have matched expectations for their age. Provision is led and managed well. Teaching and learning are good and all learners are cared for and supported very well. Children quickly settle into routines. Their behaviour is good and they enjoy their learning. They work and play happily together. Very good relationships and constructive guidance provide a solid foundation for children's personal, social and emotional development. They learn to share and take turns. The curriculum is good as children are able to learn in a variety of ways, using a good range of resources. A good balance is struck between practical activities and the teaching of key skills. At present the lack of a covered outside area limits some of their opportunities, but the school has plans to address this.

Achievements are assessed systematically and thoroughly, which provides information for planning further challenges. This ensures good progress across the stage so that by the time children start Year 1 most of them are achieving beyond their expected goals. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to be active in their children's learning and, as a result, are well informed as to their progress.

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

- Ensure that all pupils have a clear understanding of how to improve their work.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Standards are above average and achievement throughout the school is good. At Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress. There have been significant improvements in recent years and standards have been well above average overall in the last three years. Skills in mathematics, by the end of Year 2, have not been as high as those in reading and writing, but they were nonetheless above average in 2007. At Key Stage 2 national test results have been above average in each of the last three years. Pupils' good progress is founded on good teaching and effective use of a thorough system to track the progress of individual pupils and identify cases where specific support is required. The secure knowledge that is gained from the process enables the school to continue to set challenging targets. Current work indicates that Year 6 pupils are progressing well in pursuit of their targets.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

The personal development and well-being of pupils are outstanding. Pupils get on very well with one another, which promotes positive attitudes to all. They show strong respect for one another. They are articulate and confident, and their behaviour is exemplary. This helps to ensure that spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to lead safe and healthy lives through sensible eating and taking exercise. Attendance is above average and improving, reflecting pupils' enjoyment of school life. Pupils know that the views they express through the annual questionnaire are valued. Pupils contribute extremely well to school life. For example, older pupils help young pupils to settle into the school. They make good contributions to the wider community, too, by enthusiastically raising funds for a wide range of charities and taking part in church activities. They are well prepared for the next stage in their education through team working and the good progress observed in lessons. They are justly proud of their school and say they have good teachers, good friends and interesting lessons.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pupils have positive attitudes to learning because they find most lessons interesting, challenging and fun. Teaching assistants contribute very well to the quality of pupils' learning, especially for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Good questioning techniques are used to make pupils think for themselves. Teachers use ICT to good effect to enhance pupils' learning across a range of subjects. Effective systems are in place for assessing and tracking pupils' progress. However, procedures to make pupils fully aware of their targets are not yet firmly established as part of everyday classroom practice across the school. Consequently, not all pupils have a clear understanding of how to improve their work.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum meets pupils' needs well. Through its 'Themes and Schemes' initiative, the school is beginning to make links between subjects to improve their relevance to pupils and to develop pupils' skills across all aspects of their work, but this development is in its infancy and its impact on learning cannot yet be assessed. The everyday curriculum is enriched by a very good range of activities and visits that enhance pupils' learning and personal development. These include residential visits to outdoor activity centres and involvement with the Schools Sports Partnership. Effective use of a programme that deals with the social and emotional aspects of learning is beginning to add significantly to the school's personal, social and health education programme and helps pupils to develop a growing understanding of their own personal development. There are good links with secondary schools to make use of specialist teachers and facilities in subjects such as science and French. Additionally, good links with local primary schools provide valuable opportunities for pupils to take part in a range of other activities that include sports and music.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 1

The outstanding quality of care and support given to pupils at the school is crucial in enabling pupils to achieve well and to understand themselves and others. There are excellent relationships between adults and pupils in the school. Teachers and their assistants know the pupils very well. Adults are consistent in their high expectations and pupils respond accordingly. Child protection and health and safety systems are in place. There are close links with specialist support agencies. Vulnerable pupils, including those with individual medical or learning needs, receive very good support. The school's rigorous tracking of pupils' progress, as a tool for academic guidance, is good. It enables the school to identify pupils who need additional learning support and effective action is taken to help them to achieve well.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 1

A real strength of the school's outstanding leadership and management is the very high quality of teamwork, which ensures that everyone plays a part in driving the school further forward. Morale is high and everyone is committed to raising standards and achievement. The significant improvements in academic standards being achieved and the high quality of care, guidance and support that leads to pupils' outstanding personal development are the outcomes of excellent leadership. Data is analysed thoroughly and accurately to monitor school performance and the school quickly takes effective action to address areas for improvement.

Comprehensive systems to track both the personal development and the academic progress of pupils have been developed. This helps staff to know their pupils well and has a very positive impact on the planning of lessons so that pupils' needs are met well. Good opportunities for the professional development of staff are provided. There are strong and productive links with other agencies to provide a wide range of extended services that impact positively on pupils' learning and personal development. Governors are well informed, partly as a result of their monthly interviews with groups of pupils, but also because they are fully involved in monitoring the school development plan. Financial management is good. The current surplus is carefully earmarked for use in the imminent building developments.

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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?	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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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?	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>	1
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	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
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	1
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

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**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Inspection of St Mary's RC Primary School, Malton, YO17 7DB

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave to me when I inspected your school recently. I would like to thank you for being courteous and friendly. I enjoyed talking to you and finding out your views about the school. I spent a lot of time finding out how well you learn in your lessons, looking at your work and talking to your headteacher and school staff.

St Mary's is a good school and it has some excellent features that help you to enjoy school and make good progress in your work. I was impressed by how well you get on with one another, by your positive attitudes to learning and by your enthusiasm for the school in general. I think your teachers and teaching assistants care for you and look after you extremely well, keeping you safe and healthy. I know, too, that you are very proud of your school and that you thoroughly enjoy the many activities such as visits, sports and music that it provides for you.

Your teachers teach you well and make your lessons interesting and enjoyable. I have asked them to make sure that all of you understand clearly how you can improve your work. You can help, too, by making sure that you know your targets and listen carefully to the advice that your teachers give you. Having met you, I am confident you will.

I am sure that you will continue to enjoy school and to make good progress. Most of all, I hope that you will carry on working hard and helping all the staff to make St Mary's become an outstanding school in the near future.