

# SS Mary and John Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123213
<b>Local Authority</b>	Oxfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	314543
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 March 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Keith Sadler

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	383
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Joan Clanchy
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Pip Murray
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 March 2004
<b>School address</b>	Hertford Street Oxford OX4 3AJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01865 248865
<b>Fax number</b>	01865 725156

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This above average sized primary school serves a culturally and social diverse community in East Oxford. The school operates in three parts on two sites. The Hertford Street site accommodates the Key Stage 1 pupils. The children in the Foundation Stage are taught in the Comper Foundation Stage School that is based on the same site. These children are taught by staff of both Comper and SS Mary and John, who are led and managed by the headteacher of the Foundation Stage school. Key Stage 2 pupils are accommodated on a site in Meadow Lane, which is almost a mile away. About half the pupils are of White British heritage. Others come from a wide number of ethnic backgrounds, the largest group being of Pakistani origin. At present, 15 different languages are spoken in the school and the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is double the national average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities (LDD) is similar to other schools. The school holds the following awards: National Healthy Schools, Eco School and Sports Activmark.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory standard of education. Pupils are prepared appropriately for secondary education. Pupils make satisfactory progress and attain standards that are in line with the national average. Pupils that are at an early stage of learning English make progress that parallels that of their classmates. The provision for this large group of pupils is generally good, although no member of the leadership team currently has oversight of their provision. In 2007, results of national tests at Year 6 were below average partly because this group, along with some more able pupils anticipated to gain the higher level, did not attain the expected levels.

Although a large majority of parents who returned questionnaires said that their children enjoy school and that they are safe and well cared for, a number said they thought leadership and management was not good. Leadership and management are satisfactory, and good measures have been taken to arrest the weak results of 2007. Parents are correct in suggesting that, until last year, there had not been a sufficiently strong focus in senior leadership to drive forward provision and pupils' progress. Senior leaders had not been sufficiently proactive. Instead, they responded to weaknesses and were reactive. The headteacher has steered the school appropriately to ensure that provision and pupils' achievement have strengthened considerably. Although a number of parents feel that communication systems are not appropriate, the level of information that the school provides matches that of most schools. Senior staff recognise that they need to be more available to deal with parental enquires and concerns, particularly at the Meadow Lane site.

Because there has been an improvement in the quality of teaching and learning, pupils' progress is improving in all year groups. Despite current teaching being good, a legacy of inadequate progress in the school year 2006 - 2007 and some weaknesses in academic guidance mean that progress is still only satisfactory. Improvements in the assessment of pupils' work have enabled staff to set activities that are better matched to individual needs. However, these improvements are not consistently applied in all classes. In addition, good procedures have led to closer tracking of pupils' progress, particularly in English and mathematics though these, too, are not implemented consistently in all classes.

Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils thoroughly enjoy learning and are proud of their school. They thrive in their personal development because of the good care taken by staff. Pupils of all ethnic origins and backgrounds enjoy working and playing together and they are keen to point out how their school benefits from the rich diversity of cultures represented in the pupil body. They have a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and understand how to stay safe.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 3

Children start in the Comper Foundation School with a wide range of skills that overall, are at levels similar to those expected for their age. They make steady progress and the quality of teaching by the staff of SS Mary and John is satisfactory. Children enjoy the activities and learn and work well together. The curriculum is good and consists of an appropriate balance between activities that are directed by the teacher and those that the children choose for themselves. Children benefit from a wide range of good quality resources, both inside and outdoors. There

are good arrangements for checking progress, and assessments are used well to guide staff in planning the next range of activities.

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

- Raise standards by ensuring that senior leaders concentrate on strengthening achievement in English, mathematics and science.
- Ensure that the recently developed strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning are applied consistently in all year groups, and that teachers make regular use of information about pupil's attainment to check their progress.
- Improve access and communication systems with parents to enable them to raise comments and concerns, particularly at the Meadow Lane site.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged to be satisfactory but who have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils enter Year 1 with skills and abilities similar to those found nationally and standards in national tests for Year 6 pupils are average. This marks satisfactory achievement overall. Standards in Year 6 dipped in 2007 to levels that were significantly below average. This is because some of the more able pupils and those that speak English as an additional language and some who find learning more difficult did not make the expected progress. However, because these groups have been provided with extra help and challenge, their progress is now satisfactory, and in some classes, it is good. Current Year 6 pupils are on course to attain average levels and those in Year 5 are attaining standards that are above expectations.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils have positive attitudes and behave well. The school is a happy place where pupils from many different backgrounds enjoy learning together. Their attendance is satisfactory. They have strong views on a number of issues, showing care and concern about their immediate environment and beyond. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a keen sense of right and wrong and are able to reflect on matters that concern them and, as they get older, on wider issues such as global citizenship. They speak positively about other faiths and cultures and have a good understanding of the multi-cultural world in which they live. Pupils make a very strong contribution to school life through the school council. They are proud to have been elected. As one Year 3 pupil said, 'We make the school more like children want it to be'. Similarly, the eco-council, playground buddies and the good behaviour patrol all take their roles seriously and are keen to play their part.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. This has successfully reversed the decline in standards exemplified by the weak test results in 2007. Classrooms have a calm and purposeful atmosphere in which pupils enjoy learning. Lessons are clearly planned with work that is well

matched to pupils' different learning needs and preferred learning styles. Because teachers routinely highlight their expectations, pupils focus their efforts and they are becoming increasingly more involved in understanding how well they are doing. In the best lessons, pupils are active and benefit from some imaginative tasks, which challenge them well. The provision for pupils that find learning hard is good. Pupils' needs are identified early and good programmes are put into place for their development.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory. It is effective in promoting pupils' personal development but is only just starting to make a significant impact on pupils' progress and to improve standards. Much work has been done to develop the curriculum since the previous inspection. There have been significant improvements in the curriculum for Foundation Stage children and there are now much closer curricular links with Year 1. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 emphasises appropriately the links between various subjects and this has increased pupils' enjoyment. It is well enriched through participation in many local projects, together with a range of musical and sporting activities all of which pupils enjoy.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

The care, guidance and support provided for pupils are satisfactory. Good care is taken of their welfare and safety. Personal development is monitored well and this leads to effective levels of individual support, for example, where behaviour is a concern. The school sets a good example to pupils about healthy lifestyles and who to tell if they feel worried or unsafe. The school keeps itself well informed about attendance and works with parents to keep rates at satisfactory levels. Support and guidance for pupils' academic development is satisfactory. The school has recently adopted a more comprehensive programme of tracking of pupils' learning but this is not yet fully effective across the school. Pupils are given curriculum targets to show what they need to do to reach the next stage of their learning. Their understanding of targets is much stronger in writing than for numeracy.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. Its impact on provision and pupils' progress has been hampered by a lack of focus on raising standards. The disappointment of the weak Key Stage 2 results in 2007 has led to significant and helpful strategies being put into place, to ensure that this does not occur in the future. As a result of improvements in the tracking of pupils' progress, linked to more focus on raising standards and new lesson planning procedures, the barely adequate progress has been arrested and there are clear signs of satisfactory and, in some classes, good progress being made. This demonstrates a satisfactory capacity for further improvement. The school has satisfactory procedures in place for monitoring and evaluating its work and its accurate identification of improvement projects is making a positive impact on both provision and pupils' progress.

Governance is satisfactory. Governors are deeply committed to the further improvement of provision and standards and are keen to see that the school's effectiveness strengthens. However, their actions have only recently started to have an impact.

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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
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?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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?	2
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

<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>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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**

20 March 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of SS Mary and John Church of England Primary School, Oxford, OX4 3AJ

Thank you for welcoming us to your school during our recent visit. We enjoyed meeting you and watching you learn and play. We were pleased to hear that you enjoy school and learning.

Yours is a satisfactory school and there are some good things about it. You told us that you feel safe in school. We can see that this is because the staff take good care of you. The adults work hard for you and the teaching is good. We were impressed with the way that you listen well in lessons and enjoy learning. Your behaviour is good and you have a good understanding of how to stay safe, lead a healthy life and, most of all, you enjoy taking responsibility.

However, your school can improve. The standards that you reach are not high enough in English, maths or science, so we have asked your headteacher and senior leaders to concentrate even more on making sure that more of you make quicker progress. We have said that they should do this by making sure that the really good ways that teachers help to make your learning better are used in all lessons and that they should use the tracking information to check your progress. Finally, we have asked that more information is provided for your parents and more chances given for them to meet with senior members of staff to discuss any comments or concerns they have. This is particularly at the Meadow Lane site.

You can help by continuing to work hard towards meeting your targets.

Best wishes for the future.

Keith Sadler

Lead Inspector