

# St Mark's Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100619
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lambeth
<b>Inspection number</b>	323316
<b>Inspection dates</b>	2–3 December 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Vanessa Ward

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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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 (total)	173
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Eddy Chan-Lok
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Julaine Hedman
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 November 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Harleyford Road London SE11 5SL
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7735 1467
<b>Fax number</b>	020 7582 9071

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	2–3 December 2008
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

St Mark's Church of England Primary School is smaller than average. The number of pupils who join and leave the school throughout the school year is higher than average. Pupils' social, cultural and religious backgrounds are very varied. Most of the pupils come from minority ethnic groups, the largest of these being from Black African and Black Caribbean heritages. A few pupils are from White British families and the remainder of the school is made up of pupils from other White or Mixed heritages. Well over half of the pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who receive free school meals is higher than in most schools. More pupils than average have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. These include pupils with moderate learning difficulties and some with behavioural, social and emotional problems. Children are admitted to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in either the September or January following their fourth birthday. The school experiences some difficulties with staff recruitment. It is working towards a Healthy School 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 Mark's Church of England Primary School is a good school. Pupils enjoy their learning and this is reflected in parental comments such as, 'My child never wants to miss a day.' Parents are very supportive of the school, saying that, 'It is a pleasure to be part of this school.'

There have been many staffing changes since the previous inspection. Throughout this time, the school has remained focused on raising standards and improving teaching and learning. Leadership and management are good. A newly appointed senior leadership team, supported by the governing body, is working hard to promote school improvement. School self-evaluation takes into account the views of all stakeholders and leads to successful school improvement. The school sets challenging targets. A recent focus on improving provision for more-able pupils is having a positive impact and is accelerating progress for these pupils. The success of such actions indicates that the school has good capacity to improve further.

Good teaching and an exciting curriculum enable the pupils from the Reception Year to Year 6 to make good progress and achieve well. When pupils join the EYFS, they have skills which are below, and often well below, those typical of four-year-olds. By the end of Year 6, pupils attain standards in English, mathematics and science that are broadly average. Results in the 2008 national tests showed a substantial rise in the number of pupils attaining the higher levels. Standards in mathematics are generally lower than those for English and science. The school has identified this as an area for improvement and is putting in place a range of additional support for pupils whose progress is slower than expected.

The good care, guidance and support provided by the school contribute significantly to the pupils' good personal development and well-being. Procedures to keep pupils safe are effective. Pupils say that they feel safe and know that an adult will help them if they are worried or upset. Recent changes to the catering provision at lunchtimes have led to much healthier eating in school. Pupils are proud of the contribution they were able to make to these changes through the school council. They value and participate enthusiastically in the wide range of sporting activities that the school offers. Pupils are involved in setting rules for their behaviour and most respond very positively to these. They know that they have targets that they should try to achieve in their learning. The school is increasingly involving them in evaluating their own learning, and recognises that this is an area that it can develop further. Similarly, the feedback that pupils currently receive when their work is marked does not consistently help them to know how they can improve.

The curriculum is good and teachers make it interesting, which motivates pupils to learn. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to develop skills in speaking and listening. They use questioning well to challenge pupils' thinking. Pupils comment that they 'like hard work because our class motto is 'Rise to the Challenge''. They particularly enjoy educational visits and the many opportunities they are given to make music and to learn to play instruments. Taking responsibility for such things as raising money for charity, and growing and selling fruit and vegetables, help them to develop well, skills that will be important in later life.

The school promotes community cohesion well. It has a successful focus on providing equal opportunities for all of its pupils. This enables all pupils, including those with moderate learning difficulties and behavioural, social and emotional problems, to make good progress. It works hard and successfully to support pupils and their families who are learning to speak English. Both the staff and governing body reflect well the broad range of ethnic groups that make up

the local community. The school's rich curriculum provides many opportunities for pupils to learn about different cultures, through the celebration of religious festivals, educational visits, music, and the study of African as well as British history. Its International Evenings provide valuable occasions when parents and pupils from many backgrounds can share their cultural traditions.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Children are given a good start to their learning in the EYFS. Liaison with their parents and carers is comprehensive and enables all children, including those who speak little English, to settle quickly and happily into school. They soon become familiar with school routines. All areas of learning are planned for, and the children's development is carefully observed and recorded. There is no direct access to an outside learning area, and this constrains the curriculum that can be offered. The teacher compensates for this by taking the children outside for some activities each day, but the lack of continuous access to outside learning means that the children's learning and development are satisfactory rather than good. However, there are plans to re-house the EYFS children in a different classroom, where a secure and accessible outdoor learning area could be created.

Children make good progress through the EYFS, and around half of them achieve the expected goals by the end of the year in all areas of learning. A rigorous approach to teaching letter sounds and names helps to accelerate the children's reading and writing skills. In line with the school's current focus on mathematics, greater emphasis is being given to promoting mathematical understanding. The EYFS is well led and managed, and the requirements of the EYFS framework are implemented well.

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

- Raise standards in mathematics throughout the school by ensuring that work challenges pupils of different abilities.
- Establish greater consistency in marking and in procedures for pupils' self-assessment, so that pupils are more aware of how well they are doing and of how to improve their work.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Standards are average and achievement is good. Year groups are small and this means that variations in the performance of one or two pupils can have a significant impact on statistics. This accounts for fluctuating results in both Years 2 and 6. While the attainment of pupils in Year 6 in 2007/08 was above average, there is a higher proportion of pupils with learning difficulties in the current Year 6 and standards are closer to average. The school is providing additional support for pupils of all abilities, which is accelerating their progress. This is particularly the case for mathematics, where standards remain lower than those for English and science. The school has recently introduced a new system for tracking data, which is beginning to provide more detail about the progress of individuals and groups, and is helping the school to target support where it is most needed. It shows that all groups of pupils make good progress. This includes those who have moderate learning difficulties or behavioural, social and emotional problems and those who join the school between Years 3 and 6, as well as the more able and those who are learning to speak English.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They develop good levels of confidence and self-esteem and this helps to raise their expectations of themselves as learners. Pupils have good awareness of how rules contribute to their safety and security. Attendance is below average, but this is the result of poor attendance by a few families. The school is working hard to improve the attendance of these pupils. Cultural development is a particular strength, with the school making good use of the many nationalities that make up its population. The school's focus on literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) is improving pupils' basic skills, and helps to equip them well for later life.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Particular features that increase pupils' learning include good management of behaviour, thoughtful planning and positive relationships. Pupils writing a plan for a story were well motivated by the teacher's introduction and worked purposefully. Support staff work successfully with small groups of pupils, often helping those with learning difficulties. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use resources, such as interactive whiteboards, to good effect to enliven their teaching. The quality of marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and does not always provide sufficient information about how well pupils are doing and what they need to do next to improve. Assessment procedures are being strengthened, and progress tracked more closely, in order to assist teachers to plan for the specific needs of pupils, particularly in mathematics.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school provides the pupils with a curriculum that is adapted well to meet their needs and which provides a wide range of opportunities and experiences. The curriculum promotes good cultural awareness and this leads to strong racial harmony. It is currently being revised to include more creative approaches, with the intention of raising pupils' enjoyment and engagement. Each term, educational visits to topic-related places of interest take place, including trips to museums, the Oval and the local church. Lunchtime activities are available for Year 6 pupils, where they can take part in playing steel pans, and Year 3 and 4 pupils learn Spanish. A wide range of clubs is available throughout the school. These include music, several sports and tae kwon do, all of which help pupils to develop their personal skills very successfully. The gospel choir contributes much to the pupils' good spiritual and cultural development.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

Procedures to ensure the health, safety and well-being of the pupils are robust and effective. The school has good links with other schools and agencies, and uses these well to benefit pupils. Catch-up programmes and extra tuition are used effectively to support pupils who learn more slowly. The school also provides good support for its more-able pupils, and for those who are learning to speak English as an additional language. Procedures are in place to enable pupils to evaluate their own progress, both at the end of lessons and in relation to their targets, but

these procedures are not yet used consistently well throughout all classes. The school is effective in supporting pupils when they join the school, including those who join mid-year. The school's policy for rewards and sanctions is understood by pupils, who feel that it is fair.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher and senior leaders have a good understanding of the areas in which the school needs to improve. Recent initiatives to raise standards and accelerate progress are having a positive impact, but the school acknowledges that this work needs to continue, especially in relation to mathematics. The monitoring of teaching by the headteacher and senior leaders is thorough and generates helpful development points which are followed up. Governors understand the school's strengths and weaknesses and provide good support and challenge to the headteacher. Governance is satisfactory because, as they recognise, there is a need to increase their monitoring role. Subject leaders' roles are being developed so that leaders take greater responsibility for managing teaching, learning and standards in their subjects. Equal opportunities are given high priority and are promoted very effectively.

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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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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
The extent to which 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	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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?	2

## 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	3
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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	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

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

16 December 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Mark's Church of England Primary School, London, SE11 5SL

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you and hearing your comments. You say that you go to a good school and we agree with you.

Here are some of the good things about your school.

- You make good progress in your work, and in the tests at the end of Year 6 your results in English, mathematics and science are similar to those in most other schools.
- All of the adults take good care of you and this helps you to enjoy school thoroughly and feel safe there.
- You are good at carrying out the responsibilities given to you, eating healthily, taking lots of exercise and behaving well, and these things help you grow into healthy, caring and confident young people.
- Your teachers make learning interesting and exciting, and provide lots of opportunities to go on trips and join after-school clubs.
- Everyone works together well in your school and helps you to join in with events in your local community, as well as helping you to learn about other communities across Britain and the world.
- The children in the Reception class are given a good start to school life and learn well.
- Your headteacher, teachers and governors are good at finding ways to improve your school.

To make your school even better, we have asked your teachers to:

- help you to do better in mathematics
- help you to understand better how well you are doing and what you need to do to improve.

You can help your teachers by always doing your best and making sure that you always attend school unless you are ill.

I hope that you continue to enjoy being at school and keep working hard.

Yours faithfully

Vanessa Ward

Lead Inspector