

# St Marys CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106247
<b>Local Authority</b>	Tameside
<b>Inspection number</b>	324357
<b>Inspection dates</b>	5–6 May 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Marie Cordey

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	240
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>	Mrs S Marsh
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss . Hampson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 July 2006
<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>	Church Street Droylsden Manchester M43 7BR
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 3703948
<b>Fax number</b>	0161 3715886

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

This average-sized school serves pupils from a wide variety of backgrounds. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The percentage of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is below average and the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. The school's extended provision is managed by the governing body and includes a before and after-school club and a holiday club that is regularly attended by upwards of 40 pupils. This provision did not form a part of this inspection. The newly appointed headteacher had been acting headteacher from January 2009. Early Years Foundation Stage provision includes one part-time Nursery class and a Reception class. The school holds a number of awards including Healthy Schools, Activemark for its sports provision and Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark. It also has Eco-Schools (Bronze) status and is working towards the Silver award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school. Pupils say that they 'like everything about our school' and that, 'Teachers make lessons fun and help everyone to understand.' Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children and their parents are made to feel welcome and this helps children to settle into school life quickly. Central to the school's character is its strong focus on achievement and standards as well as good provision for pupils' personal development and well-being. Pupils are encouraged to believe in themselves as well as to think of others. Their outstanding commitment to healthy lifestyles is reflected in a healthy, sensible approach to diet helped by the appetising, nutritious meals cooked on site. Parents' positive attitudes towards the school are reflected in their typical comments: 'A wonderful and caring school,' and 'My child learns a lot of new skills and is making good progress.' Pupils' behaviour and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good because pupils are respected and valued. In turn, pupils appreciate other people from different walks of life and are active fundraisers for national and international charities. Pupils enjoy their involvement in the school, local and parish communities. Their understanding of the diverse nature of multicultural Britain and the global community is satisfactory.

The quality of teaching is good overall and, as a result, pupils achieve well to attain above average standards in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave school. More and more pupils are reaching National Curriculum higher levels; the proportions attaining Level 5 have gone up significantly in the last two years. As yet, not all teaching is good or better and this affects the rate at which standards rise and the consistency of pupils' good achievement. Progress is slower occasionally when pupils are less involved and when questioning does not provoke thought and reflection. Effective tracking of each pupil's performance means that work is regularly adapted to match pupils' needs closely. Consequently, pupils meet and sometimes exceed their challenging targets.

The school takes good care of its pupils, particularly those who are most vulnerable. The good curriculum supports the achievement of all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those in the care of the local authority. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used to good effect to enliven teaching and to develop pupils' independence and computer skills. Parents and pupils appreciate the 'excellent out-of-school care' and the vast range of extra-curricular school clubs, including drama, science, homework and a host of different sports activities.

Good leadership and management are driving the school forward by involving all staff in its mission to provide equal, high-quality care and education for every pupil. Governors increasingly challenge the school and are very involved and supportive. They are not afraid to ask difficult questions and develop their knowledge and expertise through attending regular training courses. Improvement since the previous inspection is good and the school provides good value for money. Improvements in standards, particularly in writing and for pupils in Years 1 and 2 demonstrate good capacity to improve further.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children's starting points in the Nursery class are below expected levels for their age; they progress well to attain levels broadly in line with those expected at the end of the Reception

Year. A range of well-prepared activities encourages children to explore and enjoy their learning and they are eager to play and learn through games, role-play areas, computers and painting activities. Provision is well planned and ensures that each child has equal access to the resources available. There are limitations outdoors, however, because of the small outdoor space with less play equipment than indoors. As a result, children's opportunities to explore and develop their physical skills and their knowledge and understanding of the world are restricted. Good teaching and learning stem from effective leadership and management closely focused on children's progress and personal development. Children become increasingly confident and self-reliant because of the good care for their welfare. Each child is listened to very carefully because children's views are taken seriously. Good teaching and support build up trust and children make especially good progress in their social development. Children are well cared for and requirements regarding their welfare, health and safety are fully met.

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

- Improve outdoor provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage to develop children's physical skills and their understanding and knowledge of the world.
- Improve the consistency of teaching and learning to ensure that it is all good or better leading to higher standards and consistently good achievement.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

A trend of above average standards and good achievement include particular strengths in mathematics and science and the progress of pupils in Years 2 to 6. Interventions to improve writing across the school have resulted in higher standards so that attainment in English now matches the above average standards in mathematics and science. The school has raised standards in writing through concentrating on story writing and encouraging pupils to write about their own experiences. Pupils say that they 'love writing stories' and particularly enjoy 'getting under the skin of characters'. As a result, their writing is vibrant and sincere.

After a period of unsettled staffing, a trend of broadly average attainment and satisfactory achievement for pupils at the end of Year 2 has improved, because of the school's focus on teaching, assessment and well-planned support. Currently, pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress in all their subjects and attain above average standards. There are no significant differences in pupils' achievement. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those in the care of the local authority make good progress because of an unequivocal commitment to their needs and the support of knowledgeable and skilled staff.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils enjoy coming to school and they form good relationships with their teachers and each other. They know how to keep safe. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility and are proud to represent the views of the pupils who elected them to the school council. The eco committee, for instance, has been instrumental in changing the school's approach to recycling. Attendance is broadly average and the school has developed a variety of strategies with the help of the local authority, to improve it. However, a small number of families adversely affect attendance by taking holidays in term time. Good preparation for pupils' future includes close liaison with local schools, effective skills in ICT, numeracy and literacy and above average speaking, listening and social skills. A small number of parents are concerned about some pupils' behaviour and

occasional lapses in communication from the school. The school acknowledges these concerns and is reviewing its anti-bullying policy to act more speedily on the rare occurrences of bullying. The new newsletter is improving communications.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Most teaching is of good quality and supports pupils' learning well. The most effective lessons involve pupils in their learning through practical activities designed to stimulate their interest. A literacy lesson in Year 1 featured pupils acting out the story of Little Red Riding Hood with great enthusiasm and skill because of the verve and interest generated by the class teacher and the support assistant. Pupils went on to write and illustrate high-quality cartoon story lines for the fairy tale. Most teachers' high expectations mean that pupils are well motivated and expect to think for themselves. For instance, in a Year 4 science lesson pupils participated in experiments to demonstrate how electricity is conducted and why sometimes their switches didn't work. Both the teacher and support assistant skilfully asked searching questions to ensure that pupils realised how they could apply their knowledge. Consequently, pupils moved on from what seemed like setbacks to complete their investigations successfully. In satisfactory lessons, progress is slower because teachers' questions are not always challenging enough and pupils are not given as many opportunities to be actively involved in their learning. Teachers mark work regularly and most pupils are aware of how they are doing and what they need to do to improve their work through clear targets and increased involvement in assessing their work. Occasionally, marking and target setting are not always used as effectively to secure good progress.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is rich and increasingly varied. Pupils' personal, social and emotional development is fostered by the school and helps to improve the standards they reach in all their subjects. A recent, more thematic approach enables pupils to make connections between subjects and apply that learning to improve their skills. This has yet to have full impact in all classes. The school makes good provision for competitive sports as demonstrated by pupils' successes. From the Early Years Foundation Stage right through to Year 6, participation in extra-curricular activities is high and the school is rightly proud of its enrichment opportunities.

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

#### **Grade: 2**

Vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified swiftly and provided with support that is well matched to their personal and academic needs. 'Teaching assistants make a difference to my child's progress,' say parents. Children are well prepared for starting school in the Nursery and good preparation continues for each stage of their school lives, helped by links with neighbouring schools. Procedures for safeguarding and child protection are in place and fully meet current guidelines. Academic guidance has improved since the previous inspection; detailed advice enables pupils to edit their own work, assess others' work and make improvements.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The new headteacher, senior leaders and governors share a vision for how the school should develop. Loyalty to the headteacher and teamwork make for a good, collegiate atmosphere where staff are taking on more responsibility for their classes and subjects. School self-evaluation is honest and mostly accurate. It has led to more effective monitoring of the school's performance and improved standards. Equality of opportunity for all and the elimination of discrimination are close to the school's ethos. The school's promotion of community cohesion is developing to include more reference to the wider and international community. Good links with the parish, the local community and outside agencies help to develop pupils' personal and academic development.

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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?	2
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	2
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	1
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	2
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?	3
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

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

Inspection of St Mary's C of E Primary School, Droylsden, M43 7BR

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave to inspectors. Many of you made a point of speaking to us and, in particular, I would like to thank the pupils who came to meet with an inspector to share their views about school life. You played a big part in making the inspection so enjoyable and I would like to share with you what I found out about your school.

Yours is a good school. You learn well because you enjoy it and your work is above average in all subjects. You have done a lot of work to improve your writing and it is now so good that it sometimes made me laugh and sometimes made me stop and think about life. Your behaviour is good and you are very thoughtful young people. You have a satisfactory understanding of different cultures, though there is more for you to learn. All the staff in the school respect and value every one of you. Both you and your parents appreciate the excellent range of activities on offer after school.

You are encouraged to eat healthily and keep fit and you take health very seriously. Your excellent attitudes to diet and your enthusiasm and skill in sports make you very healthy indeed. Well done! You enjoy coming to school and enjoy what the school has to offer. You are keen to make a contribution in your school and staff appreciate your help in the library and as lunchtime receptionists. You raise lots of money for charity, through school and the parish.

Children in the Nursery and Reception classes settle down quickly and make good progress when they join the school. I would like there to be more room for them to play and explore outdoors so that they can improve their physical skills and learn more about our world. They are well cared for and made to feel welcome by you.

I have asked the school to make all teaching good so that you make good progress in all your classes and reach even higher standards. I know you will enjoy the challenge.