

St Mary's Priory RC Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102147
Local Authority	Haringey
Inspection number	335848
Inspection dates	16–17 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Derek Watts

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	224
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Marva Hibbert
Headteacher	Mrs Florence Collins
Date of previous school inspection	20 June 2007
School address	Hermitage Road Tottenham London N15 5RE
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Fifteen lessons or part lessons were observed and eight teachers were seen. The inspection team observed the school's work and examined its policies, assessments, pupils' work, teachers' plans and school improvement planning. Discussions were held with the headteacher, staff, governors and pupils. There were informal conversations with parents and carers. The inspectors analysed 105 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, and others by staff and pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- children's progress in language and social skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the school's action to improve pupils' writing in Years 1 and 2
- the progress of the more able pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- the promotion of community cohesion.

Information about the school

St Mary's Priory RC Infants is an average-sized school. The pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds, with those from Other White backgrounds, Black African and Black Caribbean being the largest groups. The large majority of pupils speak English as an additional language and a small minority are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is just below average. The nature of their needs lies mainly in the areas of emotional difficulties and speech, language and communication. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above average. Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is in the Nursery and Reception. The infant school is federated with the adjoining junior school. The two schools share the same headteacher and the same governing body. The before- and after-school club is managed by the school and was observed as part of the inspection. The school has received a number of awards including Investors in People and Healthy Schools.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

St Mary's Priory RC Infants is a good school. There are a few outstanding features to its work. The very positive ethos and outstanding care, guidance and support contribute extremely well to pupils' personal development. Pupils are friendly and courteous, and relate exceptionally well to adults and to their peers. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is usually exemplary. Pupils feel extremely safe and show a good understanding of how to adopt a healthy lifestyle. They make good contributions to the school and to the wider community. For example, they raise funds for a variety of national and overseas charities. Very strong partnerships exist with parents and carers and other agencies. Parents and carers are delighted with the care and education provided for their children. The comment of one parent summed up the views of many: 'I'm very happy my child goes to this school.'

Pupils achieve well because of good teaching and an interesting curriculum. Children enter the Nursery with knowledge and skills below those expected for their age. Their language and social skills are often low. Considerable emphasis is placed on developing these areas. Children make outstanding progress in their personal and social development and good progress in the other areas of learning.

In Years 1 and 2, pupils continue to make good progress and their attainment by the end of Year 2 is broadly average. Strategies to improve pupils' attainment in writing are working well. Pupils write imaginatively for different purposes and apply their writing skills well to topic work. However, the teaching of handwriting is inconsistent and therefore few pupils by Year 2 have a fluent joined handwriting style. Teachers establish very good relationships with their classes and use a range of methods to promote good learning. Tasks are usually well suited to pupils' needs but occasionally they are not challenging enough for the more able and opportunities are sometimes missed for pupils to plan and organise their own work. Marking provides praise but is not fully effective in helping pupils to improve. A well-planned curriculum is enriched by a good range of additional activities.

An experienced headteacher, with her staff, has created a welcoming and very positive atmosphere for pupils to learn. She is well supported by senior staff. The federation of the two schools has worked well and brings consistency in policies and good practice. Expertise among the staff is effectively shared across the two schools. Through systematic self-evaluation, the school has a clear understanding of its performance and effective steps are taken to bring about improvements. For example, good improvements have been made to provision and pupils' progress in writing. The positive personal outcomes for pupils and the good teaching identified at the last inspection have been maintained. The school demonstrates a good capacity to improve further.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve elements of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 by:
 - providing additional opportunities for pupils, particularly the more able, to plan their own work and learn independently
 - implementing a consistent approach to the teaching of handwriting so pupils develop legible and joined writing by Year 2
 - ensure that marking provides clear comments to help pupils improve their work.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils are achieving well and thoroughly enjoy their learning. Evidence from their work, assessments and the lessons seen indicate that attainment by the end of Year 2 is average in reading, writing and mathematics.

Pupils make good progress in speaking and listening because of the regular opportunities provided for them to discuss interesting topics with a partner. For example, pupils in Year 2 discussed how they might have felt if they were a soldier about to fight in the Crimean War. Good quality discussions help to generate ideas for writing. Pupils make good progress in reading and enjoy the wide range of books available. Attainment in writing dipped to below average in 2008 but effective action has been taken to tackle this. In a good Year 2 lesson, pupils wrote interesting diary extracts of Florence Nightingale in the hospital at Scutari or of a soldier in the war. The use of a large illustrated book, discussion and diary extracts inspired the pupils. In mathematics, pupils make good progress because activities are well matched to their needs. In Year 2, pupils constructed timelines to show the main events in their lives. This helped them to understand the key dates and events in their history topic.

Pupils at an early stage of learning English are carefully assessed and well supported, which enables them to make good gains in speaking English. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because tasks and adult support are carefully matched to their needs. Both boys and girls are making good progress in English and mathematics. Differences in attainment are not significantly different from the national picture.

Pupils make good progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In assembly, they reflected on the positive qualities of St Patrick and celebrated the achievements of their fellow pupils. Pupils show consideration and respect for others and work extremely well with others on a range of tasks. They feel exceptionally well cared for at school and are confident that there is always a trusted adult they can turn to if they are upset or worried. High expectations by staff and the excellent relationships between pupils and adults contribute to the pupils' outstanding behaviour. Pupils are well prepared for the future and their economic well-being. Their personal and social skills are well developed. They make good progress in acquiring and applying their

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literacy and numeracy skills. Attendance levels are broadly average.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and respond enthusiastically to their teachers. Clear and informative explanations and instructions promote learning well. Questioning is used effectively to challenge pupils' thinking and to check their knowledge and understanding. Visual stimuli such as photographs on the interactive whiteboard and paired discussion are used well to generate pupils' ideas for writing. Teachers use 'modelling' successfully to show pupils how to construct interesting sentences. In most cases, assessment information is used effectively to plan teaching and learning. Activities are usually well matched to pupils' abilities so they are challenged and make good progress. Occasionally, activities are directed too much by the teacher and do not always extend the most able. Teachers' marking provides praise for good work but comments to guide improvement are less consistent. The school has rightly planned to review its marking policy.

The curriculum promotes good academic progress for pupils and contributes very well to

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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their personal development. Literacy and numeracy skills are promoted well but the school does not have a consistent approach to the teaching of handwriting. Good links between subjects have been developed since the last inspection. These add meaning, relevance and enjoyment to pupils' learning. Health education and the Healthy Schools award make a valuable contribution to pupils' healthy lifestyles. While there are good opportunities for additional sports activities, the taught time for physical education is below recommendations. Clubs, visits and visitors enrich the curriculum and pupils' experiences successfully.

High quality care, support and guidance underpin the school's ethos. This is reflected in a parent's comment, 'A very caring school and the headteacher and teachers are very approachable.' The well-organised, very safe and secure environment provided is recognised by both pupils and parents and carers. The nurture suite successfully supports pupils with emotional, behavioural and learning difficulties. Pupils grow in confidence and many make outstanding progress in their personal development and learning. A range of agencies contribute well to the school's very good quality support for pupils and their families. A well run before- and after-school club is enjoyed by pupils and much appreciated by parents and carers.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher is highly regarded by pupils, parents and carers, and staff. She is supported well by the deputy headteacher, key staff and governors in setting the school's direction and driving improvement. As a parent commented, 'The headteacher and deputy headteacher have strong leadership skills.' Teamwork among the staff is strong. Staff feel valued and are proud to be part of the school.

The infant and junior schools have been successfully brought together through federation. A shared sense of purpose and direction contribute to the overall effectiveness of both schools. Investors in People has contributed well to this. Key subject leaders, such as those for English and mathematics, operate effectively across both schools in monitoring and improving their areas of responsibility. This has a positive impact on provision and on pupils' progress. Self-evaluation is good, but the school does not always compare its performance with the national averages. As a result, some aspects of its performance, such as pupils' attainment and attendance, are judged to be higher than they really are. Nevertheless, senior leaders know what the school

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does well and what is needed to improve. Senior and subject leaders have a clear overview of the quality of teaching through regular monitoring and support.

The governors are supportive and have a good understanding of the school's performance. They ensure that statutory requirements are met and hold the school to account through constructive challenge. There are good procedures to protect and safeguard pupils. Recommended practice is adopted and there are well established quality assurance and risk assessments. Safety and safeguarding issues are effectively integrated in the curriculum. All pupils in the school are equally valued and are fully included in all activities. Discrimination is tackled effectively and the school strives to ensure that all groups of pupils do well.

Community cohesion is promoted well. The school has a clear understanding of the local community it serves. The different cultures and races represented within the school are celebrated and embraced. Positive links and partnerships with other organisations are developing well in order to broaden pupils' horizons of the wider global community.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Enthusiastic and knowledgeable leadership has a positive impact on provision and on the outcomes for children. Effective induction arrangements and excellent partnerships with parents and carers enable children to settle quickly. Adults establish high quality relationships with the children and so they grow in confidence and relate very well to adults and to their peers. Children feel very safe, secure and extremely well cared for because of the considerable attention given to their care and welfare. As a result,

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children make excellent progress in their personal and social development. Assessment information is used well to plan teaching and learning. Exciting activities, around themes such as Fairy Tales and Animals, are planned effectively. Good teaching and an interesting range of learning activities enable children to make good gains in their learning. Children use information and communication technology competently to consolidate and extend their language, literacy and numeracy skills. In Reception, adults are particularly successful in developing children's speaking and listening through role play, interaction and skilful questioning. This very good practice is not as consistent in the Nursery. There are clear plans to improve further the outdoor learning facilities in the Nursery area.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Views of parents and carers

The inspection team received a good response to the survey with nearly half of the parents and carers returning the questionnaire. The vast majority are extremely happy with their child's experience at the school. They are also very pleased with the sense of enjoyment, safety in school, the way the school supports them and their child's progress. The inspection team fully supports these positive views. Parents' and carers' concerns are very few. A few commented that there was insufficient time allocated to physical education and these concerns are justified.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Mary's Priory RC Infant School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 105 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 224 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	70	67	35	33	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	68	65	34	32	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	70	67	34	32	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	70	67	34	32	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	39	66	35	33	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	71	68	32	30	1	1	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	53	50	49	47	2	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	41	39	56	53	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	50	48	51	49	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	56	53	46	44	1	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	51	49	49	47	2	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	54	51	49	47	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	74	70	30	29	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



18 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Mary's Priory RC Infant School, London, N15 5RE

Thank you so much for welcoming us into your school and showing us your work. We thoroughly enjoyed our visit and would like to tell you what we found. Yours is a good school. There are a few things that it does extremely well.

These are the school's main strengths.

- You thoroughly enjoy school.
- The school is a very welcoming and pleasant place in which to learn.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage get off to a super start.
- You are making good progress in Years 1 and 2 because of the good teaching you receive.
- You are given a good range of learning activities, including clubs and visits.
- You get on very well with each other and your behaviour is usually outstanding.
- You have a good understanding of how to keep healthy and fit.
- You feel safe at school because the teachers and other adults take very good care of you and provide excellent support and guidance.
- You make good contributions to the school and to the wider community.
- The school is led and managed well.

We have asked the headteacher and teachers to do three things to make the school even better so that you make faster progress, especially those of you in Years 1 and 2.

- Give you more chances to organise your own work and work independently, especially those of you who find learning easy.
- Help you to develop joined handwriting.
- In their marking, help you to know how you can improve your work.

You can help by continuing to work hard. We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Derek Watts

Lead inspector

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