

St Mary's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105936
Local Authority	Salford
Inspection number	336586
Inspection dates	20–21 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Stephen Wall

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Chris Thompson
Headteacher	Mrs G Evans
Date of previous school inspection	17 July 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Eight lessons were observed taught by eight teachers. The inspectors held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the tracking of pupils' progress and the school's monitoring, self-evaluation and planning for improvement. The inspectors also analysed 23 questionnaire returns from parents and carers.

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

- the quality of pupils' achievement, especially in mathematics
- to what extent the improvement in attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2009 is being maintained
- the impact of strategies for improvement introduced by leaders and managers to tackle the issues for improvement identified in the last inspection report.

Information about the school

This is a smaller than average school in which the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. Most pupils are White British. A few pupils have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. However, the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The school has Healthy Schools status, International Schools Intermediate level and Eco Schools Silver among numerous other awards.

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

This is a good school. The care, guidance and support it provides, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage, are outstanding. Pupils' adoption of healthy lifestyles and the effectiveness of partnerships in supporting pupils' learning and well-being are also outstanding. Since the last inspection, good leadership and management have tightened procedures for monitoring the effectiveness of all aspects of the school's work in order to provide an accurate evaluation of its effectiveness. This has enabled leaders and managers to identify areas for improvement and introduce strategies to tackle them rigorously. As a result, many aspects of the school's work have improved significantly, demonstrating the school's good capacity for sustained improvement.

The school has been especially successful in improving how effectively it uses assessment data to track pupils' progress. This, allied to good teaching and a good and improving curriculum, has led to a rising trend in attainment and improved learning and progress. Pupils achieve well. Excellent provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures that children get off to flying start. Skilled teaching assistants provide highly effective support to lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, so that they too make good progress and achieve well. Most teaching is challenging and conducted at a good pace. Occasionally, however, starter activities go on for too long and are somewhat laboured, with the result that pupils' interest and progress wanes. Teachers are adept at using questioning to make pupils think hard and to justify their answers. However, pupils' progress sometimes slows when activities are not matched closely enough to pupils' needs and abilities.

Pupils say they enjoy school, that they feel safe and that they feel known and valued as individuals. The school has an extensive range of strategies to check on absenteeism and to promote attendance. Consequently, attendance is above average. Pupils' behaviour is good in lessons and around school. Most are very polite and respectful. Pupils' positive attitudes to learning, their solid grasp of basic skills and, above all, their good levels of maturity ensure that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Good leadership and management, including good governance, provide the school with a sharp focus on improvement. Good teamwork is evident across the school. Planning for the future is of good quality.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment and improve their rate of progress when it is less than good, by:

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- - making sure that starter activities in lessons are consistently lively and sharply focused to maintain pupils' interest and engagement
- - making sure that teaching is consistent in matching tasks closely to the needs and abilities of different groups of pupils.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They are eager to contribute their ideas in most lessons. They enjoy working in pairs and in small groups, where they contribute well and listen respectfully to others' contributions. For example, a Year 6 class discussed various ways to carry out a complicated long-division problem. Good relationships between adults and learners mean that pupils' behaviour is good. Only occasionally, when tasks are too easy or too difficult, does pupils' concentration wander. Although attainment on entry varies considerably, overall it is below expected levels. By the end of Key Stage 2, attainment is average and on a rising trend; this represents good progress and achievement. Evidence shows that the improvement in attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2009, is set to continue. There has been a significant improvement in pupils' attainment in writing because the school has focused sharply on improving this aspect of pupils' work. The school is now turning its focus to improving attainment in mathematics and there are early signs that this is starting to have a positive impact. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make good progress and achieve well because of the effective, targeted support they receive. Pupils' understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles is impressive. They talk with great enthusiasm about taking part in the school's wide range of sporting activities. Large numbers of pupils enjoy taking vigorous exercise at the daily 'Freddy Fit' sessions at morning break. The take-up of healthy school meals is very high. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities by becoming, for example, peer mentors, prefects and playground leaders. The influential school council has brought about playground improvements. The eco-council is involved in planning the school's gardens and new wetland area. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They are respectful, behave sensibly and are tolerant of those who are different.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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

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	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Most teaching is good. Teachers generally plan their lessons well, although occasionally tasks set for pupils are not aligned closely enough to their abilities. Learning objectives are made clear at the start of lessons so that pupils know what is expected of them. However, the starter activities in some lessons are occasionally too long, during which pupils' attention sometimes wanders. Teaching makes good use of information and communication technology and other new technology to add extra stimulation and interest to learning. Group and pair work is used skilfully to encourage pupils' cooperation and independent learning skills. Nearly all teachers uses questioning effectively to make pupils think hard about their answers. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly. Their comments are generally helpful in showing pupils what they need to do to improve their work. The good curriculum is managed increasingly well to provide themes and topics that are of interest to pupils. Topic work adds relevance to pupils' learning. This has been one of the keys to improving pupils' writing skills. There is an extensive range of enrichment activities that are very popular with pupils. Sports, the arts, school trips and visitors all broaden pupils' horizons and add to their enjoyment. Outstanding care, guidance and support ensure that pupils are known and valued as individuals. Pupils are very comfortable in seeking help and guidance from adults working with them. Strong links with the local high school ensure that pupils are confident about their move to secondary education. Transition arrangements are managed expertly to ensure that children settle quickly and confidently into school life.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
	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?

Good leadership and management are driving the school forward well. Development planning is based solidly on the outcomes of the good self-evaluation procedures; it gives the school a clear vision for the future and quantifiable steps by which success can be measured. Governors know the school well. They are very supportive and keen for it to do well. They seek information and ask pertinent questions to hold the school to account. The school has forged excellent links with a range of partners to enrich pupils' learning opportunities. For example, the school works closely with partner schools to share ideas and resources. The school has also forged very strong links with local creative partnerships and sports development providers in order to extend its range of enrichment activities to add significantly to pupils' enjoyment and to broaden their horizons.

Good attention to providing equal opportunities and tackling discrimination ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable, are integrated seamlessly into the everyday life of the school. The school has been successful in reducing significantly the attainment gap between boys and girls. Safeguarding procedures are good. The school adopts recommended good practice for its procedures and policies relating to safeguarding. Meticulous attention is paid to risk assessment. Staff training in safeguarding and child protection is regular and of good quality. Good links have been established with outside agencies to provide specialist support when need is identified.

The school's promotion of community cohesion is good. It has conducted an accurate audit of needs and has produced an action plan to guide its work. The school is a harmonious community. Pupils are encouraged to play an active part in the local community. Opportunities are provided in the curriculum and through visits and visitors to raise pupils' awareness of other religions and cultures. Links with a school in Kenya are developing. The school evaluates its impact on community cohesion effectively.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
	2

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	
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	2
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

The Early Years Foundation Stage is good and improving strongly. New leadership and management are bringing about significant improvement to all aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Provision is outstanding. This is because teaching is highly effective and outstanding care, guidance and support are at the heart of everything that happens. The involvement of parents and carers is outstanding. For example, a cookery club for children and their parents and carers is very popular. It involves parents and carers actively and meaningfully in their children's learning and in school life. Excellent links have been forged with outside agencies to support children as soon as a specific need is identified. Children play well together in a harmonious and stimulating environment where every child, regardless of ability or background, is valued equally. Individual learning needs are identified accurately. As a result, children make good progress overall and some children make outstanding progress. The Early Years Foundation Stage lays down very solid foundations for future learning by making very effective use of the extensive range of resources both indoor and outdoor. Teaching is enthusiastic and supportive. Children's progress is checked regularly and the outcomes are used to plan activities according to individual children's needs. Children are very happy and obviously enjoy their learning in the safe and nurturing environment. Parents and carers are informed on a regular basis of their child's progress. There are very effective arrangements for ensuring that children settle quickly and smoothly into their new surroundings. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. They provide a good vision for future success, a strong sense of purpose for its work and a good balance of teacher-led and child-initiated activities to stimulate and engage children in work and play.

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

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	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

There was a low return of questionnaires from parents and carers. Most questionnaires returned were supportive of the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Mary's CofE Primary 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 24 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 207 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	15	63	7	29	1	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	17	71	4	17	2	8	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	14	58	6	25	1	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	15	63	5	21	2	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	15	63	6	25	1	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	17	71	3	13	2	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	63	7	29	1	4	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)	14	58	9	38	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	17	71	3	13	1	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	54	7	29	1	4	2	8
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	58	6	25	1	4	2	8
The school is led and managed effectively	12	50	8	33	0	0	3	13
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	16	67	4	17	0	0	1	4

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.



22 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Mary's CofE Primary School, Manchester, M44 5HG

Thank you for your warm welcome during the recent inspection of your school. It was a pleasure to meet you and see you at work and play.

The inspectors judged that you go to a good school, which has improved since it was last inspected just over three years ago. You get on very well with each other and with the adults in the school. It was pleasing to see how well you understand the importance of staying healthy. It was also pleasing to see that most of you attend school regularly – well done! Your teachers provide you with good teaching and interesting things to do so that you all make good progress and achieve well. You behave well and are keen to do your best – again, well done!

In order to help your school improve even further, I am asking your headteacher and staff to do the following things:

raise attainment and improve the progress you make when it is less than good, by:

- making sure that you find the activities you do at the start of lessons interesting and inspiring so that work hard
- making sure that teaching always matches your work to how easy or difficult you find learning new things.

I am confident that you will continue to work hard and help your school go from strength to strength in the coming years.

I wish you all every success for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Stephen Wall

Lead Inspector

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