

# St Mary's Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106106
<b>Local Authority</b>	Stockport
<b>Inspection number</b>	336618
<b>Inspection dates</b>	15–16 March 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jennifer Platt

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 controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	146
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Nicky Gilbert
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Marjorie Brown
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 March 2007
<b>School address</b>	Broomfield Drive South Reddish Stockport SK5 7DR
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 10 lessons and saw six teachers. Meetings were held with staff, governors and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including policies relating to the safeguarding of pupils, the school's development plan, self-evaluation and tracking records. In addition, inspectors analysed 36 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, 14 from school staff and 80 from pupils.

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

- the progress of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the progress of the more able pupils in Key Stage 1 and of all pupils in writing in Key Stage 2
- the quality of teaching and use of assessment to monitor pupils' progress
- how well the school promotes community cohesion, especially pupils' understanding of life in a multicultural society.

## Information about the school

The school is smaller than most primary schools. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The school intake is predominantly White British and very few are from minority ethnic groups. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average. The number on roll has declined since the last inspection. The school holds several awards including National Healthy Schools Status and Activemark.

**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

The school has a well deserved good reputation in the community and parents and carers are pleased with the education their children receive. Pupils are happy and behaviour is exemplary. This is a caring school and pupils feel safe and have many friends. A firm foundation is established in the Early Years Foundation Stage and children gain the essential skills to enable them to move confidently into Key Stage 1. Progress is good throughout the school and pupils leave with above average standards. In the past the more able pupils have not always done well enough. The school has tackled this successfully with improved tracking and interventions. As a result, these pupils now also make good progress.

As a result of higher expectations and staff being held more accountable for pupils' progress teaching has improved and is now good. Staff prepare imaginative lessons with a variety of activities so it is not surprising that pupils say they enjoy learning. The use of the electronic whiteboard is very effective and consolidates learning. The school has a good range of computers in the information and communication technology suite and at other places in school. However, there is limited access to computers in lessons so opportunities are missed to extend skills as part of other subjects. Teachers use assessment effectively to match work to ability. Pupils assess their own learning and have a good understanding of how they can improve their work. Pupils and parents and carers really appreciate the excellent range of clubs that enhance pupils' skills and the visits that are eagerly anticipated by the pupils.

The initial plan for community cohesion gives good attention to links within the local community. Although the school promotes knowledge of the wider world the pupils' understanding of life in a multicultural society is less well developed.

The school has responded very well to the previous inspection report. The headteacher has shown great determination in addressing previous concerns and at the same time keeping ahead of new initiatives. Accurate and honest self-evaluation effectively identifies the school's priorities. The school is now in a better position to be more precise in its future planning and in making it easier to measure success. Governors are supportive of the work of the school and have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. However, they are not yet fully involved in evaluating progress and in challenging the school. Nevertheless, the changes in place are leading the school forward. Attainment is higher and the school has good capacity to improve.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the precision of the school's priorities and make it easier for governors to

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see how success is measured so that they can become more challenging.

- Improve community cohesion by:
  - extending opportunities for pupils to engage with the wider community and improving their understanding of life in a multicultural society
  - evaluating the impact of community cohesion on the school's ethos.
- Further promote the use of information and communication technology in lessons by increasing access to resources.

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

In lessons pupils show a keenness to do well and extend their skills and knowledge. They rise to the challenge and when given a set time to complete a task apply themselves well and complete their work. They try to produce their best work, although their handwriting could be neater. From broadly average starting points when they join school pupils make good progress throughout the school to reach above average standards by the end of Year 6. Standards in reading are especially high. Writing is broadly average but improving at the end of both key stages as staff have raised their expectations, especially for the more able pupils. The results of national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 show a rising trend and were above the national average in English, mathematics and science in 2009. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the very few who speak English as an additional language make good progress because their needs are swiftly identified and support provided.

Pupils are happy in school and it is not surprising attendance is above average. Watching pupils at play shows their enthusiasm for energetic play and their determination to keep fit and healthy. In one lesson pupils showed a good understanding of the dangers of drug misuse and knew how to look after themselves. The school's spiritual ethos is evident in pupils' ability to pause and reflect on their actions and the respect they have for each other. They are polite and well mannered and extremely helpful to visitors. The different cultures in school are valued and the school is looking to extend pupils' experiences of life in a multicultural society. Pupils eagerly contribute to school life. The school council especially has a strong voice organising many fund-raising events. These many strengths in pupils' personal development ensure that their preparation for the future is good.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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<sup>1</sup> 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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<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

### How effective is the provision?

More precise assessment procedures have been pivotal in improving the quality of teaching. Teachers now have an accurate picture of current attainment and understand the progress pupils have to make if they are to reach the expected level and beyond. Consequently, work is pitched at the correct level and enables pupils to achieve success. The pace of lessons is brisk although occasionally too much talking and repetition slows the pace and a few pupils start to get restless. Staff are skilled using the electronic whiteboard: Year 6 pupils quickly recognised the importance of precision when measuring angles because of a very clear demonstration on the electronic whiteboard. Lessons are carefully organised and very effective management leads to lessons running smoothly. Teaching assistants play a key role in lessons. They are well trained and effectively lead small groups. They are especially skilful at supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Personal and social education is a priority in the curriculum and results in good relationships and exemplary behaviour. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well organised and effective. Themed weeks and special events are successful and plans are afoot for an imaginative week for the forthcoming football world cup. The school intends to extend this approach to planning to make even more links between subjects.

In the pupils' words, 'This is a fun and caring school and I feel good.' The breakfast club gives many pupils a good start to the day and it is clear they feel safe and enjoy their healthy breakfast. This quality of care exists throughout the school, mirrored in a blend of warm relationships and understanding of pupils' individual needs.

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*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides a very firm steer to the school. She leads by example, effectively managing the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities as well as teaching groups of pupils needing an extra boost to their learning. The extended leadership team is now a strong team with a clear focus on driving forward changes while keeping an eye on what is best for the pupils. Sharper tracking procedures facilitate effective interventions and ensure challenging targets are often exceeded. Self-evaluation is honest and becoming more collaborative, although governors are not yet included at the early stages when decisions are made. As yet, forward planning is not as precise as it could be and the school's development plan is a lengthy document which clouds the school's main priorities.

Governors play an important role in financial management and challenge the school to explain spending to ensure the budget balances. This challenge is less developed in other aspects although governors are supportive and regular visitors to school.

Safeguarding procedures are in place and staff are closely checked to ensure they are suitable to work with children. Risk assessments are carried out and all staff have regular training in child protection.

The school's focus on raising attainment for the more able pupils is reaping benefits and shows the school's good attention to providing equality of opportunity for all pupils. The school has an initial plan to promote community cohesion based on an initial audit of its ethos. This reveals a real sense of belonging to the school and local community. However, evaluation of provision is at an early stage and the school is not yet promoting an awareness of the cultural diversity in the United Kingdom.

Close links with other school and external agents effectively improve support for all pupils with emphasis on those needing extra help and advice. Parents comment positively about the school. They appreciate the introduction to the early Years Foundation Stage and especially the parent workshops which are described as excellent. The school intends to extend these.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The atmosphere in the Early Years Foundation Stage is cheerful and welcoming. Children are always kept busy and enjoy their learning. They grow in confidence, enjoy making choices and love a challenge. Many were very pleased with the boats they made and eagerly tested them out, delighted to see them float and move when they blew hard enough. Their welfare needs are fully met and the children say they feel safe and clearly have every confidence in the staff.

Attainment on entry to the Reception class varies considerably from below average to above for the current children. It is clear all make good progress from their individual starting points as can be seen with the above average attainment of the current class. Effective teaching and rigorous planning are the keys to the school's success. Staff are prepared well for the day so that all understand their responsibilities. Resources are imaginative and always ready for the children who arrive eager to see what the day holds. Occasionally, the pace of learning slows as children have to wait a turn or, as in the session about coins, some lose interest as they are not quite ready for some of the new learning.

Effective leadership has improved the monitoring of progress and a new record of achievement is being established. Transition from Reception to Year 1 was a concern for a few parents and carers and the school is developing common practices between the two classes. Although the school has a secure outdoor space for this age range it is not freely accessible to the classroom and this restricts some free-flow of learning from the classroom to outdoors.



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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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

The response to the questionnaire was small but indicated that parents and carers have positive views about the school. Written comments reflected their appreciation with a focus on the after school clubs and happy atmosphere. Both these aspects were very evident during the inspection. A very small minority expressed concern about the transition between Reception and Year 1 and the school is developing links between the two classes.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Mary's Church of England 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 inspector received 36 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 146 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	20	53	18	47	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	21	55	15	39	2	5	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	17	45	18	47	3	8	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	17	45	14	37	6	16	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	16	42	16	42	6	16	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	15	39	18	47	3	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	16	42	20	53	1	3	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)	12	32	20	53	1	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	12	32	19	50	5	13	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	14	37	17	45	6	16	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	6	16	25	66	5	13	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	14	37	18	47	4	11	1	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	17	45	16	42	4	11	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



17 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Mary's Church of England Primary School, Stockport, SK5 7DR

Thank you so much for the friendly welcome you gave the inspectors when we visited your school. I was privileged to stay for two days and greatly appreciated how you directed me to your classes. It was lovely to hear about all of the exciting things that happen in your school especially how much you enjoy the residential visits. We agree with you that you go to a good school. You work hard and make good progress. Your behaviour is excellent and it is good that you attend regularly. We were impressed with the amount of money you raise for so many charities.

To help the school become even better, I have asked your headteacher and governors to:

- check that the priorities set for your school are very clear so that governors can check that everything is going well
- find ways to give you a clearer understanding about how people from different cultures live in the United Kingdom
- provide you with even more opportunities to use computers in lessons.

You can help your school by continuing to work hard and check that your work is always presented neatly. You should be very proud that your behaviour is so good and this contributes greatly to your happy school. I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Jennie Platt

Lead inspector

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