

# Wakefield St Marys Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108269
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wakefield
<b>Inspection number</b>	337048
<b>Inspection dates</b>	1–2 July 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Linda Murphy

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 aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	215
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Janet Milne
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Mark Taylor
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 May 2007
<b>School address</b>	Charles Street Wakefield West Yorkshire WF1 4PE
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<b>Email address</b>	headteacher@st-marys.wakefield.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Twelve lessons were observed and seven teachers. Meetings were held with parents and carers, groups of pupils, governors, staff and two officers of the local authority. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the data on pupils' performance, development plans and records of the school's own monitoring of its performance and scrutinized samples of pupils' work. Seventy two parental questionnaires were analysed as well as completed questionnaires by pupils and staff.

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

- what the school is doing to raise attainment for groups of pupils, such as higher attainers
- the quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the impact of the school's provision for pupils' care, guidance and welfare on their achievement.

## Information about the school

This is a smaller than average sized school. Most pupils are of Asian heritage. A high and increasing proportion of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and more pupils than is usual join the school throughout the year. A large majority of pupils speak English as an additional language and of these a very small minority are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for a free school meal is higher than the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is much lower than average. Since the last inspection, the number on roll has increased and a newly built classroom is ready for occupation in September 2010. The Nursery and Reception classes have amalgamated into an Early Years Foundation Stage Unit. A new headteacher was appointed in September 2008 and a new deputy headteacher in September 2009. The school holds the Healthy School Award, Activemark and Financial Management in Schools Standard. It is an Investor in People.

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

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?****3****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****3**

## Main findings

This satisfactory school has strengths in the way in which it cares for its pupils.

Standards are low at Key Stage 1 and broadly average at the end of Key Stage 2 with a general overall rise since 2008 at Key Stage 2. The school provides a satisfactory education for the great number and range of pupils who join throughout the year. Pupils from diverse cultures get on very well together because the school encourages a harmonious setting where individuals and their families are highly valued and respected. Pupils respect each other, are very clear about right and wrong and in the main, behave well. An emphasis on developing pupils' understanding of feelings and promoting their self-esteem supports their development. As a result, the pupils are confident and curious. Many pupils enter the school with low levels of skills but the curriculum at Key Stage 1 does not always match pupils' learning needs closely enough. The school concentrates keenly on developing pupils' English and this is responsible for the rise in standards in English at Key Stage 2. In mathematics, pupils' attainment is below average because pupils often have difficulties applying their learning to solving mathematical problems.

Changes to the organisation of the Early Years Foundation Stage are taking time to embed. Unexpected changes in staffing have taken their toll on the organisation and on the consistent use of agreed systems. The leadership and management of this stage are inadequate because steps have not been taken to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is sufficiently strong to raise children's attainment. However, green shoots of improvement are beginning to be seen.

Since the establishment of a permanent senior leadership team, self-evaluation is sound. For example, the overall satisfactory teaching at Key Stages 1 and 2 is closely monitored. Actions are taken to build on the strengths identified and to address areas for improvement. Staff are willing to take advice and try out new ways of working to benefit pupils' learning. The school's focus on improving literacy and language, an area for improvement since the last inspection, has been fruitful, as evidenced by improved standards in Year 6. Assessment is much improved and the headteacher regularly holds teachers to account for the progress of pupils in their class. A clear and easy to use system of tracking pupils' assessments and setting targets is beginning to prove its worth. Middle managers have a clear way forward and the governing body understands the school well and challenges it to improve. As a result of these factors, the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and raise children's attainment in the Early Years Foundation Stage, by:
  - - providing regular training for all staff so that they thoroughly understand their role
  - - improving the day-to-day organisation and ensuring all staff are well deployed
  - - improving the quality of assessment and using the outcomes to match tasks to children's needs and interests
  - - improving the leadership and management so that key priorities are tackled and changes are monitored and evaluated
  - - ensuring that groups that start in the spring and summer terms do as well as those who start in the autumn term.
- Raise standards in mathematics, by:
  - - ensuring that all teaching is at least good so that pupils learn more rapidly
  - - providing pupils with more opportunities to apply their learning to solve problems.
- Ensure that the curriculum at Key Stage 1 meets the needs of pupils, by:
  - - structuring it to develop pupils' independence
  - - ensuring it fully matches pupils' developing academic and social needs
  - - increasing the range, quantity and use of practical resources.
- About 40% of school's whose overall effectiveness is judged to be satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

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Pupils enjoy their learning, are attentive and work well with others. They like the opportunities they have to discuss their thoughts and work with a partner. This promotes their confidence in answering questions and ensures that most contribute to each lesson. For example, at Key Stage 2 pupils discussed the meaning of 'partition' in relation to division although when they then came to apply their new knowledge to solving a mathematical problem they found it difficult to identify the steps required. At Key Stage 1, pupils have a lot of learning to catch up on from their low starting points so that even by Year 2, pupils' attainment is low. As pupils gain in confidence and acquire more extensive language by the end of Key Stage 2, their attainment in English and mathematics rises. In 2009 in English, it rose to an average level, although attainment in mathematics was below average. The increases have continued in 2010, although mathematics is the weaker partner. Achievement is satisfactory overall because of some inconsistency between the rates of progress between subjects and classes, it speeds up towards the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language make the same progress as their classmates because of the support provided.

Pupils say they feel safe, give clear reasons why, and take good care of each other. Year 6 pupils have plenty of responsibilities, such as answering the telephone at lunch time, befriending others at play-time and leading sports activities. Pupils feel they are listened to and have a voice. The school council, through activities to raise money for a national society has received a grant, which they decided to spend on planters. This has been so

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

successful that the councillors have been invited onto the judging panel for future grant allocation. Pupils have much encouragement to live a healthy lifestyle and start each day with exercise through 'wake up shake up'. As a Year 6 pupil explained, 'it really wakes our brains up'. Pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development underpins these attributes.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</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>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

During this last year, the use of assessment has improved so that now tasks are increasingly matched to pupils' needs. Teachers track carefully the progress being made and this mostly leads to extra teaching for those who need it. Teaching strengths include the clear use of learning objectives so that pupils know what is expected of them and are reminded throughout the lessons in order to help to maintain their focus. Good relationships and good management of pupils' behaviour enable lessons to start promptly. However, during lessons the pace sometimes slows because the teachers talk for too long and leave insufficient time for pupils to complete individual work. Questioning is of good quality and there is the expectation that each child has to

<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.

contribute to learning. The marking of pupils' work, the use of targets, the degree of challenge for higher attainers and the deployment of adults are variable between classes, which is why teaching is satisfactory rather than good overall. In mathematics, untidy presentation can lead to simple errors in calculation. Because time is not always used well, there are occasions when pupils have insufficient opportunity to practise their calculation skills in solving problems.

The improving curriculum is under review to accommodate a change in organisation in September 2010. It has yet to fully take account of the low levels of attainment on entry to Year 1, where pupils' needs are more in line with those of an Early Years Foundation Stage setting than the National Curriculum. Nevertheless, a more creative cross-curricular approach concentrates on developing speaking skills to better underpin pupils' writing. Projects to help all pupils improve their reading and writing are paying dividends. Pupils say they like the way their writing builds up to an extended piece of work of which they are proud. When developing vocabulary for a story, for example, a pupil explained 'I get all my new words from my world of school'. However, opportunities to use mathematics in other subjects, is more limited. Provision for information and communication technology is satisfactory. The curriculum is enriched by educational visits, visitors and a high take up of sport and artistic opportunities.

Parents and carers say that the school cares well for their children. Well-established procedures support pupils' continued well-being and ensure new-comers are soon integrated into class and friendship groups, and ready to learn. The breakfast club provides a safe, positive start to the day for those who attend. Families are well-supported and the work of the learning mentor and parent support worker helps the school do much to support attendance for all groups of pupils.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## **How effective are leadership and management?**

The leaders and managers, including governors, have a clear view of the school's successes and what it needs to do to improve. The headteacher is ambitious for the pupils. Projects are trialled within a class prior to being used across the school. This means that any problems are addressed prior to introducing projects school-wide. Improvements in systems to track pupils' progress are beginning to be used more widely by more staff. A newly developing tier of middle managers work in two teams, gain in confidence from each other and delegate tasks appropriately. Even so, the school

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development plan and action plans are satisfactory rather than good because responsibilities for monitoring and evaluation, together with smart success criteria, are not always clear. Work with parents and carers helps to promote attendance, for example, and good links with external agencies impacts well on pupils' well-being in particular.

Safeguarding arrangements meet current government requirements: the school pays due regard to pupils' safety. The school promotes equality of opportunity by using information about individual pupils and there is evidence of improvements where it has focused its efforts, for example, in English. Any discrimination is tackled quickly and this results in a harmonious community, where pupils get on well together despite the many pupils joining and leaving each term. The school has common values and a clear sense of belonging for pupils. The school understands its ever changing local context effectively and works with care to promote community cohesion. As a result, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of diversity in modern Britain and beyond. Even so, the evaluation of the school's action on pupils' appreciation of community cohesion is patchy and prevents their development from being stronger.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</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>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The amalgamation of the Nursery and Reception classes, with support from the local authority, is in its infancy. The resources are of good quality and well displayed to encourage children's independence and the unit provides an area that is conducive to learning. However, the inadequate quality of teaching and subsequent slow learning



means that children make insufficient progress. They mostly join the unit with skills and knowledge well below those typically expected for their age and by the time they transfer to Year 1 their skills remain well below those expected. Historically the younger children do not do as well as those who start school in the autumn term. Children's achievement is inadequate because the unit is not well enough organised to ensure that all staff are deployed to advantage to support children's differing needs. For example, higher attainers often lack challenge and the use of focused teaching to particular groups sometimes goes by the wayside. Children are at times taught in large groups despite there being a good ratio of staff to children. When this happens, those learning English as an additional language, in particular, miss out on the individual support they require.

Developing strengths include the way in which children move between self-chosen activities, which encourages their independence and use of a wide variety of resources. For example, they choose from a self-service system when they would like to have their drink and fruit. The children work and play in a secure environment and staff are vigilant of their care and welfare, although insufficient attention is given to washing hands before eating healthy snacks. Relationships with parents, carers and children are welcoming, friendly and calm. Leaders and managers have the support of parents and carers, yet have struggled with many staff changes and have not ensured that all staff have the training they require to fully contribute to meeting children's needs. For example, in assessing how well children are doing and what they need to do next to improve. There has been insufficient monitoring of the organisation and changes made over the year. The outcome of the shortcomings is that children are not sufficiently well prepared for their work in Year 1.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	4

## Views of parents and carers

Forty five percent of parents and carers replied to the questionnaire. Of these the majority were very happy with what the school provides. As one parent explained 'The headteacher is deeply committed to the school and gives unflinching support'. Inspectors agree that overall this is a satisfactory school with strengths in the care it provides and the way in which it works with parents and carers and outside agencies to do the best for the pupils. This results in pupils' good family values. A very few parents and carers were unhappy with their child's progress and the inspection team agree that

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children's progress could be speeded up, in particular, in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Of the very few parents and carers who returned negative responses the inspection team found no evidence to support these views.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Wakefield St Marys Church of England Voluntary Aided 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 72 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 191 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	46	58	32	40	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	54	68	26	33	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	43	54	36	45	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	42	53	32	40	5	6	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	38	48	40	50	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	46	58	29	36	5	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	46	58	33	41	0	0	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)	32	40	40	50	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	33	41	43	54	3	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	36	45	40	50	3	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	29	36	47	59	2	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	42	53	34	43	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	44	55	32	40	4	5	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%.

1–2 July 2010

## 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](http://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"> <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.

1-2 July 2010

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**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.**



3 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wakefield St Marys Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Wakefield, WF1 4PE

Thank you for all your kindness and help when I inspected your school recently with my colleagues. We enjoyed chatting to you and listening to your views.

Your headteacher and other staff provide you with a satisfactory education so that you make satisfactory progress. This increases towards the end of Key Stage 2 so that by the end of Year 6 standards are average in English and below average in mathematics. You are proud to be part of such a happy learning community where new children are soon befriended and made to feel part of the school. You mostly behave well and are good at working in pairs to discuss your learning. You know a great deal about how to stay safe and live a healthy lifestyle. This is because the adults in school look after you well and work well in partnership with your parents and outside agencies. You have lots of clubs to attend and responsibilities to take on.

To make your school even better I have asked the leaders and managers to: help the Early Years Foundation Stage gel into a good unit, help you attain more highly in mathematics, and to make sure that pupils in Years 1 and 2 have activities that match their needs, have more things to play and learn with and develop their independence.

You can help by always presenting your work in mathematics neatly so that unnecessary mistakes are not made and by thinking carefully how to apply what you know about numbers to help you solve mathematical problems.

Keep enjoying school, attending regularly, and having fun!

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Linda Murphy

Lead Inspector

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