

# St Mary's C of E Primary School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109208
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bath And North East Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	337241
<b>Inspection dates</b>	19–20 January 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Stephen Lake

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	202
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Judith Taylor
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sue Heal
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	0 January 2007
<b>School address</b>	Lansdown View Timsbury Bath BA2 0JR
<b>Telephone number</b>	01761 470245
<b>Fax number</b>	01761 479044
<b>Email address</b>	stmarystimsbury_pri@bathnes.gv.uk

---

<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	19–20 January 2010
<b>Inspection number</b>	337241

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2010

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors spent around 50% of the time looking at learning. They visited 18 lessons and made short visits to a further seven, observing eight teachers. Inspectors held meetings with governors, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at the most recent school self-evaluation form, the school development plan, governors' minutes, the school's assessments of pupils' attainment and progress, the records held on vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, school policies, and reports from the local authority and the School Improvement Partner. Inspectors analysed questionnaires from pupils, staff and 111 parents.

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

- achievement in English and mathematics, to determine whether teaching is appropriately challenging in these subjects, especially for more able pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- achievement in reading and writing in the Early Years Foundation Stage to determine if provision is of good quality across all aspects of communication, language and literacy
- provision for pupils' cultural development to determine if sufficient is being done to develop their understanding of cultures in other parts of the world.

## Information about the school

This is an average-size school serving mainly the village of Timsbury, but a large minority of pupils travel in from neighbouring villages. Almost all pupils are of White British origin with only a very small minority from other ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. There are significantly more boys than girls in the school. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average, but the percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs is above average. A pre-school, operated by an independent provider, is situated on the school site.

**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?**

**1**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**1**

## Main findings

St Mary's provides an outstanding standard of education for pupils. The outstanding leadership and management ensure that highly effective strategies for school improvement are extremely well focused on seeking the highest possible quality of learning. The excellent and highly personalised curriculum makes learning very enjoyable and relevant for pupils. This curriculum, together with the excellent care, support and guidance that pupils receive, enables pupils to make outstanding progress in their personal development and grow into articulate and confident young people. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding and they have an excellent knowledge of how to keep safe and stay healthy because of the extremely high quality support and guidance that they receive. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to both the school and local community. Extremely strong partnerships with external agencies provide high quality support for vulnerable pupils. Equally strong links with other local schools have supported the improvements in the curriculum.

Achievement is good overall and improving. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is above average. Achievement in mathematics is excellent and attainment is well above average because of the high priority given to ensuring that all pupils are challenged to achieve their very best. Although the revised marking scheme is of high quality, it is not used consistently in English where sometimes pupils are not given clear enough guidance as to what they need to do to improve their work. The progress of pupils with special educational needs has improved, especially in mathematics, and these pupils make the same progress as other pupils. Children start in Reception with skills that are generally above those normally expected at this age and good provision ensures that they start Year 1 well prepared for future learning. Although achievement overall is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage, there are a few variations in the progress children make in some areas of learning. This is because the Early Years Foundation Stage leader does not have a secure overview of the achievement and progress of the whole cohort.

The school has an extremely accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses and is very effective at securing the improvements needed. The driving force behind this school's success and continued improvement is the highly motivated senior leadership team that has inspired all members of staff to raise standards and strive to improve the provision. They all share a strong sense of purpose and work together very effectively and there is substantial evidence to show the very positive impact this is having upon standards and provision across the school. This pursuit of excellence over time is why so many areas have improved since the last inspection and why the school has an outstanding capacity to improve further.

**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

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

- Ensure that marking, especially in English, makes it clear to pupils what they need to do to improve their work.
- Improve the use of data in the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure that a clear overview is available to managers of how the whole cohort is achieving.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Attainment is improving across the school and learning in most lessons observed was at least good, and sometimes outstanding. Progress in Year 6 is particularly good in English and mathematics. More able pupils are achieving well because the work provided challenges them effectively and is relevant. For example, Year 6 pupils, when studying report writing, viewed news clips of the recent earthquake in Haiti and identified the links between them and the key points of the coverage. In Year 4, more able pupils were very confident using a thesaurus to find better descriptive words to use in their writing. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are achieving very well in mathematics. In one class, for example, they were describing the properties of quite complex three-dimensional shapes. Vibrant displays around the school show pupils' good attainment in art in work demonstrating their understanding of other cultures such as Aboriginal and Bolivian. Good quality work was also observed in history and information and communication technology.

Pupils feel very safe in school. They reported no bullying and they trust the adults to deal with any that might occur. Pupils demonstrate great maturity in the polite and courteous way they speak with visitors. They make an excellent contribution to school life by taking on a wide range of responsibilities. For example, the eco-group takes responsibility for ensuring lights are off and 'matemakers' ensure that everyone has someone to play with on the playground. Pupils' very secure understanding of how to stay healthy and keep fit is evident in the enthusiastic way they take advantage of the many opportunities for physical activity in the school grounds and after school. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the local community, for example by contributing to the village magazine or giving their views on the village plan. Their spiritual, moral and social development is outstanding. Pupils have an excellent understanding of right and wrong, feel valued and show respect for themselves and for others. They have a good understanding of many cultures in other parts of the world.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

---

<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.

**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

<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>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</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>	1
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

### How effective is the provision?

Pupils learn well in this school because of the consistently good teaching and the extremely stimulating curriculum that makes learning so interesting and ensures many highly motivating experiences for pupils. The contribution made by the school to pupils' personal development is outstanding. All adults provide excellent guidance for pupils on how to stay safe and healthy. The school has established very strong international links including a high quality link with a school in Denmark. Activities such as these, and the many visits and visitors to the school, make learning extremely enjoyable for all pupils and develop their understanding of other cultures.

Teachers prepare lessons that stimulate pupils to learn. Information and communication technology is used extremely well to support teaching and ensure that the different learning styles of pupils are accommodated. Teachers are skilled at knowing just what question to ask to challenge pupils and extend their learning. For example, in a mathematics lesson skilled questioning extended pupils' understanding of the link between subtraction and division. Assessment information is used effectively to plan work that challenges pupils to achieve their full potential.

The care, guidance and support in this school are exemplary. Child protection procedures are detailed and well known to all staff. Very great care is taken to ensure that pupils are given high quality guidance on how to stay safe, especially when using the internet. Extremely detailed records of the progress made by individual pupils are kept and used very well in discussions with parents to set targets for learning. The school works very closely with parents to support their children's learning through activities such as the 'home challenge', which is the school's innovative way of providing

**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

homework to support learning. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make excellent progress towards their targets due to the extremely good support given by talented teaching assistants and the strong links with outside agencies. Those pupils identified as gifted and talented are given suitably challenging learning targets and they gain additional support through the strong partnerships with other local schools.

*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>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The staff in this school work together as a cohesive team to bring about school improvement and ensure that the best possible education is provided for all pupils. The school is careful to tackle any incidents of discrimination and the great care taken to monitor the progress of all ensures good equality of opportunity. Safeguarding requirements are met well and procedures to keep pupils safe are meticulous. Strong links with and beyond the local community and the attention paid to pupils' multicultural understanding help to promote community cohesion.

Governors support the school well and share the drive to improve further. All governors visit the school regularly and monitor its work, although these visits are not always linked closely enough to the priorities of the school development plan. Parents and pupils are consulted regularly and their views taken into account in the very good quality school development plan.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
<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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>

<b>Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate</b> Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children receive a good start to their education. Close and positive relationships with parents and the pre-school mean that children settle quickly and happily. Children's personal development is good; children display positive attitudes and learn to relate well to others. The good partnership between children and adults and a focus on praise ensure excellent behaviour. High quality care helps children to feel secure and confident and welfare needs are met well.

Children make good progress. They start school with levels of skill above those normally found at this age and enter Year 1 with attainment above that expected. A rich and stimulating environment is provided for children particularly in the well-designed outdoor area. All areas of learning are covered appropriately. Adults ensure a good balance between teacher-directed activities and independent choice that helps children develop as learners. All adults have a good understanding of the progress individual children are making and use this to challenge them to achieve more. Only on a few occasions is it not clear what children are expected to learn next to help them improve further.

*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	3

## Views of parents and carers

Parents are very pleased with the school. In the written responses some parents praised the school with comments such as, 'Excellent teaching standards, teachers are approachable,' 'Head is excellent, inspirational,' and, 'School is helpful in helping learning at home.' A few parents, although giving great support to the school, made some negative comments such as, 'Little help with teaching children at home, would like a session on best practice,' and, 'Behaviour is not dealt with.' In fact 12% of those responding to the questionnaire did not think behaviour was good. Inspectors do not agree with these parents' comments. Behaviour issues are dealt with promptly and behaviour around the school is excellent. The school's 'home challenge' work involves



**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

parents successfully in work at home and many good examples were seen.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Mary's C of E 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 111 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 202 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	70	63	40	36	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	84	76	27	24	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	50	45	54	49	7	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	64	58	46	41	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	70	63	46	37	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	62	56	43	39	6	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	64	58	45	41	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)	53	48	50	45	3	3	5	5
The school meets my child's particular needs	54	49	49	44	2	2	6	5
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	50	45	48	43	7	6	5	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	60	54	41	37	3	3	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	82	71	25	23	4	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	81	73	27	24	3	3	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.**



21 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Mary's C of E Primary School, Bath, BA2 0JR

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We were very impressed by your excellent behaviour and the polite and mature way that you spoke to us.

Yours is an outstanding school. We think that it looks after you and gives you a really exciting curriculum. Here are some of the things that we liked.

- Your achievement is good and your attainment is above average. In mathematics you do outstandingly well.
- Your school makes learning interesting and fun because of the wonderful range of activities provided for you. No wonder you enjoy school so much!
- The school looks after you very well, which is why you know how to stay safe and keep healthy.
- The teaching is good. You have very talented teachers and teaching assistants who make learning enjoyable and interesting.
- You make a big contribution to the running of the school through the school council and other jobs that you do.
- The school is led and managed extremely well by your excellent headteacher and the people who help her.

To help make your school even better we have asked the staff and governors to:

- make sure that marking, especially in English, always makes it clear to you what you need to do next to improve your work
- help the Early Years Foundation Stage leader have better information on how those of you in that stage are doing as a group.

Thank you again for your help, and congratulations on a wonderful school.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Lake

Lead inspector

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**