

# St Mary's CofE Primary School, East Grinstead

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	126055
<b>Local Authority</b>	West Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	340906
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 June 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Collard

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	210
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Tina Allen
<b>Headteacher</b>	Richard Townshend
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 June 2007
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three inspectors. The inspectors visited 11 lessons or parts of lessons taught by six teachers, and held formal meetings with the staff, governors and pupils and also had other informal conversations. They observed the school's work, and looked at policies and procedures, the school improvement plan, various case studies and both internal and external reports about the school. The inspection team analysed 114 parental questionnaires.

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

- whether all pupils are making good progress, but especially the progress of boys, of all pupils in writing and for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- whether there is any variability in the progress of pupils or quality of provision particularly in relation to the development of a creative curriculum
- whether all leaders share a common sense of purpose and are able to help drive the school forward.

## Information about the school

This average sized school serves pupils from an increasingly wide catchment area. Very few pupils are entitled to free school meals. An average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities although a very low proportion has a statement of special educational needs. Almost all of these needs relate to moderate learning difficulties. The majority of pupils are from a White British heritage. The headteacher joined the school just over two years ago.

The school has gained a number of national awards including the DCSF International School award, Healthy Schools status, Arts Mark, an Eco Schools Bronze award and Travel Mark.

**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?**

**3**

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

**3**

## Main findings

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education with a number of good elements. Pupils behave well and attain above average standards by the time they leave. They enjoy their learning and are a credit to themselves, their school and their parents and carers. They have a good understanding about healthy lifestyles, how to stay safe and contribute well to their own and the wider community. Pupils are articulate and want to share their experiences with others. They settle to work quickly, are inquisitive to learn and want to find out more. They are not afraid to ask questions and, when working together, do so sensibly. Pupils are cared for well through strong policies, strategies and procedures and by staff who are well trained in all child protection matters. Partnerships with parents and carers and external agencies are good and, from the questionnaires received, it is clear that there is general support for what the school is trying to achieve.

On entry into Reception, children start with the skills expected for their age although there are signs that some may have advanced ability. Satisfactory progress through the Reception class means that they start Year 1 ready and prepared for more formal work. Through the rest of the school, progress is also satisfactory although variable. It is good in some individual classes where teaching is better geared towards pupils' individual needs. It is when this good teaching provides the high levels of challenge that pupils respond very positively and make the most progress. In some classes, especially in English and mathematics, teaching, while well planned, does not always identify how all groups of pupils will be given work that moves their learning on to the next stage. This is because the new assessment scheme is not yet used well enough to provide pupils with a clear idea about what they need to do next or about how well they are doing. One case study from the school highlights and identifies this, reporting a pupil as saying 'I want to walk away knowing I could improve and do better next time.'

A new approach towards a more creative curriculum is having benefits which pupils recognise. They feel excited by some of their topics and can see a real relevance to the work. The next step, rightly identified by the school, is making sure that each subject is fully covered and that the progress in specific skills within each subject can be measured and improved.

The headteacher, with the full support of senior leaders, the staff and the governing body, has provided a clear direction aimed around a school vision of respect. Since the last inspection, significant difficulties have been overcome, including a major building programme. Self-evaluation, while clearly identifying the strengths and weaknesses, is overgenerous in its grading. While it is accepted by the school that there is still some way to go, improvements have already strengthened the quality of the curriculum, the support for the professional development of teachers and support staff and the provision

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for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Nevertheless, pupils' progress could be higher and more teaching has the potential to be good or outstanding. Consequently, the school is satisfactorily placed to continue to improve in the future.

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

- By September 2011:
  - Ensure 90% of pupils are making at least the expected progress in English and mathematics in each year by:
    - providing pupils with information about how well they are doing and setting targets that will allow them to know what to do next
    - providing tasks that challenge all levels of ability
    - using assessment information to quickly identify and remedy any potential underachievement.
- Eliminate the variability in teaching so that 90% is good or better by:
  - using the monitoring of teaching more effectively to set clearly defined development areas which can be assessed for their success and help inform the school's self-evaluation
  - ensuring that whole-school assessment information is used to make teachers more accountable for the progress of their class.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

After a satisfactory start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, pupils within all ability groups, both boys and girls, make suitable progress through the school. In Years 1 and 2 they develop the right basic skills to ensure they are reaching above average standards at the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2. Nine in ten pupils are achieving the expected level for their age and half are working above this. They are increasingly confident writers and can calculate and assimilate information quickly. While pupils make satisfactory progress and are suitably prepared for their future lives, potential is not always fully exploited. For example, in one class pupils were enthused by their role play, which they were able to explain in some detail, but the subsequent task did not then provide them with the highest levels of challenge. Conversely, in another Key Stage 1 class, progress was much more challenging because the teacher identified those pupils who were capable of more and gave them a task which stretched their abilities. A significant minority of pupils, in their responses to questionnaires, also pointed to the fact they would like harder work.

A series of national awards bears testament to pupils' good personal development. They say that 'sport is high on the agenda' with some pupils going on to represent the school and doing well in a range of competitive events. Pupils are very capable of making their own decisions, a fact demonstrated within the school council. They have

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suggested changes and work hard to improve the school. Connections with other parts of the country and wider afield are developing well and pupils show their awareness of others through an understanding and tolerance of different societies. This all provides support for the pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

*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>	2
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>	1
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

### How effective is the provision?

Teaching, while always at least satisfactory, is somewhat variable. Common strengths include ways of engendering exciting tasks within the planning, good behaviour management techniques and the methods used to provide different experiences. This has come about through a radical review of the curriculum. This is providing improved opportunities for real-life experiences enabling pupils to use a range of acquired knowledge in different situations. At its best, the classroom entices pupils to learn, the teacher has a clear view about what is being achieved by all groups of pupils and continuously provides the work that will make this happen. As one teacher said, 'I want everybody to be excited about coming into this classroom.' The use of exciting starts and endings to topics has provided an added dimension, also helping parents and

<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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carers to be involved in their children's learning. However, some classes do not have this same level of excitement and the work for different ability groups is too similar. While different work or support is provided to those identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities, there is insufficient difference for those in the middle or higher ability. This is linked to the use of ongoing assessment. For example, while work is generally marked conscientiously, and in some subjects such as English there are also targets set for individual pupils, it does not always explain how to improve or identify the next steps in learning. As a consequence, while a significant proportion of pupils attain above average standards, some could do even better. A strength of the school is the care, guidance and support that pupils receive. Rigorous monitoring, clear systems and the pupils' understanding of who to go to with any problems mean that there are very few instances of bullying or poor behaviour either in lessons or when pupils are moving around the school.

*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?**

Since his arrival, the headteacher has encouraged leaders to take more responsibility for their own areas. This has helped staff develop their own expertise and provide a shared drive and commitment towards improvement. Useful self-evaluation days allow all stakeholders, including staff and governors, to have an input into this improvement. While the areas for development relate to the most important issues, these plans lack sharp outcomes against which their success can be measured. The headteacher has established systems for monitoring teaching which involve senior leaders. This provides a satisfactory picture of strengths and development needs. However, this is not sufficiently systematic to provide the whole staff with an understanding of what needs to be done, how it will be achieved and what effect it will have on pupils' achievement. While there is no evidence of discrimination, the relative variability in the progress of different groups of pupils as they move through the school means that equality of opportunity is satisfactory rather than good. Governors have successfully overcome difficulties from the past and are very supportive of the school. This ensures there is now full compliance with statutory requirements. They use external agencies and other partnerships well to provide information such as through the school improvement partner's reports. While they have an understanding of the performance data they have not yet questioned this well enough, particularly where it shows apparent

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discrepancies, to ensure that all pupils make the best possible progress. As a result, leaders are not always fully challenged on the decisions that they take. More positively, the systems for ensuring pupils' safety are good with careful checks made on all staff. The systems for developing community cohesion are also good. Governors and staff have taken a measured and thoughtful approach to their audit and evaluation and are now in the process of implementing the recommendations to ensure it has the desired impact.

*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>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>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enjoy their time in the Reception class. They are well behaved and know right from wrong. Activities are tackled with enthusiasm and the indoor and outdoor classrooms are well organised although the range of resources is limited. Children can move safely between the different areas and settle quickly, concentrating on what they are doing. The activities themselves, while appropriate, do not always provide children with enough opportunity to explore ideas for themselves. When this happens, it restricts the opportunity for children to make choices or be involved in independent play. Tasks are planned conscientiously and, at this stage of the year, are starting to prepare children for their move to Year 1. Children make satisfactory progress from their starting points although more could be done to extend the level of challenge. In one activity the group struggled to add up numbers together because the task was not modified sufficiently to take account of their ability. Children are increasingly articulate and can express their ideas with others. For example, one child noted that a meat eater was a



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carnivore. They are building up skills within numeracy, creativity and physical development. By the time they leave the Early Years Foundation Stage most are working at levels at least in line with those expected for their age with a significant proportion working above this. Leadership is satisfactory. A start has been made on developing better practice through work with other settings. This has included meetings with other schools although, as yet, there has been limited opportunity to witness best practice.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

### **Views of parents and carers**

Almost all parents and carers are happy with their children's experience at school, feel that the school keeps their children safe and teaches them to have a healthy lifestyle. Many parents and carers made positive comments in their responses to the questionnaire. There were some individual concerns although there was no pattern to these. There was relatively less agreement about how the school deals with behaviour. The inspection found that behaviour is good through the school and that pupils are very positive about their learning.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Mary's Parochial 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 inspection team received 114 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 210 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	72	63	39	34	2	2	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	72	63	41	36	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	37	32	66	58	11	10	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	41	36	62	54	10	9	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	54	47	53	46	7	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	47	41	58	51	7	6	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	54	47	56	49	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)	47	41	60	53	1	1	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	44	39	59	52	9	8	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	38	33	58	51	12	11	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	45	39	57	50	7	6	3	3
The school is led and managed effectively	67	59	38	33	5	4	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	69	61	39	34	5	4	1	1

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](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.

**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.**



28 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Mary's Parochial Church of England Primary School, East Grinstead  
RH19 2DS

Thank you for taking the time to meet with us during our recent visit. We very much enjoyed talking to so many of you and joining you in your lessons. It was also good to hear your views about your school. We have said that yours is a satisfactory school but that there are also some good elements. As I promised some of you, I have enclosed the main points of our report below.

- You told us you were looked after well and that the work you were given was interesting. We have agreed with your views and in particular that the new creative curriculum is beginning to help you see how different subjects are connected.
- We have said that you know how to stay safe, fit and healthy and that you enjoy helping others, both in the school and within your community.
- By the time you leave in Year 6, you are reaching above average standards and make suitable progress through each year.
- Your teachers plan your lessons well so that they are exciting and relevant. We have asked that over the next year the school makes sure that all lessons are as good as the best ones so that you make the best possible progress in each year group.
- Your headteacher and the rest of the staff know what to do to make your school even better and have many things planned for the future. You can help by continuing to suggest ways of improving things and working as hard as you can.

Finally, we wish you all the best for the future and hope that you continue to be as enthusiastic about your education as you are now.

Yours sincerely

David Collard

Lead inspector

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