

St Martin's Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126413
Local Authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	340975
Inspection dates	6–7 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Joyce Cox

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	126
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jon Hampton
Headteacher	Vanessa Pile
Date of previous school inspection	21 June 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspection team observed six teachers and visited nine lessons. They held meetings with governors, staff and pupils and looked at the school development plan, assessment information, teachers' planning, pupils' work and safeguarding procedures. They also analysed 85 parental questionnaires.

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

- whether all groups of pupils are making at least satisfactory progress throughout the school, with particular focus on pupils' achievement in writing and mathematics
- how successfully staff use assessment information to meet the various learning needs of all pupils
- the quality of the outdoor learning environment for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- the extent and impact of subject leaders' and governors' involvement in whole school improvement.

Information about the school

This is a smaller-than-average primary school. There are six classes and children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in the Reception class. The on-site pre-school provision is run by an independent management committee and has a separate inspection.

□ An above average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities, including an above average proportion with statements of special educational needs. The main areas of need are speech, language and communication and behaviour and learning difficulties. A few of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and a very small number are at an early stage of speaking English. Forty per cent of the pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is high. A higher-than-average proportion of pupils leave or join the school throughout the course of the school year.

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

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school where pupils are well cared for and are happy, work hard and achieve well. The school has come a long way since its previous inspection and now produces good outcomes for all its pupils. The headteacher, governors and staff have also successfully enhanced the school's reputation in the local area. One parent, speaking for many, commented, 'I am extremely impressed with developments at the school. It's a joy to come here for the children and the parents. I feel the school deserves recognition for the considerable improvements it has made. This is a fabulous school that I now highly recommend to anyone.' Reception children have a happy and successful start to their school life. Teaching throughout the school is nearly always good. Lessons move at a brisk pace and engage pupils in interesting, practical activities. Precise analysis of assessment information points staff towards those pupils who need extra support. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have taken much of the lead on improvements but increasingly, through good professional development, other staff are playing their part. From a below-average point on entry to the school, pupils achieve well and attain average standards at the end of Year 6. Attainment has risen to above-average levels in mathematics for pupils in Year 6, demonstrating the good academic progress that pupils make during their time at the school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well due to good support and effective individual programmes for their learning. Those pupils who speak English as an additional language quickly become bilingual and progress well in their learning.

Behaviour is good and pupils say they enjoy school. Their good attitudes to learning and the quality of work and presentation in their exercise books are impressive. Positive relationships, good classroom management and careful planning for mixed-age classes ensure that work is usually matched to the needs of individuals and groups. However, in a few instances, more-able pupils are not challenged sufficiently in their writing. In addition, some pupils struggle to spell words when drafting their work. The opportunities and activities on offer continue to be improved and enriched through an exciting curriculum with numerous interesting projects and visits. Pupils make a good contribution to school and local community life. The relatively weaker areas of community cohesion are pupils' knowledge and understanding of being part of the United Kingdom and wider global communities.

The headteacher, working closely with the deputy headteacher and with the active support of all staff and governors, is embedding high ambition. Self-evaluation is realistic, if not a little too harsh in some areas, but clearly demonstrates the high expectations that are being set for future developments. This has ensured that the school has correctly identified the key areas for improvement. Standards have been

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rising steadily since the last inspection apart from a slight dip in the 2009 Year 6 results due to a very high proportion of pupils with complex special educational needs and/or disabilities. Consequently the school demonstrates a good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment and achievement in writing further by:
 - ensuring more-able pupils are challenged in all aspects of their writing
 - devising ways to improve pupils' spelling skills.
- Devise and implement plans to improve pupils' knowledge and understanding of being part of the United Kingdom and wider global communities.

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

All groups of pupils, including those who have special educational needs, say they enjoy school because 'teachers make our lessons fun and interesting and we learn a lot'. Their good academic and personal skills prepare them well for later life. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are lower than expected for their age. By the time pupils leave, their attainment is average and rising. This year, the 16 Year 6 pupils did particularly well in mathematics, with over a third attaining the higher Level 5. In lessons, pupils show positive attitudes to learning and good levels of sustained concentration. All pupils work well together and are clearly involved and engaged in their learning. A strength in many lessons is the way pupils support each other, for example as talk partners. A Portuguese pupil described how he talks in Portuguese to another pupil from Brazil who has recently arrived to 'make her feel at home'.

Pupils say they feel very safe in school and older pupils are very clear about internet dangers. They comment that most pupils behave well and maturely say that a very small number of pupils have 'difficulty in controlling themselves because of their special needs'. They also state that behaviour has improved at break times because they have special play zones for football, small apparatus and quiet thinking. Pupils with complex behavioural or personal difficulties like the 'Happy Haven' room where they can retreat and work quietly with an adult. Pupils have a good awareness of the need for sleep, exercise, healthy food and drink, and good hygiene. For example, Year 1 pupils are fascinated by their superhero 'Sporticus' who lives on a Healthy Boat role-play area and who leads an exemplary life by keeping fit through sailing and by eating lots of fruit and vegetables. Pupils also enjoy growing their own vegetables. They are proud of, and committed to, their school community. Many older pupils have a leadership role in the school. Year 5 and 6 pupils regularly and confidently support younger children with their reading or computer skills. □ All pupils have a strong voice in decisions relating to their learning and well-being through the school council. Pupils are involved in many interesting projects in conjunction with the local community. For example, a third of the pupils are in the school choir and have recently recorded a CD, working with a local college. □ Pupils' relationships with staff and each other are good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and they think deeply about a wide range of

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issues. For instance, older pupils enjoyed a visit to Salisbury Cathedral so much that staff from the cathedral led a Spirituality Day for all pupils where they learnt to become more aware of others, the world and God. There are very close links with St Martin's Church. School attendance is average. Despite the school's best efforts, attendance figures are affected by a very small number of parents who do not ensure that their children attend school regularly. □ □

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

There are a number of common strengths within the good teaching. Individual lesson plans are of a high quality. They define what will be learnt and by whom, how this will be achieved and they set out exciting activities to achieve this. For example, Year 2 pupils have thoroughly enjoyed researching and recording the life and times of Florence Nightingale. In a small number of literacy lessons, more-able pupils are not challenged sufficiently. Talented teaching assistants provide good levels of support to all pupils and are very skilled at managing pupils with behavioural difficulties. Lessons move at a good pace and activities are switched if concentration wanes. The use of information and

¹ 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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communication technology has improved and is now an integral part of many lessons. Marking is of a high quality and Year 4 and 5 pupils say they like the fact their teacher writes two positive comments and then writes, 'Next time..' and details how they can improve their work.

The headteacher and staff have worked hard to successfully devise an innovative curriculum. This is manifest in the way pupils explore curriculum areas and make meaningful links between subjects. For example, Year 5 and 6 pupils enjoyed working with the Milford Street Bridge Project. □ They completed a fascinating walk with a local historian and welcomed visitors into school and interviewed them about toys, games and their memories of growing up in the local area. □ A local artist came in to work with pupils on designing a mural for the bridge. Pupils were clearly pleased to be part of this project and learnt a great deal about their local area.

Pupils receive good care because each child is known and valued. Effective induction arrangements enable Reception children and pupils who arrive later in their school life to settle quickly. Older pupils have many chances to visit their local secondary schools. Staff provide good support to pupils with additional needs. Good partnerships with outside agencies ensure that any pupil requiring additional support, for whatever reason, quickly gets it. One parent commented, ' My child is currently undergoing assessments for special educational needs and the school has been incredibly helpful and understanding in dealing with my child.' □

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and the deputy headteacher set high standards and form a strong partnership which is driven by clear ideas about how to improve the school further. The very realistic school development plan, based on a thorough analysis of the school's true position, is driving this forward well. Improvements, such as highly accurate assessments of pupils' abilities and a rigorous approach to supporting pupils in danger of underachieving, have raised pupils' academic achievement. They are also ensuring that equal opportunities are enjoyed by all and there is no discrimination. The staff team is united and totally committed to doing the very best for each and every pupil. Leaders monitor the quality of teaching and learning regularly and accept that standards of spelling should be higher. Governors have developed their role well and are in the early stages of ensuring that all new developments have been assessed for their effectiveness

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and challenged when they do not produce what has been expected. They are also working hard to be more accessible to parents and pupils. Community cohesion is working extremely well at school and local community levels. The relatively weaker areas, identified by the school, are pupils' knowledge and understanding of being part of the United Kingdom and wider global communities. The required safeguarding checks have been undertaken by the school, child protection arrangements are secure and risk assessments are completed for all relevant activities. There are good links with the majority of parents. The school's excellent website provides a myriad of information for parents and carers as class teachers regularly update information about their classes.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Good leadership and management, effective teaching and loving care ensure that most children attain close to the expected levels for their age on entry to Year 1. Children do well in learning to read and write because of skilful teaching. Staff make learning fun and very enjoyable, and challenge children to think and work together well. For instance, during the inspection, children were engrossed in their 'Animal Magic' topic. They have helped design and make a vet's surgery and enjoyed pond dipping and a visit from a local vet. The outdoor learning area has been covered and provides good opportunities in all winds and weathers. There are good plans to extend this so children can explore and investigate in a larger space. Reception staff work as an effective team and have good knowledge and understanding of the personal and learning needs of young children. This ensures that children make particularly good progress in their

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personal, social and emotional development and are well equipped for future learning. The curriculum is interesting and provides constant pleasure, excitement and adventure. A strong partnership is quickly formed with parents who feel their children have a 'great start' and appreciate the endless patience and unbounded enthusiasm of all the staff. One parent commented, 'My son has been very happy in this supportive, fun and lovely learning environment. He has flourished.'

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Almost three quarters of the parents and carers returned the questionnaire. All of these parents and carers feel that their children enjoy school and are helped to be healthy and that they are kept well informed about their children's progress. A few parents raised concerns about progress and behaviour. The inspection team evaluated the progress that all pupils are making both in lessons and over time by looking closely at pupils' books. They discovered that all groups of pupils are making good progress. Inspectors looked closely at pupils' behaviour in lessons and at playtimes and found it to be good. Pupils themselves also say that most pupils behave well. Parents' individual concerns were summarised and reported to the school without identifying any individual.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Martin's VA 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 85 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 126 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	57	67	27	32	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	57	37	27	32	0	0	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	47	55	37	44	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	46	54	32	38	5	6	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	46	54	33	39	1	1	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	69	59	32	38	2	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	51	60	34	40	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)	42	49	40	47	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	45	53	35	41	4	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	37	44	41	48	6	7	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	44	52	39	46	1	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	58	68	25	59	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	61	72	23	27	0	0	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). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



8 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Martin's Voluntary Aided Primary School, Salisbury SP1 2RG

We really enjoyed visiting you and I am writing to thank you for the two very happy days we spent there. I hope that your Summer Show goes really well next week.

These are the things we found out.

- You make good progress and reach above-average standards in mathematics.
- Your behaviour is good and you work hard and play happily together.
- You are taught well and your lessons are usually fun and interesting.
- Your headteacher and deputy headteacher are good leaders.
- You are well cared for in school and you say you feel safe.
- You are helped to keep fit and eat healthily.

We have asked the school to do two things to be even better:

- Make sure you all do really well in writing.
- Help you to learn more about other pupils' lives in the United Kingdom and abroad.

You can help by always being kind, attending school regularly and by behaving well.

We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Joyce Cox

Lead Inspector

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