

St Michael and St Martin RC Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102531
Local Authority	Hounslow
Inspection number	354516
Inspection dates	10–11 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Susan Thomas-Pounce

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	478
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alfred Agius
Headteacher	Eileen Mullarkey
Date of previous school inspection	20 September 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 21 lessons observing all year groups and 16 class teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff and three groups of pupils. Further informal discussions were held with pupils at break and lunch times, and with parents and carers at the start of the day. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at tracking data, minutes of governors' meetings, the school development plan, the school's records demonstrating arrangements for safeguarding pupils, a sample of pupils' work in their books and local authority reports on the school. Inspectors received and analysed 197 questionnaires from parents or carers, 97 from pupils and 16 from members of staff.

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

- the effectiveness of actions taken to improve the progress and achievement of pupils
- the effectiveness of teaching and the curriculum to develop cross-curricular skills of literacy and information and communication technology
- the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels to secure improvement.

Information about the school

The school is much larger than the national average. Over three quarters of all pupils come from a wide variety of minority ethnic backgrounds. This includes a small minority who are at an early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible to take a free school meal is below the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than average. These pupils' needs cover a wide range including behavioural, emotional and social problems, speech, language and communication difficulties, and physical disabilities. Since the previous inspection a substantial remodelling of the school's accommodation has taken place and was completed very recently. A new senior leadership team was appointed in September 2009.

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. It has some outstanding features and has rightly achieved a good reputation among parents and carers. They are particularly pleased with the high quality care, guidance and support which are of outstanding quality and lead to very good personal outcomes. Behaviour is exceptionally good. Consequently, pupils feel very safe and show a positive regard for each other. Pupils of all abilities make good progress across the school and leave Year 6 with standards which are above average. Parents are proud of the school and one commented: 'I am impressed with the school ethos, the teachers are passionate about their jobs and about the outcomes of each child.'

Inspectors agree that St Michael and St Martin is a warm and caring place in which to learn. All staff are totally committed to supporting all pupils and their families.

Opportunities for music, art and sport have had a considerable influence on pupils' willingness to participate confidently in learning activities and have supported pupils' good progress. Sporting, art and musical achievements, and charitable work, make a strong contribution to promoting links with the local community. However, actions to promote community cohesion on a wider national scale have yet to be fully exploited.

Although progress is good overall, it has been, and continues to be, fastest for the most and least able pupils. Since the previous inspection, standards and pupils' progress have dipped, particularly for the middle ability pupils. The curriculum is good but opportunities are missed to provide for independent learning through a consistent use of information and communication technology (ICT). The support provided for vulnerable pupils, those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those learning to speak English as an additional language is sensitive and effective. This enables them to make good progress. Where the quality of teaching is good, lessons are purposeful and well planned, and learning activities are underpinned by varied and challenging activities. Pupils are well prepared for their future lives and have an extremely good awareness of how to keep healthy and safe.

Since the previous inspection the accommodation has been refurbished and there has been disruption to the continuity of staffing. Both factors have had an impact on achievement, the development of teaching, curriculum, school routines and use of facilities. Despite this, senior leaders and governors have successfully maintained many of the outstanding features identified in the previous inspection. The newly formed leadership team are now focusing on achieving better outcomes. Data collection is much improved. Senior managers are developing ways of making better use of this information to accelerate learning further so that all pupils, particularly the middle attainers, can reach their challenging targets. The school recognises the need to develop ICT skills. Now the remodelling of the school has finished, additional computers and

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improved technical support will hasten this. The effective leadership of the school, the good record of pupils' progress and the commitment to continuous improvement by all staff and governors indicate that this school has a good capacity to improve further and to become the outstanding school it seeks to be.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise levels of attainment further and continue to accelerate progress throughout the school by sharpening the use of assessment data to identify where improvements are needed, especially for middle-attaining pupils so they reach challenging targets.
- Improve the curriculum provision by ensuring opportunities are provided for independent learning through consistent use of ICT.
- Build knowledge and understanding across communities by developing links with another school where pupils have different beliefs and traditions.

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

Overall achievement is good and the majority of pupils attain standards that are above average. Their attainment improves at a good rate from their starting points on entering the school. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 have been above average for most of the last three years. Attainment in writing is showing significant improvement as a result of actions to address the progress of pupils in Year 5. The scrutiny of pupils' work, lesson observations and assessment information show that pupils in all year groups, including Year 5, are making good progress in reading and writing with very good progress in mathematics. Middle attainers are not doing quite as well as those who need extra support and those of higher ability. Pupils enjoy their learning and they are appreciative of the hard work of their teachers in taking excellent care of them. They are keen to do well in lessons and are focused on their learning. This is well supported by the very good relationships with teachers that enable pupils to make good progress. During the inspection the pupils were enjoying learning about the importance of respecting others. Teachers were imaginative in their choice of resources and activities. For example, in one class pupils were bursting to tell the teacher of their favourite things and in another they were working out possible resolutions to a dilemma. Very effective support helps many of those learning English and some with complex special needs to make good, and for some exceptional, progress. Higher-ability pupils also make very good progress. Although the middle-ability pupils make good progress, the school knows they could do even better.

Pupils feel very secure and know how to keep themselves and others safe both in lessons and around school. They develop excellent social skills through taking part in the extensive range of extended services and extra-curricular activities. Pupils are eager to get involved in school life. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils respond well to the Catholic ethos of the school, reflecting on relationships, celebrations and the world around them. They are involved in protecting

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the environment and make very strong contributions to the local sports partnership. Pupils know how to stay safe and healthy. Most participate fully in physical activity and they choose healthy food at lunchtime. Attendance has dipped this year and is average but, in comparison with similar schools, persistent absence is low. Although there are a number of outstanding features, outcomes for pupils remains good overall because of the comparatively recent improvements in progress, notably for middle attainers.

These are the grades for children's outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

Good, and sometimes outstanding, teaching contributes well to pupils' learning and progress and to their personal development. Teachers set high expectations for effort and behaviour in lessons and pupils respond positively to this. Teachers ensure that pupils are given a clear understanding of what they are expected to do and to achieve. At its best, teaching is brisk and purposeful with a good blend of pace and challenge and with plenty of opportunities for pupils to discuss and reflect on their learning, often in pairs or groups using the 'wow and now' system. Less successful lessons tend to lack

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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challenge and variety and the needs of the middle ability pupils are not well met. Although improving, not all teachers are using interactive whiteboards and ICT to make learning relevant and exciting. The thoughtful deployment of the good teaching assistants provides effective classroom support and enables those needing extra help to have full access to the learning. Recently the school has taken effective action to improve pupils' writing skills. Pupils say that the aide memoires displayed in classrooms along with 'challenge corners' have helped them improve their writing. Challenging targets are set for individual cohorts and are monitored closely. The recent improvement in assessing pupils' progress is enabling adults to intervene at appropriate points to address any weaknesses. However, the current way of tracking progress means that this data are not easily shared between staff and that planning opportunities are missed to assist even better learning.

The substantial internal building work has greatly improved the learning environment. Classrooms are bright and attractive and both the internal and external learning areas have been carefully planned to maximise learning opportunities. Break times are exciting and stimulating for pupils who could take part in tennis, skipping, basketball, football and exploring in and around the outdoor classroom and environmental area. Pupils proudly told inspectors about their paintings which were to be enlarged and displayed in an outdoor exhibition. There are good opportunities for musical performances, art displays and numerous sporting activities. A good range of visitors, visits, including residential visits, contribute well to pupils' learning experiences. Opportunities to develop pupils' ICT skills have been limited, and there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop and practise their ICT skills.

The outstanding level of care, guidance and support reflect the Catholic ethos that is present throughout the school. Pupils are well known and valued as individuals and they receive well-targeted support which helps them settle very quickly as they move through the school. Those with specific needs receive extra help and their needs are extremely well met which enables them to be fully included in all school activities. Parents have a high level of trust in the school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

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The strong impact of leadership is seen in how effectively the headteacher and senior leaders are embedding ambition and driving improvement. Morale is high and there is a corporate understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement which are appropriate. Recent expansion of the senior leadership team is providing extra capacity to focus effectively on improving teaching and learning and refining the school's tracking and intervention systems. Target setting has been made more challenging for individual pupils and tracking and intervention have been improved to ensure targets are consistently reached. Governors provide good support. They have a wide range of skills to help the school develop in all areas. During the last year they have demonstrated a high level of commitment to improving the learning environment. The promotion of respect and valuing others is at the heart of the school's ethos and the promotion of equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination are accorded a high priority. The school's aspirations are understood and acted upon at all levels. As a result, the outcomes are positive and any unevenness between groups is reducing rapidly. There is no evidence of discrimination. This is confirmed by one parent who wrote, 'The school is always looking to respect the diversity of the pupils and the local area.' Safeguarding meets requirements well; procedures are robust and meticulously managed by governors who play a very full part in monitoring compliance. Parents and carers are very positive about arrangements for safety. The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion. Links with the local and international community are very well developed and help pupils' understanding of the less developed areas of the world. This is making a valuable contribution to cohesion. However, links with the wider British community are not as well developed to the same extent as the other two strands.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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	2
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

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The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money

2

Views of parents and carers

The vast majority of parents and carers are very positive about the work of the school. Their responses show that they are pleased that their children are happy, safe and enjoy coming to this school. Parents and carers say that teaching is good and the school is led and managed effectively. Inspectors agree with these views. A few parents feel that their children are not making enough progress, that they are not given enough information on the progress their children make, and that they need more help to support their children's learning. Inspectors found that progress was good overall but recognise that the school needs to sharpen the use of assessment to accelerate pupils' progress especially for the middle-attaining group. The school works very well with parents to help them support children's learning through newsletters, meetings and pupil planners. A few also feel that their views are not taken into account and that unacceptable behaviour is not dealt with well. Inspectors found that the school does more than many to survey parents' views and builds responses into the development of the school. The inspection found behaviour to be exemplary and no evidence to support these opinions.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St. Michael and St. Martin 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 197 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 478 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	125	63	69	35	2	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	125	63	71	36	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	91	46	91	46	13	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	85	43	98	50	10	5	2	1
The teaching is good at this school	106	54	83	42	3	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	88	45	93	47	11	6	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	98	50	93	47	2	1	1	1
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)	83	42	96	49	5	3	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	82	42	105	53	3	2	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	80	41	94	48	9	5	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	66	34	103	52	9	5	2	1
The school is led and managed effectively	88	45	96	49	5	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	113	57	76	39	3	2	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 children's needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its children well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its children.
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 children. 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 child in their learning and development.
Attainment:	in other phases of school, for example primary schools, attainment is the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. However, there is no national average for three- and four-year-olds. Therefore, in inspections of nursery schools, inspectors take account of expectations in the age-related bands of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
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 children 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 children.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which children are learning in nursery sessions and over longer periods of time.

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.



14 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Michael and St Martin Catholic Primary School, Hounslow, TW4 7AG

Thank you for the lovely welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. You and your parents and carers are rightly proud of your school. We were told your school is good and we agree. We really enjoyed talking to you and we appreciated your help in showing us so many of the good things about your school. Your playground is a wonderful place to be with all the exciting activities such as football, tennis, basketball and skipping. You have an excellent understanding of how to stay fit and healthy. Your behaviour is outstanding and you work hard and really enjoy being at school.

You are making good progress with your school work because the teaching is good. All the adults in the school look after you extremely well and they all work well together to do their best for you. Those of you who find things a little more difficult are given good support. I know that the school has been busy making the inside very smart and bright and this has held up the development of information and communication technology (ICT), but many new computers should be arriving very soon.

You told us how much you enjoy all the extra things you get to do in sport, music and art. When we saw you drive off for your trip to the Isle of Wight we could see you were going to have a wonderful time learning lots of new things. There are three things that we have suggested to help the school to improve. To make sure that you all do as well as you possibly can, I have asked the teachers to:

- make better use of the assessment data they have collected so that they can identify those of you who need more support to make your work even better
- develop your ICT skills and give you more opportunities to use them in other subjects
- build even more links with contrasting communities within the United Kingdom so that you can have first-hand knowledge of what it means to live in a multi-racial community.

You can help by continuing to do your best. I wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Susan Thomas-Pounce

Lead inspector

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