

St Mary's Church of England Primary School

Hart Road, Byfleet, West Byfleet, KT14 7NJ

Inspection dates 23–24 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because:

- Pupils' progress in writing requires improvement. It is not as good as pupils' progress in reading and mathematics.
- Teaching is not consistently good. Expectations of what pupils can do, especially at Key Stage 1, are not high enough. This is particularly true for the most able who are not given hard enough work.
- Teachers do not always help pupils understand how to improve.
- Teachers do not make effective use of the information gained from checks they make on pupils' learning to plan for teaching.
- The extra help given, by teachers and teaching assistants, to pupils to improve their writing, especially in Key Stage 1, is not as effective as it should be.
- The relatively new governing body and new members of the senior leadership team are driving necessary improvements with vigour. However, their work is too recent to have yet had the required impact.

The school has the following strengths:

- This is a caring school where pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Pupils feel safe and are happy to come to school so attendance is good.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. They are courteous, show respect for others, and enjoy learning.
- Attainment in mathematics has steadily improved year by year so that by 2012, standards had risen to reach the national average.
- Attainment in English has risen to the national average as a result of improvements in reading.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 22 lessons, four of which were observed jointly with the headteacher or with the deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors talked to pupils, looked at a large sample of their work, and listened to two groups of pupils read.
- Meetings were also held with teachers, a group of governors, and with the school's senior leaders. A meeting was held with a representative of the local authority to discuss the extent and impact of support provided to the school.
- In planning the inspection, inspectors took account of the 63 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), views expressed by parents and carers through four letters, the views of 20 parents and carers who spoke to inspectors during the inspection, and 32 questionnaires returned by school staff.
- The inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at many documents including minutes of governing body meetings, the school's self-evaluation, the school's development plan, performance management documentation, planning documents, monitoring and assessment information, school policies and records relating to attendance, behaviour and safety.

Inspection team

John Collins, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Gail Roberston	Additional inspector
David Nebesnuick	Additional inspector
John Worgen	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an above average sized primary school.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage includes a Nursery and two reception classes.
- Pupils are taught in single-aged classes throughout the school and in ability groups for mathematics in Years 1 to 6 and for literacy in Year 6.
- Most pupils are White British.
- A high number of pupils join the school part-way through their primary education.
- A below average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium. This provides additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children, and army children.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported at school action and school action plus is below average.
- The governing body manages a breakfast club and an after school club. The school does not use any other alternative provision.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There have been significant changes to the governing body and the senior leadership team in the past 18 months. There is a new Chair of the Governing Body and vice chair, and four new governors. More recently, a new deputy headteacher, a new mathematics coordinator and a new head of the Early Years Foundation Stage have taken up their roles.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning, particularly at Key Stage 1, by ensuring that all teachers:
 - help pupils understand what they have to do next to improve their work and give them time to do it
 - ensure all pupils understand and use the feedback given
 - increase the pace of pupils' learning
 - raise their expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Improve the quality of the support given to help improve writing especially in Key Stage 1, by:
 - providing appropriate training for teaching assistants
 - assessing each child's needs as a starting point for teaching and learning
 - providing short writing tasks every day.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that senior leaders:
 - check teaching and samples of pupils' work regularly to see that pupils are making good progress
 - encourage teachers to reflect better on how well they are helping their pupils learn.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because too few pupils make fast enough progress during their time at school.
- Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and abilities well below the levels typical for their age. They are already able to choose different activities independently and play confidently in the outside area.
- The effective teaching of letters and sounds and the promotion of early reading and writing have ensured children make good progress in learning to speak more clearly and to recognise, and sometimes write, simple words.
- Most readers in Year 1 are able to use their knowledge of sounds and letters to read simple words. Because of the focus on improving reading, pupils build on their early reading skills well so that by the end of Year 2 they are reading in line with expectations.
- Pupils, particularly boys, do not make rapid enough progress from Year 1 to Year 6 in writing. This is because teachers' expectations of what pupils can do are too low and because the extra support given is not consistently focused on individual difficulties.
- Most Year 6 pupils made broadly expected progress in both English and mathematics from their starting points at the end of Key Stage 1. However, school records indicate that learning dipped for a small number of pupils in Year 4 who are currently at the top end of Key Stage 2; this was due to a temporary period of inadequate teaching that has since been rectified. These pupils are now making up lost ground and benefiting from the strength of teaching in Years 5 and 6.
- Despite a significant dip in pupils' attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 in 2011, by 2012 Year 6 pupils' standards had improved and were broadly average. This was due to the focus on improving teaching, particularly for those pupils who joined the school part-way through their education.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs read with determination and growing confidence and overall make similar rates of progress to their peers. This is because of the support provided by adults who develop their knowledge and understanding of letters and sounds and regularly hear them read.
- The progress of pupils supported by the pupil premium, as measured by their average point scores, is similar to other pupils at the school. Funding has been used effectively to give extra support for these pupils to help them develop their communication and literacy skills. This has led to improvements in their rate of progress, particularly in reading, and is closing the gap between their achievement and that of their fellow pupils.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement. This is because it is not consistently good, particularly in Key Stage 1. However, the regular monitoring and support given by senior leaders have significantly improved the quality of teaching since the last inspection.
- Most teachers plan well but some make insufficient use of the information they have on pupils' learning and do not match the work closely enough to pupils' needs.
- In some lessons the pace of learning is slow. Too much focus is given to completing a task rather than developing learning. When this happens, pupils lose interest and do not learn as well. The work given to some more-able pupils is not always sufficiently challenging.
- Some teachers do not work sufficiently closely with teaching assistants, for example, not sharing lesson plans in advance of lessons. As a result, support for pupils' learning is sometimes not as effective as it could be.
- At Key Stage 1, literacy does not always capture and maintain the children's interest and as a result pupils' progress slows. This can be clearly seen in the work that pupils have done in their

books.

- Pupils enjoy their numeracy lessons and make better progress than in writing. However, the pace of lessons is sometimes too slow and pupils make less progress than they could.
- Steps have been taken to improve pupils' writing and strengthen mathematical problem solving skills. These have already brought about improvements, particularly in the quality of written work and in achievement in mathematics. However, opportunities for pupils to apply their numeracy skills in solving simple mathematical problems, and the focus on improving pupils' use of punctuation in writing, remain limited.
- At Key Stage 2, English and mathematics are often well taught with relevance to real life and also through other subjects. For example, in a well-taught Year 6 music lesson, the teacher asked pupils to describe the qualities of Mexican Mariachi music. They used words such as joyous, rhythmic and invigorating, correctly in sentences.
- Teachers mark regularly. However, although their written comments are supportive they rarely provide pupils with clear information about what to do next to improve their work and how to do it. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used effectively to motivate pupils and to promote deeper learning, for example, using a projected image of a protractor when demonstrating how to measure angles or when showing the movement of the earth and moon around the sun.
- Teachers ensure pupils too make good use of computers to present their work. For example, pupils made their own presentations to show their parents and carers how well they were doing in their subjects and personal targets.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour is good. Almost all pupils show positive, but not always exemplary attitudes to learning and take part well in lessons and other activities. Disruption in lessons is uncommon.
- Pupils are courteous and respectful of others and share ideas willingly. The large majority of parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View) indicated that behaviour is typically good and inspectors agree.
- Pupils of all ages know how to keep safe. They understand the meaning of bullying and the different forms it can take, such as name calling and cyber-bullying. They say bullying at the school is unusual but that the teaching staff deal with it quickly and effectively.
- The measures taken to improve attendance have been successful and it is now above the national average. However, a few pupils do not arrive on time to lessons. As a result they miss out on their learning.

The leadership and management require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement. This is because teaching is not yet consistently good. Rates of pupils' progress are too slow in Key Stage 1 and not consistently good in Key Stage 2.
- The appraisal of teachers is thorough. Senior leaders observe lessons systematically and regularly, and provide accurate constructive feedback to help teachers improve the quality of teaching. The headteacher and new deputy headteacher have brought a determination to this task that is already having good impact. However, a few teachers do not accept advice willingly and this impedes pupils' progress.
- The school's values are clear, strongly supported by the governing body, and well known by staff and pupils. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated and the school is committed to providing equal opportunities. However, some more-able pupils are not achieving as well as they should.
- The school's own assessment of how well it is doing is accurate and clearly identifies areas of strengths and weakness. The governing body takes an active part in this process and supports

the actions to improve pupils' progress and to raise their attainment. Improvements in the quality of teaching since the last inspection, the improved reading scores and the slow but sure upward trend in pupils' achievement in reading and mathematics indicate that these measures are working.

- School records, including average point scores, for pupils supported by government funding (pupil premium) indicate the gap in achievement between these and other pupils is closing rapidly.
 - The new creative curriculum provides a broad range of subjects and experiences. Its relevance to real life and many opportunities for pupils to find out things for themselves motivate the pupils to learn. As a result, pupils are making better progress in most subjects than previously.
 - The local authority has provided appropriate support to improve the teaching of both literacy and numeracy but this has had little impact on pupils' achievement in these areas.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - There is a relatively new governing body but the strong measures it has taken to raise standards have not yet had sufficient time to take full effect. Members of the governing body have had training and give much improved support to the school. They help the senior team write policies and the school development plan and know the schools' strengths and weaknesses. They know how the school compares with similar schools and are able to hold the school to account more effectively. They talk confidently and with understanding about the quality of teaching. They release funds wisely to appoint and promote staff and to purchase resources to improve pupils' attainment. They use safe recruiting procedures and do not permit unjustified increases in salary or promotion. Governors monitor the use of funds and give emphasis to keeping pupils safe and improving pupils' achievement. They have a detailed understanding of how the pupil premium funding is spent and how it improves the progress of this group. They meet all their statutory requirements and have good capacity to secure the required school improvements.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	125150
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	406296
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	415
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Rob Borgars
Headteacher	Helen Austin
Date of previous school inspection	1–2 December 2010
Telephone number	01932 410300
Fax number	01932 410303
Email address	info@stmary's-byfleet.surrey.sch.uk

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