

St Mary's CofE Voluntary Aided Primary School

Church Lane, Chessington, KT9 2DH

Inspection dates 26–27 February 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		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Pupils' progress has been inconsistent and at the end of Year 6 in 2011 and 2012 it was significantly below the levels seen nationally, particularly in their writing and mathematics.
- Not all teachers set high enough expectations for the pace at which pupils learn or check pupils' learning in lessons often enough so that they can adapt tasks to enable pupils to progress more quickly.
- The most able pupils' skills and understanding are not always identified and developed early enough so that they have more opportunity to achieve at the highest level by the time they leave school.
- Pupils do not get enough opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning or to improve work after it has been marked, so that they can improve upon the skills they are learning more rapidly.
- Pupils' progress in writing and mathematics is now improving at a faster pace than has been the case in recent years, but they do not have sufficient opportunities to practice these skills in all subjects to extend their learning.

The school has the following strengths

- The drive of the headteacher aided by the more recent recruitment of experienced leaders to demonstrate more effective teaching has eliminated inadequate achievement and teaching.
- Pupils' behaviour is good around the school and within lessons and the range of topics taught are more interesting and starting to encourage pupils to learn more.
- The governing body are organised and effective. As a result, governors are very clear about how the school must improve and are now more able to monitor the necessary improvements because they are well trained. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because teachers and their assistants provide well-tailored support that meets their needs.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching in 17 lessons. These included joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made a number of other short visits to lessons and listened to a number of different pupils read.
- Meetings were held with: groups of pupils, the Chair and other members of the governing body, the headteacher, members of the leadership team and other teachers. A discussion was held with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 41 responses to the Ofsted online 'Parent View' survey and the views of parents spoken to during the inspection.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents including the school's self-evaluation, the plans for improvement and policies on how the school keeps pupils safe. Minutes of governing body meetings and records relating to behavior and attendance were also examined.
- Inspectors analysed the school's checks on pupils' current progress and evaluated work in pupils' books. They also examined teachers' plans for lessons and documentation on how the leadership team monitors teaching and the performance of teachers.

Inspection team

David Howley, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Paula Protherough	Additional Inspector
Gay Tattersall	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, or who speak English as an additional language, is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children who are looked after by the local authority and children of service families) is average.
- The school meets the current floor standard, which sets the government's minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, so that all pupils make at least good progress, by ensuring that all teachers:
 - set high expectations for the pace at which pupils learn
 - regularly check learning in lessons and reshape tasks so that pupils are continually challenged and can move on to the next step in learning more quickly
 - provide time within lessons for extended tasks so that pupils have more opportunity to take responsibility for their learning
 - provide more opportunities for pupils to consolidate their understanding by enabling them to revisit and improve their work after it has been marked.
- Increase the rate at which pupils progress and raise their achievement, particularly in writing and mathematics, by:
 - increasing the opportunities for pupils to develop their communication, literacy and numeracy skills in all subjects
 - early identification of the most able pupils so that they are able to develop their skills and increase their attainment to a higher level more quickly, in order to have more opportunity to achieve at the highest level by the time they leave school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- The achievement of pupils requires improvement because since the last inspection pupils' progress has been inconsistent, despite their attainment being similar to the national average. As a result, the progress that pupils had made by the end of Year 6 in 2011 and 2012 was significantly lower than is seen nationally, given their starting points.
- This picture is changing rapidly because the drive of senior managers has resulted in the elimination of inadequate achievement. Consequently, pupils, across the school, are now making expected progress and the proportion that is making more rapid progress is increasing.
- Pupils' progress at Key Stage 2 is more rapid, especially over the past year, because the appointment of more experienced leaders and teachers has helped pupils' learning improve. Consequently, pupils presently in Year 6 are on track to make progress at least in line with that expected nationally. However this is not consistently the case through the school.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge below, and sometimes well below, those expected for their age. They make good progress because teachers and other adults understand the needs of individual children and provide them with interesting opportunities and activities that rapidly promote children's learning and social development. Consequently, they start in Year 1 with average attainment levels.
- Pupils' progress at Key Stage 1 is more inconsistent, but this good start in the nursery and reception classes is not built upon effectively because the quality of teaching varies. Consequently, pupils make slow progress by the end of Year 2, despite improvements in their attainment since the last inspection.
- The most able pupils are not always identified quickly enough before they start Year 1 so activities can be matched more closely to their abilities to ensure they achieve at the highest level.
- Pupils make better progress in reading, than they do in writing and mathematics, because they have regular opportunities to practice and improve their reading skills in a variety of ways. Similarly, well planned lessons that cover the sounds made by the different letters and groups of letters (often known as phonics) enable pupils to progress more rapidly at an earlier stage in their reading development.
- The way in which subjects are now taught, particularly in Years 3 to 6, is providing more opportunities for pupils to practice their writing and numeracy skills in interesting and practical ways, for example pupils enjoyed learning about angles in their topic work on ancient Greeks. However, pupils do not make good progress in these basic skills as they are not practised often enough in a wider range of subjects.
- The attainment of pupils eligible for support through pupil premium funding is below that of other pupils by the end of Year 6. Increasingly better use of this funding is closing the gap rapidly by providing support that meets the different needs of individual pupils. As a result, eligible pupils make better progress across the school, and those presently in Year 6 are on track to attain at the normal level expected for all pupils nationally.
- Similarly, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs also make good progress because teachers and teachers' assistants set high expectations and are skilled in providing well-tailored support that meets the needs of individual pupils.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Despite a number of improvements in the quality of teaching since the last inspection, teaching requires improvement because not all teachers consistently set high enough expectations for the pace at which pupils learn. Consequently, there are inconsistencies in teaching that prevent pupils from making faster and sustained progress.
- Teachers use the assessment information they have on pupils to set different tasks for pupils of

different ability. However, the pace of learning is too slow when teachers give too much time to the completion of tasks that do not challenge pupils' thinking or work rate enough.

- Similarly, pupils do not have enough opportunities in lessons to experiment with their own ideas because teachers spend too much time on explanations. As a result, teachers do not check pupils' thinking often enough in order to reshape tasks so that pupils are able to learn more rapidly through having more responsibility for their own learning.
- Where teaching is more effective, it is because thoroughly planned lessons ensure that pupils are involved in a variety of interesting activities that set high expectations for the pace at which they learn. Similarly, teachers are more probing in gauging pupils' learning so that they can provide more opportunities for pupils to include their own ideas, in order to deepen pupils' understanding. Regular marking by teachers informs pupils on how to improve their work. However, pupils are not given enough opportunities to improve or refine a piece of work once it has been marked, in order to improve their learning more rapidly.
- The new range of subjects taught (often called the curriculum) makes learning more exciting because pupils are beginning to learn more through interesting topics and special events, such as the engineering challenge for more able pupils. Similarly, information and communication technology is used effectively to promote a sense of discovery that is encouraging pupils to write more creatively, though this is not the case in all subjects.
- All pupils feel included because their learning benefits from a wide range of creative and practical activities that develop their confidence and self-esteem, especially through the excellent sports coaching that they receive. In the same way, the regular use of an excellent drama coach enables pupils to learn how to express their feelings and ideas and sets an excellent example for how other subjects can encourage pupils to improve their writing. As one pupil said, 'I can really see and feel what I want to write about after I have done drama'.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are polite and courteous and behave well in lessons, in the playground and around the school. They say it is a happy school because teachers and other adults are always there to help them.
- Pupils have a good understanding and a high regard for the school's expectations for their behaviour. They say that behaviour in lessons is good because all teachers encourage them to learn and are consistent in how they deal with any infrequent misbehaviour. Teachers do not always make the best use of pupils' good behaviour by giving them more independent responsibility for their own learning.
- Pupils feel safe in school and confidently say that there is no bullying. They have a good understanding of different types of bullying, such as 'picking on others' and cyber bullying. They know how to manage risks and how to stay safe when using the internet, because they learn about different risks in a variety of ways. Pupils spoke with great enthusiasm about learning about fire risk through an activities day at the local leisure park, which simulated real life experiences.
- Pupils have a good understanding of other cultures and religions and how to be good citizens because pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural is strongly promoted through lessons, assemblies and charity fund raising events. This ensures there are happy and harmonious relationships within the school.
- All of the parents that responded to Ofsted's 'Parent view' questionnaire, indicated that they believe their child is safe and the school makes sure that pupils are well behaved.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher's determination to improve is shared by senior leaders, governors and the staff. The astute appointment of experienced leaders and teachers has eradicated inadequate teaching and underachievement, and remedied the lack of permanent leadership, noted at the

time of the last inspection. This stability and clear vision has contributed to more recent improvements in teaching and pupils' progress and ensured the school's capacity to improve.

- The regular and systematic monitoring of lessons has eliminated inadequate teaching and has increased the proportion of good teaching, although not consistently enough across the school. Senior leaders recognise there is a need to go still further in improving less effective teaching, and are making use of more experienced colleagues to demonstrate good practice to others.
- The leaders of English and mathematics are effective in leading initiatives that are improving the quality of teaching and pupils' learning in their area of responsibility, although they recognise there is still some way to go to make teaching consistently good. Teachers accurately assess pupils' learning and the challenging targets set for their progress are leading to most pupils making better progress.
- The more recent appointment of a highly experienced deputy headteacher has led to the revision of programmes that support pupils with special educational needs and those eligible for pupil premium funding. As a result, these pupils' attainment is rising more rapidly and this reflects the school's commitment to promoting equal opportunities.
- The school communicates effectively with parents and regularly provides workshops and other opportunities to involve parents in their child's learning. All parents that responded to Ofsted's 'Parent View' questionnaire indicated that they believe their child is taught well and the parents that talked to inspectors could not speak too highly about the school.
- The local authority is determined that the school should improve by supporting the drive of senior leaders and has provided specific support, for example in helping to develop teachers' skills in the teaching of English.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is increasingly aware of the school needing to improve rapidly and they have increased their evaluation on how well pupils make progress and how teaching is impacting on pupils' learning. Regular training has helped them to become aware of how to challenge the school further and their well-organised action plans are leading them to be more demanding in terms of moving the school's effectiveness to good or better. They ensure that performance management procedures are well-established and that teachers progression through pay scales relate to levels of responsibility and performance in the classroom. They have been particularly effective in ensuring that those pupils eligible for pupil premium funding achieve well, that levels of pupils' behaviour and safety are good and that links with parents are very positive. The governing body ensures all statutory requirements are implemented to a high level.

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	102593
Local authority	Royal Borough of Kingston]
Inspection number	400559

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	271
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jenny Ward
Headteacher	Linda Rainbow
Date of previous school inspection	14-15 January 2010
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