

# St Mary's CofE Foundation Primary School

Hampton Road, Stansted, Essex, CM24 8FE

**Inspection dates** 22–23 April 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The headteacher, senior leaders and governors have brought about significant improvements since the previous inspection. They have ensured that the quality of teaching and pupils' academic progress have all improved.
- Pupils throughout the school are making good progress. They achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. The school provides effective support to disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, which helps them make good progress.
- The reorganised governing body is effective in the strategic management of the school. Governors support the school's work well and offer a good level of challenge to keep the school on track to continue to improve quickly.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers know pupils well and manage their behaviour competently. Teachers provide a range of tasks that promote pupils' engagement and, ably supported by teaching assistants, ensure pupils achieve well.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a key feature of school life and ensures the school is a happy and well-ordered place.
- Pupils like their teachers and behave well. They rightly feel safe, cared for and valued.
- Children settle into the early years quickly. Good leadership and management, securely good teaching and a rich learning environment mean children enjoy learning and make good progress. Staff maintain a warm caring ethos where children feel safe and confident.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always give the most-able pupils hard enough work so they do not always make the most rapid progress they could.
- The marking of pupils' written work by teachers is not always good enough to help pupils to improve their work.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors, together with senior leaders on occasions, observed pupils in all year groups engaged in a range of activities in different subjects. They looked at pupils' written work in all years and checked the records of children's learning in the early years.
- The inspection team held meetings with the headteacher, other school leaders, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors. Inspectors spoke to a representative of the local authority and the school's improvement partner.
- Inspectors spoke to two groups of pupils and, informally, with other pupils in lessons and around the school. An inspector listened to pupils reading and spoke to them about their reading habits.
- Inspectors examined several school documents. These included the school's evaluation of its performance and its improvement plan, notes of governors' meetings, information about pupils' progress and attainment, evidence about the quality of teaching, and records relating to behaviour, safeguarding and attendance.
- Inspectors took account of the 51 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and the views expressed informally by parents as they arrived at school and in one letter and an email. The team analysed 20 questionnaires returned by staff.

## Inspection team

James McVeigh, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Victoria Turner	Additional Inspector
Carol Eyley	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school. It has two full-time Reception classes and nine classes for other years. There are three classes for combined years, namely Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6. The remaining six classes comprise one class for each year from Year 1 to Year 6.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (extra government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or children who are looked after by the local authority) is just below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is around the national average.
- There is a breakfast and after-school club, run by an external provider, which is inspected separately.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

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

- Improve teaching and raise standards by:
  - ensuring all teachers apply the school's agreed marking policy and that marking is effective in promoting pupils' learning by providing clear guidance on what pupils need to do to improve
  - having consistently high expectations of what the most-able pupils can achieve by always setting them challenging activities to tackle.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- School leaders and governors share the ambition to develop the school into an outstanding institution. They have high expectations of staff and pupils, and a determination to build on the rapid improvements made since the previous inspection.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. It is central to the school's work and permeates all aspects of school life. Pupils have many opportunities to reflect on the school's values, based on mutual care, respect and consideration for others. They are well prepared to be responsible citizens in modern Britain. School leaders have ensured that the ethos of the school effectively promotes good behaviour and a positive attitude to learning.
- Senior leaders have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses and plan effectively to make sure pupils achievement rises. The monitoring of teachers' performance is regular and rigorous. Leaders have tackled underperformance swiftly, and well-focused training and coaching have raised the quality of teaching. As a result, pupils across the school are making more rapid progress.
- The role of subject leaders, in improving the quality of teaching in their areas of responsibility, has been given much higher status. Enthusiastic and determined subject leaders are well supported to develop their leadership skills. They are closely involved in training and coaching, checking teachers' performance and pupils' progress. They are held accountable for the development of their subjects and for how well pupils perform. In the early years, reorganisation in leadership and improved teaching have ensured that provision is much better since the previous inspection.
- Teachers benefit from additional coaching and advice about improving their practice, including effective support from the school's improvement partner. They also learn from each other, for example, sharing improved skills, such as raising the quality of pupils' writing, developed from visits to other schools or training. Training and in-school mentoring provide good support to enhance the skills of newly qualified teachers.
- As well as an appropriate focus on literacy and mathematics, the school offers a suitably wide range of subjects, organised in ways that appeal to pupils and match their interests. For example, a recent topic, taking advantage of a local focus on the Magna Carta, combined elements from several subjects. Pupils were enthused and made good steps in learning about history, geography, art, computing and literacy. Further enhancement of pupils' experiences come from a good range of school trips, for example, to the zoo and museums, and from clubs.
- Leaders do not tolerate discrimination of any kind and ensure equality of opportunity for all. They carefully check how effectively pupil premium funding is spent so that it benefits the learning of disadvantaged pupils. Consequently, these pupils are catching up with their classmates in all subject areas.
- The school uses the primary sports funding effectively to provide more opportunities for pupils to develop their sporting expertise and take part in more events that are competitive. The school uses a specialist physical education teacher to coach pupils and to train and support teachers. A wider range of sports clubs is available to pupils, including less traditional ones, such as for golf, dancing and gymnastics. More pupils are now taking part in vigorous physical activity regularly.
- Senior leaders and governors make sure pupils are safe. Staff have received the appropriate safeguarding training and are familiar with the relevant school policies, for example, how to spot and report any concerns about pupils' welfare. The headteacher, as the designated safeguarding lead, is proactive in dealing with potential safeguarding issues. For example, attendance is monitored closely and all pupil absences are followed up.
- The school engages with parents regularly. Parents report that teachers are readily approachable and helpful. Parents receive regular newsletters about the work their children are doing and advice about helping them at home from the school's website and workshops in school. For example, parents said the

workshop on phonics (the sounds letters represent) followed by an observation of a teacher in action in a phonics session was very helpful.

- The local authority provides a good external view of the school's work. It has acted promptly to work with the school more closely since the previous inspection. This included working in partnership with governors and the headteacher to streamline leadership and management, in order to focus on the key areas to bring about improvement.

#### ■ The governance of the school:

- Following the previous inspection, the governing body moved quickly to reorganise itself and enlist governors with the necessary skills to make sure it was fully effective in moving the school forwards. Governors work as an effective team to gather and analyse information about school performance and ensure it has a clear direction for improvement. They focus on improving their own strategic management, the quality of teaching and leadership at all levels. They have set ambitious but realistic targets for school improvement.
- Governors have accurate information about how well the school is doing in all areas, gathered from reports and presentations from school leaders but also through their own well-planned visits. They know how different groups of pupils are progressing in different subjects and how this is related to the quality of teaching and the use of the pupil premium. Governors oversee the way the school manages teachers' performance, and ensure good teaching is appropriately rewarded and underperformance is challenged promptly. Governors work closely with the school's improvement partner to set challenging targets for the headteacher to meet.
- Governors manage the school's finances well and make sure they carry out all of their duties, including regularly checking the quality of safeguarding procedures. They ensure that statutory requirements for safeguarding are met.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

#### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are proud of their school and maintain a smart appearance in their school uniforms. They eagerly take on extra responsibilities, such as class or assembly monitor, school parliament representative and house captain. Classes are keen to win the 'Golden Dustpan' award for the tidiest class at the end of the day.
- Pupils conduct themselves well. They like coming to school and enjoy learning. They know the behaviour rules and are keen to earn enough house points for certificates and badges that show they have behaved well.
- Around the school, pupils are generally polite and courteous. At playtimes, pupils play happily together and there is little play that is too boisterous. In lessons, they follow instructions promptly and settle to work quickly. Occasionally, when activities in class are not motivating enough, enthusiasm can wane for a few pupils and the quality of their work, including its presentation, can deteriorate a little.
- There have been no exclusions in recent years and no serious incidents of bullying or racism. Minor misdemeanours are recorded and are at a low level.

#### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. School leaders ensure that health and safety procedures are followed closely, such as regular emergency evacuation practice, and that there is adequate supervision of all areas where pupils work or play.
- Pupils feel safe at school and know that adults around them value and care for them. They have learned how to stay safe in different situations, such as crossing the road or using the internet. They know the importance of eating healthily and exercising regularly.
- Pupils are aware of the different forms of bullying and report that there is little bullying at school. They

have confidence that their teachers will sort out any incidents quickly.

- Staff check attendance thoroughly and the school's systems to promote regular attendance are effective. The school monitors attendance patterns well and works with families and pupils, for example, by investigating the reasons why a pupil may be reluctant to come to school. Consequently, attendance is above average.

## The quality of teaching

is good

- The quality of teaching has improved and is typically good. Teaching has become more effective in promoting better progress in pupils' reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and teach confidently. Activities are usually interesting and engage pupils well. They often question pupils skilfully, matching questions to pupils' age and ability. This makes pupils think hard and successfully encourages them to answer in detail.
- Teachers manage their classes well. They have established good relationships with pupils and ensure good environments for learning in their classrooms.
- Teachers explain what they want pupils to learn clearly and usually outline the steps pupils need to take to be successful. For example, pupils in Year 3 checked their letter of complaint from the barons to King John to ensure they had given reasons why the barons were angry. They used adventurous adjectives to describe anger and disappointment. Teachers often demonstrate to pupils just what they expect them to do, so they have a clear grasp of the task and make rapid progress.
- Teachers explain how to use phonics well. Pupils blend the sounds of letters correctly to pronounce new words. In guided reading sessions, where they read books or newspapers with their teacher, pupils show good comprehension of the text. Teachers successfully encourage pupils to read regularly to develop their competence in reading, through such things as 'Book Day', reading competitions and authors visiting the school. There are plenty of comfortable and enticing areas for reading around the school.
- Teachers provide many opportunities in all years for pupils to develop their writing skills in a wide range of styles. Training for teachers has ensured that there is a consistent approach throughout the school so that pupils' achievement in writing, which was weaker than in mathematics and reading, is improving rapidly.
- As well as regular lessons in mathematics and good opportunities to use mathematics in other subjects, teachers provide mentoring and booster sessions in mathematics for pupils who need them. Pupils' progress in mathematics is improving and they are reaching high standards.
- Assessment of pupils' work is regular so that teachers know if any pupils are slipping behind. Teachers use pupils' results to plan effective learning activities. The accuracy of teachers' assessments is checked regularly by the local authority, by colleagues within this school and with other local schools.
- School leaders ensure that extra help for disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is effective in promoting more rapid progress. They deploy teaching assistants so they offer effective support to pupils, in lessons and in small-group or one-to-one sessions.
- Teachers generally give pupils work that is challenging but manageable. However, occasionally they give the most-able pupils work that is too easy, so their progress slows.
- There are examples of high quality marking by teachers, and they mark pupils' written work regularly. Although teachers usually point out mistakes in pupils' work, they do not always offer clear guidance on how pupils can improve their work. This means that some pupils do not always make as rapid progress as they could.

**The achievement of pupils** is good

- There has been a rising trend in pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2. In 2014, pupils in Year 6 made good progress, particularly in writing and, by the time they left school, had reached broadly average standards in all three subjects. Currently, from work seen in pupils' books and records their achievement, pupils are making even better progress in reading, writing and mathematics and will reach higher standards still.
- The cohort who completed Key Stage 1 in 2014 had a particularly high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and less able pupils. They began the key stage with notably lower standards than average in reading, writing and mathematics. School leaders took decisive action to provide effective extra support and the group made more rapid progress but did not reach average standards by the end of Year 2. The attainment of pupils currently in Year 2 is in line to be average by the end of the year.
- The school continues to provide this group of pupils, now in Year 3, with extra help and they are making better progress than other year groups as a consequence. The gap between where they are and where they should be is narrowing.
- Pupils' develop good reading skills. They make good progress in phonics due to skilled teaching. Year 1 pupils' results in the national phonics check improved in 2014 and an average proportion reached the expected level. Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to read and improve their competence in reading and their comprehension. They effectively encourage parents to listen to their children reading at home.
- Pupils in other year groups are generally making good progress in all subjects. Through well-directed extra support, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are making similar progress to their classmates.
- Disadvantaged pupils generally make good progress. The school supports them well with such things as extra help from trained staff, and enabling them to take advantage of clubs and trips. As a result, they make progress at least as good as that of their classmates, and sometimes do better. They achieve similar standards to others in the school and nationally. There were too few disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 in 2015 to report their results in detail without the risk of identifying individuals.
- The most-able pupils are generally attaining high standards in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2014, the most-able pupils reached higher standards in mathematics than pupils did nationally. More Year 6 pupils attained Level 5 or above in mathematics than in most schools and a similar proportion attained these high levels in reading and writing. School records and work seen in books indicate that more pupils than average will attain Level 3 or above at the end of Key Stage 1. However, the progress made by the most-able pupils is not always as good as it could be as they sometimes have activities set for them that are too easy.

**The early years provision** is good

- Provision in the early years has improved rapidly in the last two years. Good leadership and management, together with effective teaching in all areas of learning, have ensured that children, including those who are disabled pupils or who have special educational, needs make good and sustained progress. Established and robust systems drive improvement and raise children's achievement. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development has increased and is now slightly above average. Staff in Reception prepare children well for Key Stage 1.
- Most children start Reception with skills which are typical for their age. Staff use their good knowledge of early years teaching to provide a wide range of rich learning opportunities that interest and engage children. A group of children in the 'space station', a dramatic and exciting area decked out as a rocket ship, acted as members of the space crew as they began to dress in silver space suits. In their role-play, they developed their speaking, language and social skills well.

- Staff teach phonics really well. Adults accurately model how the different sounds are made and link phonics work closely to writing activities. Children acquire a thorough knowledge of sounds and letters and develop their skills in reading and writing well. The improvement in children's handwriting is rapid. As well as regular teacher-led activities involving numbers, adults take every opportunity to encourage children to think about numbers and simple calculations in the games and activities they select for themselves, so that children develop their understanding of numbers well.
- The inside and outside areas of the environment in the early years are richly resourced and have a wide range of stimulating activities available for children in all areas of learning. Some activities very successfully support children's growing knowledge of the world, such as growing seedlings and looking after hens. Children explained enthusiastically that hens lay eggs, which have chickens in them.
- Staff ensure that children are safe and looked after them very well. Typically, children's behaviour is outstanding. They have good attitudes to learning and show enthusiasm and sustain their concentration well. They quickly learn to do things for themselves and take pride in their work and environment. Following an instruction to clean and put away white boards, one child, unbidden, said insistently to the rest of the class 'make sure you clean the boards really well'. Children quickly reorganised themselves for the next activity with little fuss or intervention from adults.
- There are effective systems to observe and record children's development. Subsequent planning to meet children's learning needs is thorough and effective. The department works closely with parents, who contribute to their own children's learning records. This successfully encourages their close involvement in their children's learning. Highly effective transition arrangements mean children are well prepared to begin school and to move into Year 1 at the end of Reception. Initial home visits and 'stay and play' sessions help children settle into school and they meet their future Year 1 teacher in their last Reception term for story time.



## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	115269
<b>Inspection number</b>	462130

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	268
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Alan Corbishley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Christine Tonkins
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 November 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	01279 812212
<b>Fax number</b>	01279 815958
<b>Email address</b>	admin@st-marys-stansted.essex.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted)

. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone [0300 123 4234](tel:03001234234), or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and *inspects* to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone [0300 123 4234](tel:03001234234), or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)  
[Store St](#)  
[Manchester](#)  
[M1 2WD](#)

T: [0300 123 4234](tel:03001234234)  
Textphone: [0161 618 8524](tel:01616188524)  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2015

