



# St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 124780  
**LEA** SUFFOLK LEA  
**Inspection number** 281802  
**Inspection dates** 19 January 2006 to 20 January 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mr. Godfrey Bancroft LI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Kirkley
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		NR33 0DG
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01502565384
<b>Number on roll</b>	200	<b>Fax number</b>	01502585807
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs. Janet Brooks
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 November 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs. I Barker

<b>Age group</b> 4 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 19 January 2006 - 20 January 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 281802
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

St Mary's Roman Catholic primary school is of average size, with children coming from a wide area. It is in an area of some social and economic disadvantage. The percentage of children eligible for free school meals is below average. Attainment on entry is average, as is the percentage of children with learning difficulties or disabilities. The percentage of children from minority ethnic backgrounds is low. A small number of children speak English as an additional language.

## **Key for inspection grades**

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

This is a very good school in which children are valued and learn with great enthusiasm. Inspectors agree with the school's self-evaluation that it performs well. Parents, carers and children think the school is very good. Children from all backgrounds and of all abilities achieve well. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress and the provision for their learning is good. Standards in the present Year 6 are well above average. The quality of teaching and learning is good. The school cares for all children very well. Children who have learning difficulties or disabilities and the small number who speak English as an additional language are supported very well by teachers and teaching assistants. The curriculum is good and there is a good range of additional activities to enhance children's learning. The leadership of the headteacher and other staff with management responsibilities is good. Governors are very supportive and positive about the school. However, the governing body has recently been re-constituted and new governors are not yet sufficiently involved in the management of the school. Even so, the issues raised at the time of the last inspection have been addressed successfully. Improvement has been good and the school is well placed to improve in the future. The school provides good value for money.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure that all recently appointed governors are involved fully in planning for future developments, managing the school's resources and evaluating the quality of provision.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Overall, children from all abilities and backgrounds, including those who have learning difficulties or disabilities, achieve well. Children who speak English as an additional language also achieve well. Children in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 achieve well and make good progress. By the end of Year 2 standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above average. Over recent years standards at the end of Year 6, in English, mathematics and science have been above average. This is because, in Years 3 to 6, children continue to make steady progress, achieving satisfactorily. In 2005 standards in mathematics, although average, were not as good as in previous years. The school has addressed this issue effectively by teaching the subject to groups of children of similar ability. This approach is meeting children's needs successfully and standards have improved to their previous high level. The inspection evidence shows that the children currently in Year 6 are on course to attain standards that are well above average. The school's targets for attainment over the next two years indicate that high standards are likely to be maintained. Children also attain high standards in some other subjects, such as history. Standards have improved in information and communication technology (ICT) since the last inspection when they were not high enough. They are now in line with the nationally expected levels and children achieve well.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

The school accurately maintains that the personal development and well-being of the children is one of its strengths. A distinctive feature of the school is the children's outstanding enjoyment of learning. Their very mature attitudes, excellent behaviour, good attendance and clear focus on learning contribute significantly to their good achievement. Children have an excellent understanding of the importance of keeping healthy and safe. For example, Year 6's 'Crucial Crew' exercise clearly raised awareness of everyday dangers and resulted in a request for all staff and visitors to wear identity badges in school. Children make an outstanding contribution to school life and the community. They participate very well through the school council and the older children assist the younger ones on school buses and at break times. This helps to build their confidence and sense of responsibility. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has remained very good. Children have a very strong sense of right and wrong and are fully aware of procedures to follow in the very rare event of a dispute. They are very polite, open and honest and very proud of their school. Their involvement in a wide range of after-school activities, particularly sports, gives them opportunities to learn and play together, which they do very well. Children's developing computer skills help them to understand the relevance of technology to their future economic well-being. Their development is enriched by the way the school celebrates ethnic diversity and by innovative ways of helping children to appreciate other beliefs and cultures.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good. Relationships between teachers and teaching assistants are very good and help the children to become increasingly confident learners. Children have a good rapport with adults and say that their teachers are always ready to help them if ever they get stuck. Teachers plan their lessons well, ensuring that activities are matched well to the full range of abilities in each class. Teaching assistants make a very effective contribution to children's learning. This applies particularly to the support they provide for children who have special learning needs and for those who speak English as an additional language. The teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy is good. Teachers in the Foundation Stage encourage the development of early speaking and listening skills successfully. This aspect of learning is extended effectively with older children. Teachers provide good opportunities for children to discuss their work and answer thought-provoking questions. They enable them to develop their writing skills by providing good support and guidance that match children's learning needs well. The school makes good use of teachers' specialist expertise to teach subjects such as history, music and science.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The school plans a wide range of enjoyable and relevant activities which help the children learn together very well. Good personal, social and health education programmes help the children to feel safe and secure. Careful planning for literacy and numeracy ensures that the needs of all children are met, enabling them to achieve well. The planning for art and history has been improved since the last inspection and is now good. Improvements have also been made in ICT and computers are used effectively to support learning in other subjects. Children's enjoyment and learning in music are enhanced by the expertise and enthusiasm of a specialist teacher who works with all classes. The older children also learn Latin and French. The school makes good use of visits and visitors to enrich the children's learning and it provides a wide range of popular out-of-school clubs. The teaching of sports is greatly enhanced through the school's close links with the nearby sports college.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school provides a good level of care in an environment where the principles and teachings of the Church are firmly upheld. Great care is taken to ensure the school remains a safe, happy and secure place. Child protection procedures are clearly understood and meet requirements. Very good support is given to children who have learning difficulties or disabilities and the small number who learn English as an additional language. Staff are not afraid to try new ideas to help pupils. For example, some children have additional lessons in physical education, designed to improve their concentration. These lessons are popular and effective. Parents and carers confirm that the very good induction procedures for children starting in reception help them to settle quickly and happily. Arrangements at lunchtimes ensure that children are secure and involved in interesting and enjoyable activities. All staff support children's personal and academic development well. Children are given good encouragement to work hard. They have a good knowledge of their literacy and numeracy targets. These targets, and the very thorough marking of work, ensure that children know how to improve.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides clear direction and promotes an environment in which adults and children feel valued and are able to give of their best. She is supported very well by the deputy headteacher and other members of staff, who have special responsibilities. Teachers who are responsible for subjects have improved their roles well since the last inspection. They give good leadership and support their colleagues effectively. The school is well placed to make future improvements. It has a good improvement plan, which lays out clearly what improvements are intended and the criteria by which they will be evaluated. The

governing body is supportive and very positive about the school. However, it has only recently been re-constituted and some of the newer governors are not yet sufficiently involved in planning for future developments, managing the school's resources and evaluating the quality of provision. The school's good self-evaluation procedures are used effectively. Parents, carers and members of the community are regularly consulted and they make a valuable contribution to the life of the school by helping in classrooms, accompanying educational visits and fund-raising. Responses to the parents' questionnaires were overwhelmingly positive.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

### **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for helping us during the inspection. I think that your school is very good. I know that you and many of your parents, carers and members of your community think so too. Your behaviour is very good and you are very good at caring for and helping each other. I like the ways in which you all work hard in lessons and try to do your best. You answer questions thoughtfully and are helpful to your teachers. Your teachers and teaching assistants are good at helping you to do well and at taking care of you and making sure you are safe. They also help you to grow into mature and independent young people. Your headteacher is good at making sure that everything works well. There is just one thing that your headteacher and governors will be doing to make things even better. They are going to make sure that all the recently appointed governors are involved fully in everything they need to do to make sure the school continues to work well. Well done.