

# St Mary's Catholic Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101048
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wandsworth
<b>Inspection number</b>	285956
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 September 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Norma Ball

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	199
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Miss D Hass
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr M Lobo
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 June 2005
<b>School address</b>	Lockington Road Battersea London SW8 4BE
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7622 5460
<b>Fax number</b>	020 7622 4922

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<b>Age group</b>	5–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is of average size and serves a disadvantaged area of Wandsworth. Pupils come from a very wide range of ethnic backgrounds, and a high proportion has English as an additional language. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is about average and the proportion with a statement of educational need is low. A significant number of pupils join or leave the school at different times. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is very high. The school was identified as having serious weaknesses in June 2005. The school has experienced a long period of instability, especially at senior staff level and the new headteacher was appointed at the start of the academic year.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. All pupils are valued in a happy family community. Parents are very positive in their praise and one said 'I like this school because my child makes progress'. As a result of the good pastoral care pupils enjoy school, most behave well in lessons and at play and their personal development is sound. They show respect to others and acquire good social skills. Pupils who arrive at different times in the year are warmly welcomed and settle quickly.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children enter the school with skills that are well below those found nationally. English is not the first language of the majority and therefore English language skills are often poor. Support for these pupils is carefully planned and they make good progress. Pupils make satisfactory progress through the school from standards that are well below average on arrival to below average by the end of Year 6. Higher attaining pupils do not reach the levels they should. Progress made between Year 2 and Year 6 is satisfactory. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make satisfactory progress.

Teaching and learning and the curriculum are satisfactory. Teachers encourage pupils to work well independently and in groups. However, they do not sufficiently challenge pupils of different abilities, and especially those who are more able. Work set for groups fails to stretch all pupils sufficiently and marking of work does not succinctly identify how work can be improved. Relationships are positive and teachers have created good learning climates in classes. Literacy and numeracy skills are not yet fully integrated into all subjects and information and communication technology (ICT) makes a limited contribution in lessons. The curriculum is enriched by visits out of school and a good range of activities.

The pastoral care given to pupils is a strong feature of the school and as a result they feel safe and well cared for. Academic guidance is less strong and the school has made this a key area for development. Analysis of class and whole school data is used increasingly but it lacks rigour to detect and focus on underachievement quickly.

Leadership and management is satisfactory overall. A new headteacher and Chair of Governors are enthusiastic about their roles and are dedicated to raising the standards achieved by pupils. The issues identified in the previous report have been addressed but the roles and responsibilities of middle managers are underdeveloped and require strengthening. High levels of pupils' mobility and a falling roll still provide challenge for the school. However, there is now a more stable staffing structure and the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Provision in the Foundation stage is good. Children typically start school with skills and abilities much lower than those normally expected of four year olds. They make good progress in Foundation Stage but few reach the expected levels for their age by the time they move to Year 1, because most start with impoverished English language and social skills. Good emphasis is given to improving language and communication so children develop confidence in expressing themselves clearly. A good range of activities engages children well. They enjoy school and play happily together. Teachers' planning and assessment take account of children's individual needs and all the areas of learning are adequately covered. Good procedures are in place to ensure that care and welfare have a high priority.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Raise expectations of what pupils can achieve and ensure there is sufficient challenge in lessons for all pupils, especially the more able.
- Improve the quality of marking and assessment, so that pupils always receive clear guidance on the next steps in their learning and what they can do to achieve them.
- Strengthen the role of middle leaders.

The school's previous designation as having serious weaknesses no longer applies.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

All groups of pupils achieve soundly in their time at the school. Inspection evidence confirms a good foundation is laid in Reception and pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2. Standards by the end of Year 2 have improved and are broadly average. This improvement is beginning to be apparent in Years 3 to 6 but as yet, standards at the end of Year 6 remain below average. Good support is given to pupils for whom English is not their first language and they make good progress. Standards in English have shown recent improvement as new initiatives to help pupils sound out their words and improve vocabulary have been integrated into classes. Standards are also influenced by a significant number of pupils who leave and join the school during the year - those who are there for a reasonable period of time achieve well and make good progress. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities achieve at the same rate as other pupils.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 3

Pupils enjoy school, work well together and they say that their teachers are great. Attendance has improved and is now good. Pupils are carefully encouraged to be polite, behave well and show concern for others. Some lack confidence but recent initiatives such the Pyramid Club are helping to develop greater self-esteem. Pupils have a sound understanding of the value of a healthy lifestyle and being safe. Through the School Council, pupils have a say in what happens in their school. All pupils carry out responsibilities with pride and want to contribute to their school community. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is mostly good although sometimes a few pupils can behave inappropriately. Overall, personal development is satisfactory, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Pupils respect the faiths and lifestyles of others and Catholic values are reinforced well. They make a sound contribution to the wider community especially through their enthusiastic fund-raising for charities.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Relationships at every level are good and a good learning ethos exists in most classes. Pupils show good enjoyment in lessons, they like working independently and are encouraged well in this. Use of ICT is developing in the school but is not yet sufficiently integrated into lessons. In most lessons, teaching is carefully planned based on improving use of the assessment of pupil's progress. The purpose of lessons is explained and activities are structured for different ability group. However, the work planned for groups is not finely tuned to make it sufficiently

challenging for all pupils and especially higher attainers. Learning support assistants work effectively in partnership with class teachers, ensuring that pupils with learning difficulties or English as an additional language are fully involved in their lessons.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum overall is satisfactory and has improved since the last inspection. All statutory subjects are now covered. A large amount of time is given to teaching the core subjects of English and mathematics. Opportunities to integrate literacy and numeracy skills into other subjects are often missed and links between subjects are underdeveloped. The curriculum is supported by several clubs, of which football club is particularly well attended. One boy said, 'I really love football at school, I don't get much chance to play where I live'. There is strong enrichment of the curriculum with good use being made of London's abundance of galleries and museums. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities have access to all activities and are well supported to take advantage of them. The school develops pupils' awareness of the world beyond school well and prepares them soundly for their future lives.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

The pastoral care provided for all pupils is good. Staff show a strong commitment to their support and care. Pupils are confident to seek help when they have problems knowing they will be listened to. Procedures for child protection and health and safety have been carefully revised and are well managed. Induction of new pupils is well organised and their needs are assessed carefully at whatever stage they enter the school. An extensive range of outside agencies is well used to extend the support provided in school. Marking is not always used by teachers to highlight how pupils can improve their work and are not as carefully guided to improve their work as they could be. Not all pupils have individual targets and not all group targets are precise enough to be of maximum benefit. Guidance for pupils with learning difficulties and English as an additional language is efficiently organised and monitored.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Staff are pleased that they now have a permanent school leader. The school has been well supported by the local authority, everyone is clear about school priorities and they work well together to address these. Performance management is used effectively and linked to good professional development. Reliable data is collected and is gradually being used to identify where improvements in pupils' progress are needed. Increased accountability and responsibility for key stage and subject co-ordinators is recognised as a priority to strengthen management. The governing body carry out a satisfactory role in both supporting and challenging the school.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

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

2 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Mary's Catholic Primary School, London, SW8 4BE

Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. We know you like your school very much and enjoyed letting us see your work. You did such a lot to make the two days run smoothly.

We liked your school because it is a happy place. You get on well with each other and like your teachers. Your teachers work hard to make your lessons interesting and you try to do your best work. You told us that adults are always there to help you when you need advice and we thought that your school was a caring place to be.

We particularly liked how much you enjoyed your lessons and we were very impressed with the many places you visit and all the visitors who come to your school. You do a lot to help improve your school community, especially through the work of the School Council, and we know that the older pupils are doing a very good job as monitors and helpers. We also think that children make a good start on their learning in Reception and those of you who do not speak English as your first language are helped a lot to develop your language skills.

There are some things that we think would make your school an even better place to be. We have asked your teachers to make sure that they give you really interesting work in lessons that makes you think hard. We have also asked them to help you understand how you can do even better work so that you all make good progress. You have a new headteacher and he gets lots of help from the staff and the Governors. Really important changes are planned to make your school even better for you. You can all help by continuing to work hard and doing the very best you can.

Yours sincerely,

Norma Ball  
Lead Inspector