

St Mary Magdalene CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101135
Local Authority	Westminster
Inspection number	285981
Inspection dates	14–15 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Madeleine Gerard

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	222
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms J Allen
Headteacher	Mrs D Paramore
Date of previous school inspection	5 November 2001
School address	Rowington Close Warwick Estate Paddington London W2 5TF
Telephone number	020 7641 4388
Fax number	020 7641 4327

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average size primary school with a Nursery. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average. Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds and the number of pupils speaking English as an additional language is well above the national average. The school serves an area of social disadvantage and the number of pupils eligible for free school meals is high. The school has achieved the Gold Artsmark award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

St Mary Magdalene Church of England Primary School provides a satisfactory standard of education. Improvements have been made over the past two years following the appointment of the current headteacher. Achievement is satisfactory and standards are broadly average by the end of Year 6 as a result of the extra help pupils receive, particularly in Year 6. Attainment in English is better than in mathematics and science because teaching is lively and active and pupils have opportunities to talk about their work in pairs. In other lessons tasks are not always well planned to hold their interest. Pupils are accurately assessed but teachers do not always use this information well to meet individual needs in all lessons. Consequently, some more able pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Pupils are not always involved in understanding how well they have done and what they need to do to improve. Most children start school with low levels of skill, knowledge and understanding for their age. The quality of provision in Nursery and Reception is satisfactory and prioritises opportunities for independent learning which help pupils develop their social skills. As a result, children make satisfactory progress in these classes.

A strength of the school is pupils' personal and social development and well-being which are good. Pupils behave well in lessons and about the school. They enjoy coming to school. They know how to keep safe and healthy and they make a good contribution to school life and to the life of the local and wider communities. They are enthusiastic to raise funds for charity and they speak with pride about some of the changes the school has made in response to their suggestions. They leave school with average standards in basic skills and are able to work well with others.

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The school has a sound understanding of its strengths and weaknesses and has identified the need to raise achievement and improve the consistency in teaching. The headteacher recognises the need to extend expertise in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning to her subject coordinators. However, priorities for action which stem from the process of self-evaluation do not always focus on the most significant issues. The headteacher has worked hard to engage the support of the parents and many say they are confident that their children are safe and well cared for. Parents are supportive of the school. They, along with pupils, staff and governors confirm and appreciate the positive changes taking place such as the improvements in behaviour and changes to the school playground. The governing body has a sound knowledge of the school's strengths and challenges. Hence, the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that more able pupils are set challenging work in mathematics and science and check that they make good progress.
- Use assessment information more effectively to track the progress that all groups of children make in each class so that underachievement is identified and tackled at an early stage.
- Sharpen the skills of leadership and management in identifying the most important actions to take in order to bring about improvements in the school.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory with some good achievement in personal and social development and in physical development because staff make social skills a priority and use outdoor play facilities well. Progress in communication, language and literacy and in calculation is slower and by the end of the Reception year most children are working below the learning goals expected of five year olds in these areas. The progress pupils make in Years 1 to 6 is uneven across subjects and between classes as a result of inconsistencies in teaching. In Years 1 and 2, progress is good in reading and writing and satisfactory in mathematics. Standards in literacy at the end of Year 2 have been consistently in line with the national average over recent years and below average in mathematics.

Standards at the end of Year 6 were exceptionally low in 2004 and were broadly average in 2006 which illustrates how much the school has improved in the last two years. They were above average in English in 2006 and broadly average in mathematics and science. Improvements in the way literacy is taught and targeted support for individual pupils in English mean that attainment by the end of Year 6 has risen and rates of progress have increased. Despite high numbers of pupils achieving higher levels in English in the end of Year 6 national tests, more able pupils achieve less well in mathematics and science. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make satisfactory progress as a result of the support they are given. Pupils from most minority ethnic groups make good progress as do pupils learning English as an additional language, reflecting the school's success in gaining strong support from pupils' families.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are friendly, well behaved and say they feel safe in school. They are confident that there is always someone to go to if any problems should arise. Pupils are aware of the need to live and eat healthily. For example, many take part in after-school sports clubs. They work well together in pairs and in teams and enjoy learning. One pupil said, 'I really like learning new things'; another said, 'I really love the clubs'. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and is supported by strong links with the local church. Work on display in the school shows pupils know how important these areas are to the school community. The school council is providing opportunities for pupils to contribute to developing their school and is building pupils' self-esteem. They have recently undertaken a lunchtime food survey and are proud of the changes to the school playground as a result of their suggestions. The school's efforts to promote good attendance are satisfactory. However, there a few pupils have too many absences which means that they do not learn as well as they should. These skills, together with the satisfactory progress they make in basic skills, prepare them adequately for later life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory with some strengths, particularly in the teaching of English in some classes. Pupils make good progress in their learning when the teaching is well planned and there is a strong focus on the development of speaking and listening. The quality of planning is inconsistent, however, across the school and particularly in mathematics. This

affects the quality of teaching which can lack focus and pace so that rate of progress slows. Teaching assistants play a satisfactory role in supporting progress in lessons particularly for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. They do not currently play a full role in providing specific programmes of support for pupils. Pupils have targets to work towards in English and mathematics but do not always know their targets or what to do to improve their work. There are too few opportunities for more able pupils to develop their strengths because there is insufficient challenge. Exercise books are regularly marked with positive comments but guidance to help pupils onto the next stages of learning is more limited. Where available, interactive whiteboards are used well in lessons to enhance learning and add to pupils' interest.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. Good features include music and opportunities for pupils in Year 3 to learn Spanish. It is enhanced by a range of sporting opportunities including swimming and a residential visit for Year 6 pupils. Recent developments, such as the changes made to the way writing is taught and to the mathematics curriculum are not put into practice consistently in all classes. The school is beginning to develop better links between subjects such as through a history and literacy project in Year 2. The school has made improvements in the use made of information and communication technology to enhance pupils' learning, although opportunities for them to develop their computing skills across a range of subjects are uneven.

The curriculum is enriched through themed weeks, for example on health and Black History. Creative afternoons help pupils to develop their personal and social skills by enabling pupils of different ages to work together. Pupils also enjoy a range of visits to local places of interest. Pupils participate enthusiastically in school clubs and activities and are successful in developing a wide range of interest and enjoyment.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory. Child protection and health and safety procedures in the school are secure. Assessment systems are in place to make sure that individual pupils are monitored and targets set. However, these systems do not give a full enough picture of pupils' progress and underachieving pupils are not always identified early enough for support to be given. They do not consistently know their targets or how to extend their learning further. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are monitored and receive satisfactory support with their learning.

The school has developed good links with outside agencies to help the pupils. For example, the Marlborough Family Service provides good emotional and behavioural support to targeted pupils and families. There is also good provision for speech and language therapy.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and is committed to raising standards and ensuring every child is well looked after. Good communication means staff work well together as a team. As yet, middle managers have not had enough opportunities to monitor teaching and learning and to provide support to colleagues,

particularly in mathematics and science. The school has identified this as a priority. The school development plan identifies appropriate areas for improvement and some actions have been taken leading to better outcomes for pupils, for example, in their personal development. However, the plan is not always clear enough about the action needed to bring about the desired changes. Coordinators have too few opportunities to monitor teaching and evaluate the work of the school which limits their impact on improving the quality of learning.

Governors are committed and know the school. Links between governors and subject staff in school are effective in holding the school to account. They are supportive and are keen to help the school in developing further.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ 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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
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

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	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

25 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Mary Magdalene CofE Primary School, London, W2 5TF

Thank you for making us so welcome and for helping us when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed our visit and would like to tell you what we found.

St Mary Magdalene Church of England Primary is a satisfactory and improving school with many strengths. We think that you

- are doing better in your learning especially in English
- behave well in lessons and around the school
- enjoy coming to school and like the clubs which are organised for you
- feel safe and happy
- get on well with each other and with adults.

There are a few things we have asked the school to improve and I am sure you will want to help it to do this.

- We have asked teachers to make really thorough checks on your progress. This will help them plan work which is just right for you. You can help by telling your teachers if you find the work too easy.
- You can help by listening carefully to your teachers and continuing to behave well. We think that a few of you would do better in your work if you were able to attend more frequently.

Thank you again for your warm welcome to St Mary Magdalene Church of England Primary.

With best wishes for the future,

Madeleine Gerard Lead inspector