

# St Mary Magdalene C of E Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101135
<b>Local Authority</b>	Westminster
<b>Inspection number</b>	335665
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 January 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Sarah McDermott

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	227
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Julia Allen
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tonnie Simpson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 May 2007
<b>School address</b>	Rowington Crescent Warwick Estate London W2 5TF
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7641 4388
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The team spent 60% of the time looking at learning and observed 10 teachers teaching 12 lessons. The inspectors observed the school's work, and held meetings with the headteacher, governors, staff and groups of pupils. They scrutinised pupils' work books and looked at the data the school had collected on pupils' academic progress and attendance. They also looked at the school development plan, investigated procedures for keeping pupils safe and analysed pupil, staff and 52 parent and carer questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- attendance rates to check they are sufficiently high
- whether all groups of pupils and in particular White British pupils and those who are more able achieve equally well
- whether the quality of teaching and the curriculum enable pupils of differing abilities to make sufficient progress
- the effectiveness of the new headteacher, senior management team and governors in driving improvement.

## Information about the school

St Mary Magdalene Primary is an inner-city school situated near Paddington. Nearly half of pupils are eligible for free school meals. Most pupils are from a wide variety of different ethnic minority backgrounds, with White British making up about a fifth of the school population. About half of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who need extra help mostly because of speech and language needs, is similar to most primary schools. The school runs a breakfast club for up to 15 pupils. It has gained the Activemark.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

St Mary Magdalene C of E Primary is a satisfactory school where pupils are happy, safe and proud to be members of a community of many different backgrounds and cultures. One parent typically wrote, 'The school keeps my child really happy.' Pupils know how to lead healthy lives, eat well-balanced meals at lunchtime and take part enthusiastically in the wide range of active after-school clubs. One boy exclaimed, 'The trips and clubs are great!' School councillors are sensible and mature and the newly appointed head boys and girls represent their classes with pride. Pupils' involvement in campaigning for safer cycling outside the school demonstrates a well-developed awareness of the needs of their local neighbourhood. Pupils behave well in class, but sometimes lack self-discipline and are boisterous when not under close supervision in the playground. Occasionally, this can make the smaller pupils fearful of being knocked over. Attendance has been low for several years, but with concerted effort from teachers and office staff, absence rates are starting to fall. The school realises there is still more to be done in getting the message across to some parents that regular attendance is essential in helping their children make the progress they should.

The headteacher is popular and well respected. One member of staff commented, 'The headteacher's clear vision, enthusiasm and sense of duty motivate us all to strive for quality in all areas.' Since her arrival she has identified those areas that needed most improvement and started to tackle these successfully. By moving teachers to different classes and providing targeted support, the quality of teaching and learning is now improving in lessons. Consequently, the school has a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement. However, some teachers still do not put enough emphasis on bettering pupils' learning over the longer term by marking regularly and providing comments so that pupils understand what they need to do next.

Most children make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, but on occasion activities and games do not capture children's imagination sufficiently to improve learning. Adults routinely observe children's progress and are building up useful knowledge about individual needs. However, they do not always use this effectively to plan more challenging activities to progress the children's learning. In the main school, pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning to attain standards below national averages in English, mathematics and science. Last summer pupils in Year 6 made good progress in English and reached levels comparable to the national average.

Nevertheless, the rate of progress is inconsistent for English, mathematics and science subjects across classes. The quality of pupils' writing is not as good as it should be, because pupils are not always given sufficient opportunities to apply their writing skills in other subjects such as history or geography.

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

- Raise attendance levels to meet the local authority target of 95% by the end of the summer term 2010 by:
  - working effectively with parents to emphasise the benefits of their children's daily attendance on their learning.
- Improve attainment in writing by:
  - increasing opportunities for pupils to write at length in subjects other than English
  - making clear to pupils through helpful comments in marking how they can improve their writing.
- Improve the outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
  - increasing the use of observations of children's progress to plan the next steps in their learning
  - providing a greater range of stimulating activities to engage children in positive learning.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

Pupils enjoy coming to school and taking part in lessons and extra-curricular activities. They are keen to please their teachers and they handle resources sensibly. Routines are well known to pupils so in most cases learning can start promptly with little interruption. Pupils nearly always behave well in lessons because they know teachers have high expectations, so learning is invariably quiet and calm. They are starting to evaluate the progress they are making in each lesson. For example, in a good Year 6 lesson pupils could identify two positive points and two areas for improvement in their work. However, this good practice is not sufficiently widespread across all classes. Pupils are not always able to take the lead in perfecting their work, because they are not sufficiently clear what they personally need to do to improve. They relish a challenge, as for example when the Year 5 class were given a William Blake poem to analyse. On the other hand, when activities are dull, learning lacks urgency and sparkle. All pupils, whatever their ability level or ethnic background, make satisfactory progress in their learning overall. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language make similarly satisfactory progress to their classmates.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is good. Pupils are interested to find out more about each other's backgrounds and appreciate the different faiths within school. The firm friendship of girls from Iraq, Sudan and India was very evident during lunchtime conversations. Incidents of bullying are infrequent and pupils know who to turn to if they are concerned. A good proportion of pupils walk to school, often proudly displaying their 'Walk to School on Wednesday' badges. Pupils contribute well to school life through a range of useful jobs and are valued members of the local

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community through their singing and sports involvement. Although attendance levels for a significant number of pupils are below the national average, pupils have expected skills in literacy and numeracy to enable them to move on satisfactorily to the next stage of education.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

### How effective is the provision?

Teachers are welcoming and ensure their pupils feel at ease with learning. They make good use of the interactive whiteboard to enliven learning and introduce interesting resources whenever possible. Most teachers are good at telling pupils what they want them to have learnt by the end of the lesson, although a few dwell too much on completing the activity rather than making gains in pupils' learning. Teaching observed in lessons during the inspection was mostly of good quality, but over time, the impact of teaching on pupils' learning is satisfactory. This is because teachers are not always giving sufficient priority to ensuring pupils can take their learning forward from one lesson to another. In some classes, marking is constructive, giving specific challenges or clear direction on how to improve work. However, in others it is either not regular

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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enough or is too general and uninformative. Teachers have started to give pupils individual targets so they can take more of an independent lead in their learning.

The school is beginning to think carefully how to organise the timetable to raise pupils' attainment. So, pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress in learning sounds because they are grouped according to ability. Nevertheless, writing is not sufficiently promoted across the curriculum to ensure pupils are all achieving as they should. In some lessons, use of worksheets constrain pupils' progress in writing. Interesting pieces of pupils' work in art and design are on display, but their written work is not celebrated enough. The school's undertaking to provide each pupil with at least two trips per term enables pupils to enjoy experiences they might not otherwise have, contributing well to their personal development.

The breakfast club provides a safe, welcoming start to the school day. Pupils who need extra help with their learning are given good support by teaching assistants within lessons. The school works effectively with outside agencies, such as Marlborough Family Services, to help the whole family address their learning needs. As a result, little by little, pupils' attendance rates are beginning to improve. The site is secure and the procedures for risk assessment are satisfactory.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>3</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

On arrival in her new post, the headteacher immediately set out to ascertain the quality of teaching and learning in each class. Using her useful bank of evidence from observations of teaching and learning, she has made bold decisions on deployment of staff with the clear aim of improving learning for the pupils. Senior managers know what is going well and what needs improving, but do not all spend sufficient time themselves observing the learning of pupils to be able to give the same high level of leadership. Governors understand the context of the school's multicultural intake well and are starting to ask questions of the management should any one group fall behind the others. The school provides parents and carers with a good array of information about how their children are progressing. A coffee morning held during the inspection with the local authority family worker demonstrates the governors' and headteacher's commitment to including parents and carers in learning. However, there is still a small core of parents and carers that the school finds hard to reach, particularly in relation to attendance. The school meets all legally required safeguarding requirements and is now

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extending this by ensuring all governors are as rigorously checked as staff.

There is no discrimination and pupils, whatever their background, have equal opportunities to make the most of trips and activities. From their knowledge of different pupil groups, leaders and managers can establish that they are all achieving equally satisfactorily. The school has undertaken an accurate audit and devised an up-to-date action plan to ensure it is promoting a cohesive and harmonious community. The headteacher and senior management team of this Christian school have a good knowledge of pupils' ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds and warmly welcome pupils from other faiths into the family of the school. Consequently, pupils are very accepting of a wide range of different faiths and cultures from within London and around the world. They are less familiar with different ways of life in other parts of the United Kingdom.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

New children to the Early Years Foundation Stage are soon happy because staff are comforting and let the parents and carers settle their children in gradually. Children arrive with skills that are generally below those expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress overall, although by the end of the Reception Year their skills remain below average in most areas of learning. Nonetheless, children behave well and most become confident in their speaking skills. A group of three children held an animated conversation about the state of health of the class goldfish with the inspector. A few children are less self assured, tending to prefer to play on their own, unless



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encouraged otherwise.

The activities and support provided in the Reception class are stimulating and well matched to the children's learning needs. There is a buzz of chatter and interest from the children, particularly on the day they were making bread. However, learning in the Nursery class is not as positive. Staff observe children's progress carefully but do not consistently use the information in their notes to steer what is to be learnt next. On occasion they do not put sufficient thought into whether the activities prepared for the younger children will capture their imagination and help them to make leaps and bounds in their learning. Leadership is soundly based on a clear understanding of how young children learn best and the staff team is managed well. Self-evaluation is accurate and identifies where improvements are needed and this is having a satisfactory impact on improving children's learning. The outside area of the Nursery is not providing sufficient scope for learning, but improvements are already planned.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

## Views of parents and carers

All parents and carers who returned questionnaires agree that their children are happy, safe and healthy when at school. This is confirmed by the inspection team. Although a number of parents expressed concern in written comments about the management of behaviour, inspectors found that pupils behave satisfactorily because of close supervision from adults. A few parents and carers feel they could receive more information about their children's progress. The inspectors judge the quality of communication from school to parents to be good.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Mary Magdalene Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 52 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 227 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	24	46	28	54	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	26	50	26	50	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	20	38	27	52	5	10	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	40	23	44	6	12	2	4
The teaching is good at this school	21	40	27	52	4	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	16	31	29	56	4	8	2	4
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	16	31	35	67	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	15	29	28	54	3	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	17	33	28	54	6	12	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	33	28	54	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	33	28	54	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	18	35	29	56	2	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	22	42	28	54	1	2	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



25 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Mary Magdalene C of E Primary School Paddington W2 5TF

We thoroughly enjoyed our visit to your school. Thank you very much for helping with the inspection by talking to us and showing us what you can do. We agree with your parents and carers that you are in safe hands and we know you enjoy school.

You get on very well with your teachers and friends. You nearly always behave well in lessons, but too many of you are rowdy at playtime. We are impressed with your knowledge of leading healthy lives, through your sport and sensible eating. You take on a good range of jobs about the school, such as councillors and librarians. We also applaud you for looking after your neighbourhood, by campaigning for safer cycling outside your school. However, some of you have too many days off school so your learning suffers.

You make satisfactory progress in English, mathematics and science. Your teachers agree with us that you could improve your writing more. Teaching is often good because lessons are well organised and you know what you should learn. However, we have asked teachers to provide useful comments when marking so you can learn to check how you are progressing. Your headteacher and her team of senior teachers lead the school satisfactorily. They know what needs improving, have already improved learning in some classes and now are concentrating on improving your writing.

To make your education better, I have asked your school to do three things:

- improve your attendance rates so you do not miss out on valuable learning time
- give you more interesting opportunities to write in lessons other than literacy
- make all games and activities in Nursery and Reception exciting ways to learn.

We thoroughly enjoyed our visit to your school. We know that your teachers make your school a special place for you. You can do your bit by continuing to be positive, behaving well and coming to school regularly at St Mary Magdalene Primary.

Yours sincerely

Sarah McDermott

Lead inspector

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