

St Mary's CofE (Aided) Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102593
Local Authority	Kingston upon Thames
Inspection number	335932
Inspection dates	14–15 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Wendy Forbes

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 of pupils on the school roll	245
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Maria Evans
Headteacher	Linda Rainbow
Date of previous school inspection	1 September 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors spent more than 75% of their time evaluating pupils' learning. The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. The inspectors visited 12 lessons, visited all classrooms on a 'learning walk' to sample displays, behaviour and resources, and held meetings with governors, staff and a group of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and examined pupils' books and school documents, including the school improvement plans, safety records and assessment information. They analysed questionnaires returned by pupils and 66 from parents and carers.

Inspectors looked in detail at the following:

- the work the school is doing to eliminate variations in attainment between year groups, different groups of learners and between different key subjects
- how effectively teaching and the curriculum are meeting the needs of all learners, particularly the most able, and specifically in writing
- the effectiveness of the school's work in managing the improvement in teaching and raising achievement
- the impact of recent staff changes and mobility on the attainment and progress of pupils and the school's capacity to sustain recent improvements.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school which has benefited from a recently built extension. The majority of pupils are White British. The Nursery takes children on a part-time basis. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average and includes pupils who have speech and language difficulties. The school holds a number of awards including Healthy Schools.

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

The school provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. Following the last inspection, there has been a period of turbulence and change particularly in staffing, which has had, in the intervening period a detrimental impact on pupils' overall achievement. Despite the lack of a permanent leadership team in recent times, the drive, ambition and tenacity of the recently appointed headteacher, with support from senior staff seconded by the local authority, has ensured the eradication of some identified weaknesses in teaching and secured improvements in attainment. As a result, previously low attainment rose significantly in 2009. Current school data and pupils' work seen confirm that attainment in Year 6 is now broadly average in writing and mathematics and high in reading. Effective systems monitor the quality of teaching and learning as well as track pupils' achievement. This focus on raising standards has helped to sustain recent improvements, ensuring that pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make at least satisfactory progress throughout the school. Self-evaluation is accurate and honest and has already led to improvements, particularly in reading. Because of the improving standards, the strong leadership of the headteacher and the strengthening leadership team, the school has now developed the satisfactory capacity to sustain improvement.

The school is a settled, happy, harmonious community in which all pupils are valued. Behaviour is good in class and around the school, demonstrating politeness and courtesy. As a result, pupils say they are well cared for, knowing adults will always help them. This means that the vast majority of pupils enjoy learning and hold positive views about the school. Many spoke enthusiastically about the new school buildings and the excellent provision for physical education, which inject interest and enjoyment into their learning. As one pupil said, 'It's just such a wonderful place to be now... our new classrooms are just awesome...' The vast majority of parents and carers are supportive and value the high level of pastoral care, guidance and support provided for their children. A typical comment was, 'It has a real community feel to it and pupils (and parents) are treated with warmth and respect.'

Teaching is satisfactory. At its best, teaching provides achievable challenges for all pupils and results in their high levels of enjoyment and sustained concentration. However, some teachers do not always make effective use of information gathered from ongoing assessments of their pupils so that at times the work set for pupils does not always match their capabilities well enough, particularly more able pupils in English and mathematics. The curriculum is satisfactory. Since the last inspection, effective links between subjects have been developed, providing good opportunities for extended writing which have helped to raise attainment.

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Governors are regular visitors to the school and have worked tirelessly to ensure the completion of the school's new extension. Although they are supportive of the school, their role as critical friend is not as developed as it could be, and they do not hold leaders sufficiently to account for the quality of the school's work, with the result that much is satisfactory rather than good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment in English and mathematics, by ensuring that:
 - work is better matched to the needs of all groups of learners, especially the most able; in English, particularly writing, and in mathematics to match the high standards already achieved in reading.
- Improve teaching and assessment so that they are consistently good through:
 - ensuring that teachers make good use of assessment information to set work at the correct level which matches the ability of all pupils.
- Strengthen leadership and management by ensuring that governors target their monitoring and evaluation activities more accurately on the impact of initiatives on pupils' performance.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils make satisfactory progress in reading, writing and mathematics, so that by the end of Year 2 their attainment is broadly average. Pupils' progress throughout the school has been slow in Years 3 to 6; however the school's tracking data and inspection evidence show that the current progress of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is now satisfactory in writing and mathematics, and good in reading. This is reflected in the broadly average attainment at the end of Year 6. However the rate of progress varies between classes, subjects and different groups of learners. This is because of variability in the quality of teaching and inconsistent use of assessment information to plan activities. Leaders recognise that pupils, particularly the most able, have done less well in writing and mathematics, and leaders have taken significant steps to improve teachers' methods and knowledge. This is bringing about improvement across the school. Pupils work hard and behave well enjoying opportunities in lessons to collaborate, for example as 'talk partners' and as peer markers. Extremely positive attitudes to learning and broadly average standards in basic skills help to ensure that pupils are prepared adequately for their future education. Pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is seen in their good relationships and in their respect for other pupils' backgrounds. They say they feel very safe and that bullying or poor behaviour are rare. Pupils show a good understanding of the importance of pursuing a healthy lifestyle enjoying the high profile given to healthy eating by the school's 'Green Gang' which has led to the award of Healthy School. They enjoy opportunities to help others by making a good contribution to local community projects, which have brought about improvements in the local environment, and by representing their peers as members of the school council.

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Attendance is broadly average and continues to improve because of the school's rigorous procedures and monitoring.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Although satisfactory overall, many good features of teaching were found in all classes. For example, teachers generally have good skills in managing their pupils, and relationships with pupils are invariably good. Writing is generally well taught and is bringing about improvements. In the most effective lessons seen, for example in a Year 2 literacy lesson, teaching moved at a brisk pace, explanations were clear, the teacher's subject knowledge was good and there were high expectations. Leaders' support is ensuring that teachers develop their skills, and school monitoring records show clear improvement. However the quality of teaching and the use of assessment data to inform planning and support learning are not consistent across the school. As a result, not all pupils achieve as well as they could, particularly the most able. Most pupils have individual learning targets for improvement and are involved in the assessment of their learning, however practice is variable. Consequently some pupils do not always have a

¹ 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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clear enough picture of how they can improve their work.

The school offers a satisfactory, broad and varied curriculum based on the core skills of literacy, numeracy, science and information and communication technology (ICT). Specialist provision in music, high quality sport and French offers good enhancement. A good programme of visits and visitors enriches pupils' experience. There are many opportunities for pupils to participate in a good range of extra-curricular activities, particularly sporting activities, and the school's strong performance in a number of competitive sports is a noteworthy feature.

School staff are committed to the ethos of support and care for all pupils. Pastoral care is a significant strength. Skilled teaching assistants ensure that those who need help are included well in lessons. Adults do much to reinforce pupils' self-confidence and to promote positive attitudes to learning.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Despite the lack of a permanent leadership team, the headteacher has worked in support with staff and seconded leaders and managers to ensure that effective systems are in place to bring about significant improvements. The classroom monitoring programme has already gone some way to even out some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and the use of assessment. However, this has not yet ensured that standards are high enough in writing or mathematics, nor that all pupils, particularly the most able, reach their full potential. The school tracks the performance of different groups of pupils closely, setting challenging targets focused on school improvement. It has made satisfactory and improving progress towards identifying and establishing improvements to ensure that all pupils have equal opportunity to do their best, and good progress in ensuring that no pupil is subject to any form of discrimination.

Governors are growing in strength, developing systems to monitor and support the school effectively in order to raise attainment, but they acknowledge they still have a way to go in evaluating decisions made in terms of impact on pupils' learning.

Safeguarding is taken very seriously and the school has good systems and procedures for child protection. Attendance and lateness are carefully monitored so any pupils, especially those who are vulnerable, are checked on swiftly. The school's relationship with parents and carers is good. They speak highly of the school and the way it cares for their children. Good links with other schools, the local church and businesses are

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strong. Well-developed support systems within the school are complemented by a good range of partnerships with outside specialists to support the needs of vulnerable pupils. The school's promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory overall. While the school knows its own community very well and is acutely aware of the changing demography of the area, it is in the early stages of developing links within the wider national and global communities.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the school with skill levels below those usually expected of typical three- and four-year-olds, particularly in speech and language. Because of the welcoming and purposeful learning environment provided by staff, children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle quickly to become happy, confident and eager learners. A strong partnership between parents and staff ensures that individual children's needs are quickly identified and appropriate support provided to help them achieve their potential. Children are safe and secure, and adults promote children's welfare well. Good care, teaching, and leadership and management all help to ensure that children make good progress towards their Early Learning Goals in most areas, except in reading and writing, and personal and social development, which remain relative weaknesses. However, effective systems are in place to raise pupils' attainment and improve provision in these areas, which are well supported by a good curriculum and daily phonic sessions. Procedures for tracking children's progress from day to day are good and provide adults with the information they need to plan each child's next steps. Transition to Year 1 is seamless because pupils carry on learning in the imaginative and

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independent style that they are used to. There is a good mix of adult-led and child-initiated learning opportunities. This means that children are taught the basic skills they need for their future learning and have

plenty of opportunities to use these skills through the stimulating and wide-ranging activities on offer. Many activities require children to adapt them to their own use, making sure they use their imagination and initiative. Magical 'awe and wonder' moments were seen as children enjoyed dressing in character to help tell the story of The King's Castle. A good range of indoor activities, with many fun-packed moments of enthusiastic action-singing, play-dough pizza making and careful painting could be seen throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, although they are enjoyable, outdoor learning opportunities have yet to fully complement this purposeful indoor provision.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The vast majority of parents and carers are supportive of the school, particularly in their praise of the headteacher and staff, the strong pastoral care and the new school buildings. Parents and carers who returned questionnaires or who spoke to the inspection team were overwhelmingly positive about the school. Overall, parents and carers' views reflect the inspection findings. A very small number of parents and carers expressed individual concerns about aspects of the school, but there was no pattern or trend. Inspectors found no evidence to substantiate any individual concerns; although these were summarised and reported to the school anonymously.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Mary's CofE (Aided) 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 66 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 245 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	42	64	22	33	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	40	61	24	36	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	26	39	37	59	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	25	38	34	52	4	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	32	48	29	44	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	28	42	33	50	3	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	28	42	34	52	2	3	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)	19	29	40	61	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	26	39	35	53	3	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	14	21	41	62	7	11	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	32	37	56	2	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	27	41	37	56	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	34	52	29	44	0	0	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"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



18 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Mary's CE (Aided) Primary School, Chessington KT9 2DH

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. We very much enjoyed our visit, and were pleased that you are happy in your school. You behave well in class and in the playground. Your school keeps you safe. You told us that you enjoy the activities your teachers plan for you, particularly the very good physical education lessons and sports clubs.

Your school gives you a satisfactory education, which means it does some things well but that some things need to be improved. All the adults care a great deal about you, and support you well. The children in Nursery and Reception make good progress in their learning. All other pupils make satisfactory progress overall.

We have asked the school to do the following things to help it improve further:

- find ways to make sure that those of you who sometimes find parts of lessons a bit too easy are challenged to reach even higher standards
- use information on how well each of you is doing more effectively, and then make sure that you each receive work that accurately matches your particular needs
- make sure the governors have a really good idea of how well you are doing ' and where things could be better still.

You can play your part by working hard and making sure that everyone does the very best they can. We wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Forbes

Lead inspector

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