

St Matthew's School, Westminster

16–18 Old Pye Street, London, SW1P 2DG

Inspection dates 24–25 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils' achievement and progress throughout the school are good because they are taught well. Standards are rising and by the end of Year 6 are above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teaching has improved since the last inspection and more is consistently good and outstanding. Lessons are well planned and teachers often set suitably demanding activities, providing good advice on how to improve further.
- All pupils from different groups, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, make good progress. Their individual needs are very well understood and support for them is excellent.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes are made to feel welcome and quickly settle. They make good progress because adults place a strong emphasis on developing their reading and writing skills and encourage their interest and enjoyment as learners.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. They show their mutual respect and regard for each other and are proud to contribute to the school's positive and friendly atmosphere.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a particular strength of the school. They greatly benefit from opportunities to enhance their experiences of the arts and have been publicly praised for their musical performances. Pupils from different backgrounds and cultures get along very well and are respectful of each other's differences.
- Leadership is good. Leaders are committed to continually improving the school and act quickly to put the right support in place for pupils, where individual weaknesses are identified. As a close-knit team, they are praised and supported by staff and parents.
- Governors know the school's strengths and areas for development and are committed to asking challenging questions to make sure that it keeps on improving.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always adapt work during lessons, to make sure that all pupils continue to make progress, or provide enough chances for pupils to check their own work and be fully involved in their learning.
- Teachers' written comments do not always make clear to pupils precisely how they can improve their work and reach their learning targets.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons, 13 of which were jointly observed with the headteacher and senior leaders. In addition, the inspection team made a number of other short visits to observe support and small-group booster sessions.
- Inspectors also attended a whole school celebration assembly with parents and carers present.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read in class and spoke with them throughout the inspection. They spoke with two school governors and a local authority representative. They also spoke to school staff, including senior and subject leaders.
- Inspectors noted the content of the 34 responses to the online Parent View survey when carrying out the inspection as well as a letter received from parents. They also spoke to parents and carers who were bringing their children to school. Responses to 16 staff questionnaires were considered.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's data on pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- Inspectors visited the school's breakfast club and spoke with staff and one of the church's pastoral assistants who were present.

Inspection team

Aune Turkson-Jones, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Peter Thrussell

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school and provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- The majority of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups and the proportion who speak English as an additional language is well above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional government funding provided for looked-after children, those known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils from service families, is above average.
- The breakfast club is managed by the governing body.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and accelerate achievement by:
 - making sure that all teachers reshape and adapt tasks during lessons to ensure that nobody falls behind and all pupils consistently make swift progress
 - providing opportunities for pupils to check their own work and that of their classmates so that they have more independence and know how to make their own improvements.
- Make sure that all pupils are always given high-quality written feedback so that they know how to improve their work, and are given time to respond, in writing, to marking.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children joining the school in the Nursery class often require additional support with their speech and language skills. They make good progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage because their needs are identified early on and they have very specific help from skilled adults who encourage their interest and enjoyment in early reading and writing.
- Pupils make good progress through the school and by the end of Year 6 are reaching standards which are above average overall. School information shows that all pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 have made at least good progress since teaching has improved over time over recent years and is now securely good across the school.
- Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals reach standards above those of similar groups nationally and perform particularly well in reading and mathematics in school. Gaps are closing quickly and by the end of Year 6 they are only half a term behind their peers in reading, less than a term behind in mathematics and slightly more than a term behind in writing. Extra funding has been used effectively to provide additional support in school. School analysis shows that this is particularly effective where pupils are supported on a one-to-one basis, such as in the additional reading recovery programme.
- Standards of reading have risen since the last inspection and are now above average. The more able pupils in Years 2 and 6 read fluently and with good expression, demonstrating skill levels above those expected for their age. Less able pupils in these years show a secure grasp of the principles of reading and how they have been taught to cope with unfamiliar words. Pupils speak with pride and pleasure about their enjoyment of reading, and this has been lifted by their regular sessions with reading partners who come into school from local businesses. Year 1 pupils achieved higher-than-average results in the national reading check in phonics (letters and the sounds they make) this year.
- Writing standards across the school have risen in the last year and writing is a feature of many activities in classes, topics, visits and trips. All pupils have a regular weekly 'Big Write' lesson and many attend the handwriting and lunchtime writers' clubs which have contributed to the rise in standards.
- More pupils are achieving the higher levels in mathematics because smaller booster groups have been created and teachers use assessment information to plan activities which effectively challenge the most able pupils. More work is being done to extend this to those of middle ability so that all pupils have made more than typically expected progress by the end of their time in school.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive very good quality support and achieve well as a result. Additional funding, to provide adult support from a range of services, has been highly effective in promoting the success of these pupils in learning.
- All pupils from minority ethnic groups achieve well. Those who speak English as an additional language also make good progress because the school identifies their needs early on and provides good support for them and their families. The school is also active in working with parents and carers and runs a regular coffee morning to encourage them into school.
- Sports funding has been invested in developing the skills of staff to deliver physical education lessons and also to allow pupils to use the large, well-equipped gym in the youth centre next to the school for twice-weekly sessions. The profile of sport and its importance in healthy lifestyles has been raised throughout the school and high proportions of pupils attend the vast range of activities on offer to them.
- Achievement is not yet outstanding because there is still more potential for pupils to reach and secure the higher levels in reading and in writing, as some already are in mathematics.

The quality of teaching**is good**

- Good teaching over time has enabled pupils to make good progress and achieve well. Teaching is occasionally outstanding.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work closely in teams and plan together well, carefully taking account of what pupils already know, understand and can do. This ensures that activities are suitably demanding for most pupils, engage their interest and motivate them well.
- All disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive very high-quality support from teachers and specialist teaching assistants at the right level for them within lessons and in one-to-one or small-group activities. Their progress is carefully checked.
- Pupils are keen learners and willingly rise to the challenges set for them by their teachers. For example, in a demanding music lesson, Year 5 pupils listened intently to a detailed explanation of technical terms, giving them clear instructions of how to extend their musical skills for the African drumming and singing sections. Their response was to deliver a rhythmic, tuneful performance of the highest order with different call and response and solo parts.
- Teachers are not always rigorous in checking that all pupils understand the work as lessons progress and sometimes miss opportunities to adapt and change their approach, so that all pupils can achieve greater success. This flexibility is more evident in the smaller teaching groups where pupils are set by ability in English and mathematics higher up the school. However, this good practice is not consistently widespread and sometimes teachers do not adapt and modify planned activities, or help pupils to check and take charge of their own learning. As a result, progress can slow.
- Pupils learn well when they have the chance to check the quality of their own work and that of their classmates, but they are not always given enough opportunities to do this. At times, this can limit their involvement in their own learning and their understanding of how to improve their work.
- Pupils receive helpful verbal feedback during lessons. However, the quality of marking is not consistently high. Pupils say that they value the feedback as this helps them to know how to improve. Nevertheless, teachers do not always give detailed enough written feedback to help pupils reach the highest levels in their work, or make sure that pupils respond, in writing, to their comments.
- Homework encourages pupils to reflect on their learning out of school and reading tasks, set regularly each week extend and develop pupils' skills, while actively involving parents and carers. The school's homework club means that pupils can receive help and support to complete their work successfully.

The behaviour and safety of pupils**are good**

- Parents, carers and staff who expressed an opinion agreed that behaviour in lessons and around school has improved since the headteacher took up her post at the time of the last inspection. Pupils are polite, keen to learn and generally well behaved. They respond well in class, especially when teaching is good, and show positive attitudes to learning.
- Pupils are proud of their school community, speaking positively about how the atmosphere has changed for the better. They treat each other with mutual respect and are tolerant of each other's differences. Pupils express their pride in being house captains and vice house captains, supervise tables at lunchtime and keenly count house points in the hope of winning cups.
- Staff manage pupils' behaviour consistently well across the school and this has contributed directly to the calm and positive atmosphere. Behaviour and safety are not yet outstanding because pupils' behaviour is not yet exemplary across the school at all times.
- Bullying is rare and dealt with effectively when it occurs. Pupils understand risk and know about different types of bullying and how to keep themselves safe, especially on the internet. They participate in anti-bullying week and in special events such as Year 6 junior citizen. There are

close links with the local community and several 'partners' have visited to present talks about being safe in the workplace and outside school. There are few racist incidents and discrimination is not tolerated.

- Attendance has is rising improved and is now edging ahead of the national average. The school has been active in raising attendance and refusing permission for term-time holidays, informing families of the important link between attendance and achievement. The school also uses the services of other professionals to tackle unauthorised absence and strengthen contact with families who struggle to ensure their children attend regularly. The learning mentor and school home support worker have established strong links with several families and successfully raised the profile of attendance and punctuality amongst them.

The leadership and management are good

- School leaders have been successful in continuing to improve the school since the last inspection, so that all aspects of its work are now securely good. They work together with a clear vision and commitment to the continuous improvement of each, individual pupil. Their high expectations are reflected throughout the school.
- Leadership roles have evolved and strengthened and new roles and appointments have enabled the creation of some smaller classes. The teaching of English and mathematics to ability groups has had a positive impact on rates of progress higher up in the school. Staff and parents responses were resoundingly positive and praising of the leadership team.
- The school reviews all aspects of its work thoroughly and acts quickly to address any gaps so that the pace of improvements is not slowed. School development plans are realistic and focused. Plans to raise standards are linked to close checks on the quality of teaching, learning and progress and these are shared by all leaders at all levels in the school.
- Leaders make sure that teachers' pay and performance link directly to whole-school priorities and pupils' progress. This has helped to improve the quality of teaching so that it is now consistently good, and an increasing proportion is outstanding.
- Pupils have excellent opportunities to develop and enhance their interests in a range of music and arts performances through an extensive number of theatre and museum visits, making good use of what London has to offer. The school choir participates in several events and has been highly praised for the quality of its performances.
- Pupils greatly enjoy the different subjects and topics they study and high proportions involve themselves in the variety of after-school activities. Pupil premium funding enables those who are eligible to be involved in a wide range of clubs and provides access to the breakfast club as well as the additional care and support of the learning mentor in school. This has helped pupils to feel more settled and be more fully included in the life of the school and has secured their good progress in line with that of their peers.
- Equal opportunities are rigorously promoted and no pupil is denied access to anything the school has to offer.
- The local authority and the diocese have supported the school well. Working closely with early years specialists and external consultants, this has raised the quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the quality of teaching across the school. In recognition of the school's improvements, the local authority has recently categorised the school as good and support is at a light-touch level.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governors are highly skilled and their close work with the school has been an essential part of the drive to raise standards and the quality of teaching. They have a good understanding of information on pupils' progress, and use the latest available to make comparisons with other schools, even down to the finest detail about the performance of individual pupils. Governors are committed to enhancing their own skills and ensuring that their training is completely up

to date. They make more frequent visits to check directly on key areas of the school's work and also ensure that financial resources are efficiently managed, including pupil premium and sports funding and how this impacts on pupils' achievement. Governors see that targets to improve the performance of staff are reviewed carefully and that teachers' pay is linked to how well pupils are doing. They check that the breakfast club is well run, and form part of a close working team together with church pastoral assistants, the diocesan board for schools and the local authority. Governors check that safeguarding meets requirements.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	101138
Local authority	Westminster
Inspection number	427271

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	199
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Philip Chester
Headteacher	Emily Norman
Date of previous school inspection	19 October 2010
Telephone number	020 7504 0500
Email address	office@stmwschool.org.uk

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