

St Mary's Church of England Primary School

Garnet Road, London, NW10 9JA

Inspection dates 11–12 December 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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.

- The strong leadership of the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and governors has ensured that all areas have improved consistently since the previous inspection.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes are happy, well cared for and enjoy their learning.
- All groups of pupils make good progress and achieve above average standards when they leave school.
- Teaching is typically at least good and occasionally better; consequently, pupils enjoy learning and make rapid progress.
- Pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs receive excellent support and achieve above expectations.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptionally well promoted; it consistently supports their learning and progress in lessons.
- Pupils behave well and feel very safe in school and have positive attitudes to learning.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school, which is reflected in their punctuality, keenness to learn and high attendance.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching does not always provide enough opportunities for pupils to work by themselves.
- The marking of pupils work does not always provide enough guidance to help them understand how to improve.
- Not all leaders are fully involved in making checks on teaching and learning. The best teaching in the school is not consistently shared with all staff.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 21 lessons, one with the headteacher, as well as a number of short visits to lessons.
- Meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority, as well as staff, including senior and middle leaders.
- Inspectors met with a number of parents and carers. There were 15 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and inspectors reviewed the recent school questionnaire responses from parents and carers.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own self-evaluation, data on pupils' current progress and attendance, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

John Croghan, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Vicky Turner

Additional inspector

Christopher Gray

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Mary's is larger than the average sized primary school with Nursery and Reception classes.
- The proportion of pupils at school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is well above the national average.
- The school has a large majority of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- A minority of pupils come from White British backgrounds, with most pupils coming from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. The largest groups are from Caribbean and Black African backgrounds.
- The school meets the current floor standards, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school offers no alternative provision.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - ensuring that marking and feedback make clear to pupils how well they have done, provide clear guidance about what they need to do to improve, and that pupils are given opportunities to respond to the teachers' comments
 - sharing the planned learning with pupils, so that they are better able to understand how well they are learning and making progress
 - making teachers' introductions to lessons more concise so that pupils have more time to work by themselves.
- Improve further the quality of leadership and management by:
 - sharing more widely the work to improve the school by involving more staff who have particular responsibilities
 - ensuring leaders establish greater consistency in the quality of teaching by sharing the skills and expertise of the best teachers in the school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children enter Nursery with levels of skill well below those typically seen for their age. They make good progress so that by the time they enter Year 1 their attainment is much closer to that of other children nationally.
- Until recently, progress has been slower in Years 1 and 2 than in other year groups. However, current pupils and last year's results at Key Stage 1 show much better progress and higher attainment is being achieved. Pupils in both these year groups are now achieving near national expectations in both reading and writing, and attainment in mathematics is rising across the school, including in Years 1 and 2.
- Consistently good progress during Key Stage 2 has been sustained for several years and in all areas, including mathematics, which was especially strong in 2012.
- The progress of pupils entitled to pupil premium continues to be a strength of the school, because their attainment is above that of other similar pupils nationally. The strong support provided by teachers and teaching assistants, with clear direction given from senior leaders, has had a very positive effect on the progress of all different groups of pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs do exceptionally well, and make particularly good progress. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are well supported and make good progress in acquiring the necessary skills to read and develop their vocabulary. All ethnic groups, including those from White British backgrounds, make good progress and the school ensures equal opportunities for all.
- The recent introduction of the Read Write Inc programme to support the teaching of reading, including recognition of letter shapes, sounds and blends is proving successful because targeted support is based on pupils' current attainment rather than their age.
- Progress is good in the majority of classes and subjects because, as seen for example in mathematics at Key Stage 2, areas of weakness are identified and appropriate steps are taken to address them.
- Pupils' exceptional spiritual, moral, social and cultural development creates an effective ethos for learning and ensures lessons are enjoyed by pupils and staff.

The quality of teaching is good

- The majority of teaching is good and occasionally outstanding, so that most pupils make rapid progress. Improved mathematics teaching is also raising attainment and progress for most pupils, especially recently at Key Stage 1. Teaching has improved since the last inspection and strong attention is now given to the development of basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics, so that in the best lessons seen pupils were often using resources and working on their own.
- Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and a good knowledge of pupils' levels of understanding and ability.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are good at asking probing questions, especially when working with small groups and individuals. Occasionally, teachers, do not share with pupils clear learning intentions, talk for too long at the beginning of lessons and do not give pupils enough opportunity to work by themselves.
- The International Primary Curriculum has provided an exciting curriculum and the opportunity to link subjects whenever possible. This was seen in Year 4 in lessons about habitats, where the use of geographical and scientific skills assisted the prediction process, as pupils searched for insects outside and wrote about their findings when back in the classroom.
- Pupils learn at a good pace because teachers plan work accurately which is accurately matched to their level of ability, so that progress year on year is now consistent and pupils' confidence is high, particularly in reading and writing and mathematics.

- Marking and the feedback given to pupils are of variable quality across the school. In weaker marking, it is not always clear to pupils how well they have done and what they need to do to improve.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- In all observations, conversations and meetings with pupils, behaviour was mostly good or better. Good behaviour and relationships in classrooms ensure there are positive attitudes to learning, even when pupils are required to listen to the teacher for some time. Inspection evidence indicates that, over time, behaviour and safety are good, rather than outstanding, because attitudes to learning are not exemplary. At playtimes and lunchtimes, pupils were aware of the needs of others and ensured that they did their best to avoid upsetting anyone.
- Pupils' attendance is high and persistent absence continues to remain exceptionally low because of the good care given to pupils. All staff, including office staff, know pupils' names and a strong caring atmosphere is evident throughout the school. Pupils, including those in the early years setting, feel exceptionally safe, and when asked are able to identify risks to their safety and the actions they would take. Pupils feel that they can go to an adult if they are worried, with the 'Place2Be' resource providing valuable emotional support.
- Pupils' enthusiasm is cherished as seen, for example, in a junior assembly on choices and teamwork, where they displayed high levels of excitement but could also quickly calm down and be involved in a time of quiet reflection. Regular visits to church by Key Stage 2 pupils provide excellent opportunities to develop their spiritual awareness.
- In the majority of lessons, pupils work very well together and support each other in their learning and are quick to praise their friends when they have success.
- Pupils understand about bullying, including name-calling. They know that the very few instances of bullying that occur in school are dealt with swiftly and effectively by adults.
- Pupils at St Mary's, of all abilities and cultures, walk around school with confidence and feel very much part of it on the many occasions when they are given the opportunity to show their initiative, sense of responsibility or care.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher leads a very cohesive community with passion, professionalism and care where the many different cultures and traditions are valued. There is no discrimination.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher know the school's strengths and have an accurate understanding of the school's performance; information which has been used well to bring about the improvements seen.
- Leaders and managers are sharply focused on improving the school and doing all they can to ensure that pupils achieve well, by addressing the lack of consistent practice in some classes through sharing the skills and expertise of the best teachers in the school. However, not all leaders with particular responsibilities are fully involved in the work to improve the school.
- The lack of good progress in mathematics was identified and effective action taken to bring about improvements, including staff training to improve the quality of the teaching of mathematics. Pupils talk about their enjoyment of mathematics lessons and attainment is rising, including in Key Stage 1 classes.
- The now embedded curriculum provides rich learning opportunities for pupils and the school is developing a much broader range of activities including more visitors to the school.
- Senior leaders are accurate in their judgements on the quality of teaching when observing lessons, scrutinising pupils' work or checking data. Half termly meetings to discuss individual pupils' progress have increased the accountability of both teachers and teaching assistants for pupils' learning and progress.
- Thorough analysis of data on pupils' attainment and progress leads to well-targeted and effective

extra support for pupils who may be falling behind.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governance is a strength of the school and has been a key element in the significant progress made by the school since the previous inspection. Governors have a good understanding of the school's overall performance (including when compared with other schools nationally) and play a pivotal role in improving the quality of teaching and learning by being in school regularly and making careful checks on systems for managing the performance, promotion and the salaries of staff. They give strong support to the headteacher and help to ensure the high attendance of pupils is maintained. They check data on the performance of pupils, have a handle on the budget, manage the finances well and pay particular attention to the use and allocation of the pupil premium funding and its impact. They have excellent knowledge of the school's past and current performance, and have updated their skills with relevant training. They ensure that safeguarding requirements are met and that policies, such as those for health and safety, are fully implemented.

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	101537
Local authority	Brent
Inspection number	400487

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	319
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sandra Kitchen
Headteacher	Susan Lawrence
Date of previous school inspection	14–15 December 2009
Telephone number	020 8451 0363
Fax number	020 8451 5630
Email address	admin@stmarysce.brent.sch.uk

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