

St Mary's Church of England Primary School, Stoke Newington

Lordship Road, Stoke Newington, London, N16 0JT

Inspection dates 2–3 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	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 headteacher focuses everyone on working to improve teaching and is supported well in her endeavours by an effective governing body.
- The very creative environment in the Nursery and Reception classes helps the children to develop into confident young learners.
- Teachers are particularly skilled at creating calm classrooms in which pupils feel confident and make good progress.
- Pupils are expected to make the right choices about their behaviour and be responsible for themselves and others. The result is that they behave well and are polite and respectful towards others.
- A programme of exceptional support has been developed for pupils having difficulty with their reading, paid for partly through pupil premium funding.
- Pupils feel very safe in school because they say adults look after them so well. They enjoy school, as shown by their high and rising attendance and positive approach to learning.
- The school is very aware of the individual needs and circumstances of its pupils. This enables it to put in place very effective and much valued support and guidance for pupils and their families.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always encourage pupils in Years 3 to 6 to work independently.
- The emphasis on English and mathematics means that other subjects are not always studied in sufficient depth.
- At times, lessons do not consistently move the learning of the more able on quickly enough.
- Literacy and numeracy are not taught to a consistent plan across subjects
- Insufficient attention is paid to developing pupils' handwriting.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons or parts of lessons, of which eight were joint observations with senior staff.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, school staff, members of the governing body including the Chair of the Governing Body, and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 33 responses to the on-line parent questionnaire (Parent View) and held informal discussions with parents and carers at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information on the pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding. Inspectors also listened to the reading of a sample of pupils in Years 1, 2 and 6.

Inspection team

Martin Beale, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Velia Holland

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is average in size.
- Almost all pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds, and half are from either Black Caribbean or Black African families. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for funding through the pupil premium is well above average. This is extra money given to schools for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is well below average. The proportion of pupils supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The school runs a daily breakfast club. It has also developed a close relationship with Kids Company.
- The school does not use alternative provision for its pupils.
- 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?

- Raise the current good teaching to be consistently outstanding by:
 - ensuring that teaching consistently meets the needs of the more-able pupils
 - providing opportunities for pupils at Key Stage 2 to take greater responsibility for their learning and show them how to learn by their mistakes
 - reducing the dependency on worksheets
 - implementing a programme for pupils to develop neat and joined handwriting.
- Strengthen the curriculum by:
 - deepening study in subjects other than English and mathematics
 - planning for the systematic development and teaching of literacy and numeracy across subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- From starting points below those expected for their age on entry, pupils make good progress across the school because teaching is of a good quality. Attainment is broadly average by the end of Year 6 and is rising in lower years.
- There is no pattern to any variation in the attainment of pupils from different ethnic groups or between boys and girls. Pupils speaking English as an additional language make rapid progress once fluent and their attainment is higher than others by the end of Year 6.
- Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception and become confident learners. They learn through a careful balance between their own exploration and adult-led activities. Because progress is improving, the current Reception class is on track to exceed last year's below average attainment.
- Pupils make rapid progress in their reading and those who struggle are helped to catch up quickly. Each pupil's progress is carefully tracked and parents and other volunteers come in to school to read with pupils each morning. This enables pupils to quickly secure their phonics skills (the sounds made by letters) and to develop an enjoyment of reading as well as broader skills of comprehension.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs also make good progress. By carefully monitoring each pupil's progress, the school is able to map provision closely to their needs and quickly adapt programmes if they are not proving effective.
- Pupil premium funding is used well to support eligible pupils, including engaging an additional Year 6 teacher and funding the catch-up reading programme. These pupils make good progress and their Year 6 test results in 2012 were higher than for others in the year by one term in English and slightly more in mathematics.
- Rapid action was taken following a fall in Year 6 test results for mathematics in 2012 by reviewing how the subject was taught and introducing a new method for teaching calculation. This is proving successful and progress is now good, but not as strong as in reading and writing.
- Attainment in other subjects varies and is not as high as in English and mathematics because they are not studied in sufficient depth. Furthermore, the pupils' handwriting does not develop into a neat script because the school's policy is not consistently implemented.

The quality of teaching is good

- Classrooms are calm and well managed so that teaching and learning move forward without distractions. A major feature of lessons is the way pupils are encouraged to learn from each other through discussion or collaborating on tasks. In the most effective lessons, teachers make clear to pupils at the start how they will be able to judge their success. This focuses their minds, gives pupils clear targets for which to aim and encourages them to make their work better.
- The teachers' secure subject knowledge is shown by their confident teaching and the way teachers stimulate the pupils' imaginations. They are skilled at probing understanding through questioning to which pupils know they are expected to respond in detail and explain their answers.
- By carefully monitoring the children's progress in the Nursery and Reception, teachers match lessons closely to their needs whilst ensuring they are challenged at all times. The purpose behind each activity is clearly displayed so that all adults know how to move the children's learning forward. An improvement to the outside areas means learning flows smoothly and is linked carefully with activities indoors.
- The skilled team of support staff makes a significant contribution to learning. The staff are deployed well to work with small groups in lessons and make sure they help pupils with special educational needs focus on their individual targets.

- While teachers set work at different levels, they do not always offer sufficient challenge for the more able. Furthermore, pupils in Years 3 to 6 are not always encouraged to be independent, take the initiative when undertaking activities and have the confidence to learn by their mistakes. The excessive use of worksheets in topics limits the pupils' chances to plan how to present their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school, and move sensibly around the narrow corridors. The new behaviour policy, implemented in response to some concerns last year, is proving effective. The 'Stay on Green' system of rewards and sanctions is implemented consistently by staff and acts as an incentive for pupils to make sensible choices about their behaviour.
- Pupils mostly arrive at school ready and keen to learn. They try hard in lessons, work well together and listen carefully to their teachers. Attendance is consistently above average and has risen further this year through the school's focus on rewarding high levels of attendance and punctuality while dealing firmly with any persistent absence.
- Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe, such when walking to school or going on public transport. They are also fully aware of how to stay safe when using the internet. They say any isolated incidents of bullying are dealt with swiftly and effectively. They are clear who to confide in if they are unhappy and say they feel supported if they fall out with their friends.
- The school works closely to support its small number of pupils with more complex behavioural needs, by helping them to adjust and learn how to manage their behaviour. The team of staff, complemented by those from Kids Company, form very constructive relationships with these pupils and help them to concentrate better so they can gain the maximum benefit from lessons.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher sets a clear direction for the school based on trying to ensure that each pupil's academic and personal needs are met. Her high expectations are reflected in challenging targets and speedily tackling any dips in performance, such as in mathematics last year.
- There is a continual drive to improve teaching by checking carefully on each teacher's performance and providing additional training where needed. Teachers are held to account for their work and targets set are used to reward only good or better teaching.
- The school engages well with the local authority, particularly in supporting the development of leadership skills. While the approach has been largely light touch, it has been sufficiently close to support the school when issues arise such as the dip in mathematics last year and giving support on developing new behaviour management procedures.
- The school is successfully focused on ensuring equality of opportunity. The on-going evaluation of assessment data enables staff to pick up quickly any emerging patterns or individual potential underachievement and put action into place. Support extends to providing advice and guidance for parents. The work of Kids Company is integral to school, and has helped to build strong and lasting relationships with families who have accessed their support.
- The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted through the school's clear vision and values and reflected throughout its work, particularly through assemblies. All adults model for pupils the ethos of care and respect, which results in pupils of all backgrounds working and playing happily together. Pupils are able to reflect on issues and have a strong sense of right and wrong.
- Much attention is paid to English and mathematics, but this limits the depth to which other subjects are taught. The new structure to teaching English is giving pupils more regular opportunities for extended writing. However, pupils have few opportunities to develop and apply

their literacy and numeracy across subjects because of a lack of coordinated plans and action.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors undertake regular training and have a level of understanding of assessment data that enables them to question the headteacher and compare the school's performance with others. They are aware how the dip in performance in mathematics is being tackled and where the headteacher is taking action to improve teaching. They are clear that only good teaching is rewarded by salary progression, but have not put this into a formal policy. Governors are fully involved in financial planning and ensure that pupil premium funding is making a difference for eligible pupils. They are rigorous in ensuring that policies for keeping the pupils safe are implemented fully and that discrimination of any sort is not tolerated.
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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	100271
Local authority	Hackney
Inspection number	412212

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	219
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julie Farley
Headteacher	Claire Eskelson
Date of previous school inspection	29–30 November 2006
Telephone number	020 8800 2645
Fax number	020 8802 1687
Email address	admin-office@st-marys.hackney.sch.uk

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