

Saint Mary's Catholic Primary School

East Row, North Kensington, London W10 5AW

Inspection dates

16–17 November 2016

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders and governors are highly ambitious for pupils. They have successfully created a culture of high expectations that is shared by all staff.
- Leadership over time has been effective in bringing about marked improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes. The quality of teaching is now good and pupils make good progress in a range of subjects, including reading, writing and mathematics.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard at the end of key stages 1 and 2 is well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Governors are skilled and know the school well. They provide good support and challenge to senior leaders to bring about improvements.
- Different groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, those who speak English as an additional language and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress because of the extra support they receive.
- The school effectively promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and they have positive attitudes to their work. Pupils feel safe and are happy in school.
- The most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, make good progress. Occasionally, adults' questioning is not sufficiently probing to challenge them to think hard and improve their understanding.
- Sometimes pupils are not moved on to their learning tasks quickly enough once they know what they will be learning. This slows their progress.
- Pupils do not always have sufficient opportunities to write at length and across the different subject areas to improve their writing skills. This slows pupils' progress in writing, particularly that of White British boys.
- Teaching in the early years is good and children make good progress from their low starting points. However, sometimes activities to move children's learning on, particularly for the disadvantaged boys, are not clearly identified.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. However, teaching, learning and assessment in the foundation subjects are not as strong as in reading, writing and mathematics.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that pupils make rapid progress by:
 - strengthening adults' questioning skills so that pupils are challenged to think more deeply and improve their understanding, particularly the most able pupils
 - ensuring that pupils move to their learning tasks more quickly once they have understood what they will be learning
 - giving pupils more time to write at length to practise and improve their writing skills, particularly the White British boys.
- Improve the early years provision by ensuring that staff consistently identify activities to address weaknesses in children's learning, particularly for the disadvantaged boys.
- Strengthen the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that teaching, learning and assessment in foundation subjects are as strong as in other subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Senior leaders and governors are highly ambitious for pupils. They have responded effectively to and addressed the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection. Consequently, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are good and pupils make good progress from their generally low starting points.
- The new headteacher has quickly established herself and works effectively with leaders, including governors, to build on the culture of high expectations and continuous improvement.
- Leadership and management are strong at all levels. Middle leaders know their subjects well, including their strengths and areas for development. They are involved in monitoring the quality of teaching and holding teachers accountable for the progress their pupils make. They are contributing to the school's capacity to improve further.
- Teachers' performance management is robust. Leaders provide effective support and training for teachers to improve their quality of teaching. There is a culture of sharing best practice in the school for teachers to improve.
- Leaders have rigorous systems in place to monitor the progress of pupils, including different groups of pupils. Leaders and staff meet regularly to track the progress of pupils and to identify those who are not making the expected progress, including the lower and higher attainers. Any potential barriers to pupils' learning are quickly identified and effectively tackled. In this way, leaders ensure that there is equality of opportunity for all pupils to achieve well and that discrimination on any grounds is not tolerated.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and is enriched by a range of after-school clubs and activities. The curriculum ensures that pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils also learn Spanish and Portuguese and there are weekly Latin lessons for the most able pupils. However, there is sometimes insufficient focus on teaching, learning and assessment in history, geography and science in some of the classes. Consequently, pupils' progress slows in these subjects.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very strongly through, for example, art, music, religious education and pupils learning about cultural diversity.
- The school's work on promoting British values is effective. Pupils learn about democracy and the roles of Parliament and of the monarchy. They learn about elections through electing pupils to various roles in the school, including the school council.
- The school prepares its pupils well for life in modern Britain through its own values of responsibility, tolerance, cooperation, respect, kindness and honesty. The school marks different cultural events and teaches pupils about different religions.
- There is good use of the physical education and sports premium to promote pupils' physical development. There is a range of sports clubs, both before and after school, for pupils to participate in both competitively and non-competitively. A large majority of

pupils take part in the sporting activities. The use of sports coaches enhances teachers' skills in teaching physical education.

- Leaders use the pupil premium funding effectively to ensure disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, make good progress and achieve at least as well as other pupils.
- The local authority and the diocese have worked successfully with leaders, including governors, since the previous inspection to review the work of the school and bring about improvements in teaching and leadership and management. The local authority now provides a 'light-touch' support for this good school.

Governance of the school

- Governors are highly ambitious and want the very best for all pupils. They have worked effectively with leaders to create a culture of high expectations.
- Governors receive a range of good-quality information from leaders, including middle leaders, to ensure they know about the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make. They know the school's main strengths and weaknesses and are committed to continuous improvement.
- They make regular visits to the school to conduct visits to classrooms to observe learning and book checks to find for themselves what learning is like for pupils. They are aware of the link between teachers' quality of teaching and the progress pupils make in any decisions on pay awards.
- The governing body, with external advice, manages the performance of the headteacher effectively. Governors ensure that headteachers' targets are challenging and strongly linked to improving the quality of teaching and raising pupils' achievement.
- Governors are skilled and knowledgeable and attend appropriate training, including on safeguarding, to improve their role. They ensure that financial management is effective and that any additional funding, including the pupil premium, is used effectively.
- Although the school conducts surveys of parental views, governors know that more can be done to engage parents further in discussions about their children's education.
- A large majority of parents responding to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, agree that the school is well led and managed.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All staff have had recent training on safeguarding based on the most current guidance. They are trained to look out for signs that a child might be at risk of suffering harm and they know the correct procedures to follow if they have any concerns in relation to safeguarding. Staff and governors have a secure understanding of the 'Prevent duty' and know how to protect pupils from extremism and radicalisation.
- Leaders ensure that all the safeguarding documents, processes and procedures are successfully implemented to create a safe and secure culture in the school.

- Pupils said that they feel very safe in the school; all the parents responding to Parent View and all the staff responding to the staff questionnaire agree.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved since the previous inspection and is now good.
- Classroom displays are engaging, cover various aspects of the curriculum and celebrate pupils' achievements. Pupils use the information displayed on walls to support their learning, for example the use of rhetorical language in their writing and different mathematical operations in calculations.
- Prominent features of learning are the strong relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults. Behaviour is effectively managed in line with the school policy and pupils overall have good attitudes to learning. This contributes well to the positive culture of learning.
- Teaching assistants are skilled and work effectively with pupils in small groups and on a one-to-one basis. They provide good additional support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, disadvantaged pupils and those at the early stages of learning English. This ensures that all groups of pupils make equally good progress.
- The teaching of phonics is highly effective and this is having a positive impact on pupils' reading. When Years 1 and 2 pupils read to inspectors, they effectively applied their phonics skills to sound out unfamiliar or difficult words. Teachers have strong subject knowledge and use technical and grammatical terms effectively to support pupils' learning.
- There has been a great deal of emphasis on improving pupils' reading across the school. Reading is effectively taught, with additional support for lower attaining pupils. Pupils enjoy reading and adults listen to them read regularly. Pupils are encouraged to record and reflect on their reading in their learning journals. The school library has a good range of books to capture pupils' interest and is used well by pupils, with many reading for pleasure. Teachers ensure that good quality texts are available for pupils to analyse and discuss. There is a growing culture of reading in the school. For example, reading is celebrated with pupils identified as 'star readers', inviting authors to school and marking Roald Dahl day and national poetry day.
- Mathematics is taught well. Teachers use their secure subject knowledge to reinforce learning of mathematical concepts. Pupils use a range of operations to solve mathematical problems. There is good emphasis on word problems and everyday mathematics to make it more relevant to pupils. Pupils are routinely encouraged to use their mental skills to solve problems. Pupils, including the most able, are encouraged to reflect and explain how they arrived at the answers.
- Teachers ensure that pupils are clear about what they will be learning and what is expected from them by the end of the lessons. However, sometimes pupils spend too much time reflecting on the introductory part of the lesson and do not move on to their tasks quickly enough once they have understood what they are learning. Consequently, some do not always complete their work.

- Occasionally, teachers' questioning is not probing enough to make pupils think hard about their learning, particularly the most able pupils. This slows their progress.
- Pupils' writing is improving. However, sometimes pupils do not write at length and across different subjects to improve their writing skills further. This slows their progress, particularly that of White British boys.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are overall weaker in history, geography and science than, for example in English, mathematics and religious education.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school is a very caring environment where all pupils are valued. Staff ensure that pupils' personal, social, emotional and welfare needs are supported effectively.
- Staff and governors carry out regular health and safety checks to ensure pupils are kept safe. Leaders ensure that there are effective links with external agencies to support pupils' personal development and well-being.
- Pupils say that they feel safe. They are taught about different unsafe situations and how to keep safe; for example, keeping safe when using the internet, when crossing roads and fire safety.
- Pupils know about different types of bullying, including cyber bullying. They said that bullying is not an issue at the school.
- They enjoy the various responsibilities they are given at school; for example, members of the school council, head boy and head girl, house captains and prefects. They enjoy being part of a debate team to put forward their ideas and show respect for the views of others.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are very courteous, polite and friendly.
- Pupils said that behaviour has improved and is now good overall. School records confirm that behaviour is good over time. Pupils behave well in lessons, at lunchtimes and around the school. Pupils from all backgrounds get on well with each other.
- Pupils are proud of their school and their achievements and have positive attitudes to learning. However, there are occasions when a few pupils lose concentration in lessons and begin to chatter. This was confirmed by pupils that the inspector met with who said that low-level chatter occasionally gets in the way of their learning.
- Attendance is improving and is in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent is also improving, as is their punctuality. The school has worked effectively to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Good attendance is celebrated and rewarded. The breakfast club gets the pupils who attend off to a good start, and is contributing to improvements in attendance and punctuality. However, leaders know

that they need to continue to work closely with individual families whose children do not always attend regularly to improve attendance further.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Standards have improved since the previous inspection. From their different and often low starting points, pupils across all year groups make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Standards rose sharply in 2015 in both key stages 1 and 2. Pupils' attainment was significantly above average in reading, writing and mathematics in the end of Year 2 and Year 6 tests. Leaders have ensured that these high standards are sustained.
- In 2016, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard at the end of key stages 1 and 2 was well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Most of the pupils at the end of key stage 2 exceeded the national standards in grammar, spelling and punctuation. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- At the end of key stages 1 and 2 in 2016, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in science was slightly above average. However, pupils do not cover enough work in science across the year groups. This slows their progress.
- Scrutiny of pupils' work, observations of learning in lessons and analysis of the school's own information indicate that pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics and across a range of other subjects. However, there is insufficient coverage of history and geography and pupils' progress is weaker in these subjects compared to, for example, in English, mathematics, Spanish, art and religious education.
- Pupils' progress in writing is good across the school. Pupils take care with their handwriting and their written work is displayed in the classrooms and in corridors. This and their books show that they write for different purposes using lively language. However, pupils do not on occasions write at length and across different subjects to practise and improve their skills in writing. This slows their progress, particularly of White British boys.
- In 2016, the proportion of Year 1 pupils achieving the expected standard in the phonics screening check was well above the national average. Pupils use their phonics skills well to improve their reading.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. Teachers track the progress of these pupils closely and ensure they are effectively supported. Teaching assistants are skilled and well trained to meet their needs. Leaders ensure that provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is carefully mapped and checked.
- Disadvantaged pupils are effectively supported by staff and are provided with additional support and resources to ensure there are no barriers to their learning. Consequently, they make good progress and their attainment is improving. The most able disadvantaged pupils make good progress from their starting points and the school information show that their progress is in line with that of their most-able peers.

- The most able pupils are tracked carefully and given additional support to ensure they are sufficiently challenged to make good progress. For example, Year 6 most-able pupils attend a higher-level mathematics lesson at local secondary school and there are effective small group support and booster sessions for them. Although the most able pupils are often provided with challenging work, teachers' questioning is sometimes not probing enough to deepen their understanding and challenge their thinking further.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language are supported well by teachers and teaching assistants. Those who are at early stages of learning English benefit from the rich opportunities for speaking and listening that adults provide. This group of pupils make good and often better progress than their peers in reading, writing and mathematics.

Early years provision

Good

- Many children join Nursery with skills and abilities that are below those typical for their age, particularly in their communication and language development. However, about a quarter of the children starting Reception do not attend the school's Nursery class and have skills and abilities that are well below those typical for their age.
- Effective arrangements, including home visits and good links and communication with parents, help children to settle in and become familiar with routines quickly.
- The quality of teaching is good and children, including the disadvantaged children and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress from their overall low starting points. By the time they leave Reception their good level of development is in line with the national average. Children are prepared well for Year 1.
- However, disadvantaged boys do less well than girls, particularly in literacy. Leaders are aware of this and additional support for the disadvantaged boys, including better outdoor provision, is having a positive impact on improving their progress and helping them to catch up with their peers.
- Children show independence and make choices about their learning, both indoor and outdoor. They know when to wear their coats and aprons when doing activities. They interact well and are willing to share resources with each other. For example, children in Nursery played out a scene from 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' well by working together to make porridge for the baby bear, mummy bear and daddy bear. They emptied out packets of the porridge into bowls and 'microwaved' the contents. Children worked out for themselves that daddy bear would need more porridge than the baby bear.
- Adults make good use of questioning overall to test children's understanding and to extend their vocabulary. For example, in Reception children practised and developed their fine motor skills through cutting different fruits into small pieces and adding them to a wooden skewer in sequence. The adult extended their vocabulary through questioning and by using the terms, for example, 'slices', 'pieces' and 'a half' and modelling language.
- Children in Reception enjoyed their Spanish lesson. They showed good concentration levels and were eager to learn new vocabulary.
- Children have consistently good behaviour and their attitudes to learning are strong.

Children are eager to engage in their learning and no child was seen wandering around not knowing what to do. Children from all backgrounds interact well with each other. Children are eager to share and talk about their work with adults and visitors.

- Learning journals provide evidence of a rich curriculum covering all areas of learning. Adults' observations of children's learning are linked to assessments and provide guidance in their next steps for learning. However, sometimes the next steps in children's learning do not identify 'follow-up' activities to address any areas of weakness. This slows children's progress, particularly that of disadvantaged boys.
- Leadership of the early years is good overall. Senior leaders work closely with the early years leader to ensure that the provision is good. There are effective systems in place to assess children's skills and abilities when joining Nursery and Reception. Leaders ensure that assessments are accurate by moderating with other schools. Leaders are improving the tracking systems so that children's progress is monitored more regularly to identify any gaps in their learning for timely support.
- Safeguarding is effective and the provision meets statutory requirements.

School details

Unique reference number	100499
Local authority	Kensington and Chelsea
Inspection number	10019649

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	340
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Max De Lotbiniere
Headteacher	Joan Harte
Telephone number	020 8969 0321
Website	www.st-marys.rbkc.sch.uk
Email address	info@st-marys.rbkc.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	6–7 November 2014

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- This is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- Children attend a full-time Nursery class and two full-time Reception classes. The vast majority of children transfer from Nursery to the Reception.
- Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic groups, with the largest group being from a White British background who make up about one-fifth of the total pupil population.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well above average.

- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above average.
- The school runs a daily breakfast club and after-school club.
- There have been several staffing changes since the previous inspection. A new headteacher was appointed in September 2016.
- No pupils attend any alternative form of education away from the school site.
- The school's published admission number has recently decreased from 366 to 340.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning in 37 lessons, the majority of which were joint observations with either the headteacher, deputy headteacher or the assistant headteachers.
- A meeting was held with a group of pupils from different abilities to discuss their learning and views about the school.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read in Years 1, 2 and 6 and discussed their reading with them.
- The inspectors held discussions with senior leaders, middle leaders and three governors, including the chair of the governing body. A discussion was held with a local authority representative, including a telephone discussion with a representative of the Diocese of Westminster.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and considered a range of documents, including the school's improvement plan, checks on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, information about pupils' progress, attendance and behaviour records and safeguarding arrangements.
- The inspectors scrutinised pupils' work across the curriculum to see what progress they have made, and the quality of teachers' marking and feedback to pupils in line with the school's marking policy.
- The inspectors took account of the 17 responses received from the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, and the school's own parent questionnaire for 2015/16 with 120 responses. In addition, inspectors spoke to some parents at the school's gate at the start of the school day. The inspectors also considered the 14 questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

Avtar Sherri, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
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Raphael Moss	Ofsted Inspector
Sean Flood	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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