

# St Mary's Catholic Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	115174
<b>Local authority</b>	Thurrock
<b>Inspection number</b>	379027
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 February 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Michael Sutherland-Harper

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	314
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Brenda Kearney
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jonathan Shields
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 July 2007
<b>School address</b>	Calcutta Road Tilbury RM18 7QH
<b>Telephone number</b>	01375 843254
<b>Fax number</b>	01375 840680
<b>Email address</b>	admin@tilburystmarys.thurrock.sch.uk

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	7–8 February 2012
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## Introduction

Inspection team

Michael Sutherland-Harper

Additional inspector

Martin Marsh

Additional inspector

Evelyn Riley

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspection team observed 18 lessons taught by nine teachers and held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books, the school's improvement plan, assessment data, monitoring and evaluation records, arrangements for safeguarding, and a range of policies and procedures. Inspectors listened to pupils read. The inspection team analysed responses to questionnaires from pupils and staff and 126 parents and carers.

## Information about the school

St Mary's Catholic Primary School is a larger than average size primary school. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds with a large minority from Black African backgrounds. The school meets the government's current floor standard for attainment at the end of Key Stage 2. The proportions of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, and of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including those with a statement of special educational needs, are below the national average. The proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language is above the national average as is the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. Nursery children attend in the morning or afternoon. The school has the ActiveMark and Healthy Schools status.

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

### Key findings

- St. Mary's Catholic Primary School is a good school. Pupils make good progress in the development of reading, writing and mathematical skills. The curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to explore topics and the world around them and enables them to develop good practical skills.
- Pupils make good progress. Rates of progress in all key stages are increasing. Pupils engage with learning from the moment they enter the Nursery and a range of interventions ensure that they remain on track.
- Teaching is good overall. Some teaching is outstanding but sharing of best practice to raise all teaching to the highest levels is at an early stage of development. Teaching meets the needs of all groups of pupils but the level of challenge is occasionally inconsistent as are opportunities for pupils to take the lead in explaining their work.
- Teachers' marking is thorough. Teachers' folders contain evidence of clear assessment procedures but, although marking addresses individual pieces of work, it does not always show next steps to reach higher levels.
- Pupils are well behaved. Behaviour is a strength of the school. Pupils get on well with each other and with adults, and are always prepared to help each other in and out of class. They feel safe and parents and carers agree. Safeguarding procedures are effective and staff are appropriately trained. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and another strength of the school.
- The headteacher, senior team, staff and governors are clear about their determination to improve the school. Roles of middle managers have been developed. They know which areas require further improvement. The governing body provides effective challenge and support. Data are well managed and well scrutinised but are not analysed regularly enough to drive improvement to the very highest levels.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching to 100% good or better, with at least 25% outstanding, by July 2013 by:
  - providing more opportunities to share best practice in teaching
  - increased analysis of data to drive improvement forward and ensure consistent progress across key stages.

- Raise attainment across the school by:
  - checking that pupils are clear about what they need to do next to improve the quality of their work and reach the highest levels
  - increasing opportunities for pupils to feed back about what they have learned and how and why they reached their answers, especially for the more able.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Pupils' attainment is above average. Children enter the Nursery with knowledge and skills well below those expected for their age, particularly in communication. They settle quickly and make accelerated progress, consolidated in the Reception class, through access to a broad curriculum and a wide range of resources. By the time children transfer from the Early Years Foundation Stage into Year 1, outcomes are generally above national expectations, particularly in personal, social and emotional development and most aspects of communication, language and literacy. Positive relationships with each other and with adults lead to further improvement at Key Stage 1. The skills of matching sounds and letters are carefully developed in most lessons with one-to-one intervention sessions for pupils who may be struggling or who speak English as an additional language. Pupils become confident readers who reach good standards by the end of Year 2 and are fully fluent by the end of Year 6. Diary entries indicate regular reading. Books well matched to ability levels ensure good progress and lead pupils, including boys, to increased engagement with writing as they move into Key Stage 2. Mathematics skills are enhanced through practical work, mental mathematics and a careful match of work to abilities. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make similar progress to their peers through focused interventions and careful support. Progress rates are rising in all areas and are now consistently good, increasing as pupils move into Key Stage 2. They are aided by strategies like the early morning Year 6 mathematics booster session with breakfast provided before targeted work on skills development in an initiative fully supported by parents and carers.

Learning in lessons is good. Pupils enjoy school, understand the school's expectations and respond well in class. Independent work supplements whole class work. However, opportunities for pupils to lead learning by offering feedback to the class about what they have learned, and how and why they reached their conclusions, are inconsistent. There are not enough chances for more able pupils to share their knowledge. Pupils have ready access to information and communication technology. Plans are afoot to increase access in school for pupils without computer access at home. Most pupils know their targets, which are clearly displayed in exercise books and dated when achieved. They are not always clear about how these targets link with the next steps towards higher levels. The vast majority of parents and carers feel their children are making good progress and that the school helps them support learning. The very large majority of pupils say they learn a lot in lessons and are helped to make progress.

## Quality of teaching

The vast majority of parents and carers believe their children are well taught. The inspection corroborates this view: teaching is good with some outstanding teaching. In a Year 6 English lesson, the combination of focused support and challenge through work closely matched to pupils' abilities and interests enthused pupils and led to outstanding progress. Where teaching is best, clear expectations, brisk pace and ongoing challenge drive learning forward. However, best practice is at an early stage of being shared across the school to help all teaching become consistently good or better. Pupils move readily into independent work because they are confident learners and work very well with each other. Teachers have secure subject knowledge, reinforced by additional training, and use new technologies well. Topics covered in the carefully planned curriculum, such as work in a good Year 5 English lesson on an Arabian tale about a rat and a sea captain, enable pupils to use their imagination and underpin good spiritual, moral, social and cultural skills. Detailed lesson planning helps to ensure teaching assistants are well used across the school. Teachers and other adults make good use of focused questioning to check pupils' understanding, which is reinforced through final sessions. This careful check on understanding ensures that all groups of pupils, including those who are more able, boys and those who are disabled or who have special educational needs, make similar progress.

The development of assessment procedures has been a whole school focus. Marking is thorough with a careful blend of encouraging comments and points for reflection about the marked piece of work. Links between individual pieces of work and how they lead to the next steps towards targets are less clearly made. Some opportunities for assessment in class are missed because pupils, particularly the more able, are inconsistently encouraged to explain in depth to the whole class what they have done and how they got there.

## Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils are very well behaved. Behaviour is a school strength and is carefully regulated through St. Mary's Way, a set of clearly understood procedures consistently applied across the inclusive community. Pupils are keen to welcome visitors and regularly demonstrate the importance they attach to good behaviour across the school. They are adamant that there is no bullying of any form, that there is always an adult to whom they can talk and that any emerging situations will be rapidly resolved. Teachers and support staff manage behaviour well to ensure that no pupil is disadvantaged in learning opportunities. Good behaviour is further encouraged by the range of one-to-one and small group sessions which enhance pupils' confidence. The very large majority of parents and carers believe that the school deals effectively with all types of bullying and that lessons are not disrupted by poor behaviour. The vast majority believe that behaviour is good at the school. Pupils proudly accept their responsibility to help younger pupils, including roles as Yellow Cap play leaders, library club mentors and prefects. The school council is vigilant in ensuring that all pupils are well looked after through clear communication with fellow pupils. Pupils enjoy good relations with each other, listen to what others say and enjoy being talk partners in lessons. High attendance is indicative of pupils'

enjoyment and their feeling of security in school. Pupils arrive punctually to lessons and at school.

The vast majority of parents and carers believe that pupils feel safe. Pupils are aware of how the good range of clubs and activities on offer, healthy eating, proper behaviour and internet safety procedures enable them to stay fit and safe. School procedures to ensure safety are part of the curriculum and understood by all pupils. Effective arrangements are in place to meet the needs of pupils whose circumstances might make them vulnerable.

## **Leadership and management**

The headteacher, staff and governing body share a vision for a high-achieving school, defined by the phrase, 'They're smart enough if we're good enough.' Staff are committed to raising attainment. Regular training opportunities, exemplified by the large number of assistants who have achieved higher level teaching assistant status, have improved staff skills. The well-focused school improvement plan is reviewed with staff and the governing body. Policies and procedures are consistently applied. Monitoring and evaluation are based on increasing collection and analysis of data about pupils' progress. Analysis is not yet sufficiently deep to push attainment consistently to the highest levels across all key stages and thereby quickly address the few remaining gaps. The role of middle managers now places more emphasis on accountability. Middle managers report on learning to the governing body. Key stage leaders regularly review the impact of steps to raise attainment with key stage teachers. The school has good capacity to improve because of its clear track record. Improvement is not dependent on one or two leaders and priorities are clearly defined. The headteacher, governing body and senior staff ensure that all aspects of safeguarding are effective. Governors have been trained in safeguarding and safer recruitment. The governing body bring a range of skills to their work and know the school well through regular visits. They are committed to supporting the school and prepared to challenge on key areas like attainment and further building.

The broad, balanced curriculum meets pupils' needs well. It has a strong focus on verbal communication, teachers' modelling of skills and paired and group work. The topic-based approach engages pupils well, as reflected in vibrant displays around the school. As a result, all groups of pupils have equal access to learning opportunities. There is no discrimination. The emphasis on creativity in order to 'put the fun back into learning' has ensured a cross-curricular approach which makes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development another school strength. Parents and carers frequently offer to come into the school, with its open door policy, to provide additional information and share experiences about life elsewhere. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong. Relationships are excellent. Good partnerships with local services and providers reinforce learning and skills. Transitions into and out of the school are well prepared.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



9 February 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Tilbury, RM18 7QH**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently; I want to tell you the result of your school's inspection. Thank you also for talking to us and for filling in your questionnaires.

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School provides you with a good education. Here are some of the things that your school does well.

- Your behaviour is good. You look after each other, listen to each other and help out in many different ways around the school.
- You enjoy learning because you are well taught and what you learn is presented in an interesting way.
- You feel safe in school and know that any concerns will be quickly sorted out.
- Your school is well led and managed.

The headteacher, staff and governing body want your school to become even better. To help them improve, we have asked them to develop a few areas:

- make sure that teachers share with one another their best ways to help you learn
- look at your results even more frequently to see if you are progressing fast enough
- check that you are clear about how the next things you do in lessons can help you to improve your work and reach the highest levels
- get you to feed back about what you have learned and why and how you chose an answer, so there is extra challenge for you in lessons.

The inspectors are sure that your pride in your school and the way you work well with each other will help the school to develop. You can help by always being ready to tell the teachers and your fellow pupils about how you worked out your answers.

Yours sincerely

Michael Sutherland-Harper  
Lead inspector

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