

St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Glamis Street, Bognor Regis, West Sussex, PO21 1DJ

Inspection dates 25–26 June 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.

- Good teaching means that pupils achieve well and their attainment rises to broadly average levels by the end of Year 6.
- In the Reception classes, work builds well on children's natural curiosity and helps them to become confident and independent.
- In Key Stages 1 and 2, lessons are fun and exciting and engage pupils well. Teachers help pupils understand how to improve their work.
- Pupils' good behaviour enables them to concentrate well in class and to be polite and helpful around the school. They feel very safe.
- Activities both in and out of lessons provide pupils with many memorable experiences and promote a very strong love of learning.
- Leaders at all levels, including the governing body, continue to ensure good school improvement. They are planning well for the next stage of the school's development as the new building is opened and the number of classes increases.
- Leaders check provision very thoroughly and use this information well to identify what still needs improving.
- The school has responded promptly to its changing intake. Leaders ensure that pupils with English as an additional language make good progress.
- Pupils contribute well to school improvement through the school council and by meeting with the governing body.
- Parents and carers are very pleased with the work of the school and contribute well to its success.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- In a few lessons, work does not provide great enough challenge for the most able. They are not always sufficiently well guided when working independently.
- The school has a great deal of information about pupils' progress. Leaders use this information well to identify those who need extra help but do not analyse it in even greater detail to check that every group, even if small, is doing equally well.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 18 lessons, of which around half were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made a number of short visits to lessons.
- Meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body, members of staff and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the views of 19 parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View). The inspectors also read letters from parents and carers and talked to some at the start of the school day.
- The inspectors observed the school's work, heard some pupils read, and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information about pupils' learning and progress, planning and monitoring documents, the school development plan, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and safeguarding information.
- The inspectors analysed 28 questionnaires from staff.

Inspection team

Mike Capper, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Angela Podmore

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average-sized primary school.
- The number on roll is increasing and a new building is scheduled to open in September 2013. In the last three years the proportion of pupils with English as an additional language has increased from 13% to 40%. Most of these pupils are from Eastern European backgrounds, with Polish and Russian the main home languages. Some of these pupils arrive during the school year with limited spoken English.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported at school action is broadly average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding given to the school for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children who are looked after by the local authority and the children of service families) is below average. There are currently no children of service families at the school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The breakfast club which operates on the school site is not managed by the governing body and was inspected separately in June 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Move more of the good teaching to outstanding by making sure that more-able pupils are always expected to complete hard enough work and are given the right level of support when working independently.
- Make even sharper use of information about pupils' progress to check that all groups are doing equally well.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- When they start school in the Reception Year, very few pupils are working at the levels expected for their age. From these low starting points, pupils make good progress, and attainment rises to broadly average levels by the end of Year 6.
- Children's progress is consistently good in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children make especially rapid progress in personal, social and emotional development. They quickly develop good confidence and sensibly self-select where they are going to work. They work together happily and explore their own ideas confidently.
- In Key Stages 1 and 2, literacy and numeracy skills improve quickly. By Year 6, pupils solve mathematical problems confidently. They read widely, write enthusiastically and enjoy sharing their work with others. Many pupils spell accurately but this is not consistently strong in all year groups, and occasionally they do not take enough care to check for errors and then correct them.
- The school successfully promotes equality by ensuring that all groups do equally well over time, although in just a few lessons, the learning of the most able pupils does not move forward quickly enough. This is reflected in the lower than average proportion of pupils who reached Level 5 in national testing at the end of Year 6 in 2012.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are given good support, both in and out of lessons, and they make good progress.
- Pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding make good progress and the attainment gap between them and other pupils at the school closes quickly. Consequently, the gap in national tests at the end of Year 6 was smaller than that found nationally, with eligible pupils less than a term behind their classmates in English and mathematics in 2012.
- Pupils with English as an additional language attain at least as well as others by the end of Year 6. They make particularly good progress in developing skills in speaking English, even if they have been in school for only a short time.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching and learning are consistently good, with examples of outstanding teaching. Across the school, teachers establish excellent relationships with pupils. They make learning purposeful and fun by linking subjects together. They manage pupils' behaviour very successfully and they ensure that time is not wasted in lessons.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, members of staff are skilled in providing timely and sensitive support when children are working independently. For example, children were supported very well as they wrote about different aspects of life in Poland, helping them to improve skills quickly.
- Adults take every opportunity to assess learning so that they know what to teach next. Pupils in the very early stages of learning English are supported well by the strong focus on developing speaking skills in activities such as role play and group work.
- In Key Stages 1 and 2, lessons have a clear structure enabling pupils to understand what they are to learn. Good use is made of 'Steps for Success' which show pupils what they are learning and how to improve. Teachers give pupils many opportunities to discuss their work with each other. For example, pupils very quickly improved their writing skills in a Year 3 literacy lesson because they talked together about the key features of a traditional story, identifying how 'powerful language' could make their writing more exciting.
- Teachers ensure that pupils with English as an additional language understand new vocabulary so that language barriers do not slow learning.
- Teaching is not yet outstanding because, while there is good challenge in most lessons, just

occasionally not enough is expected of the most able pupils. They are sometimes left to work for too long without adult support. Teaching assistants provide high-quality support to disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, but there are some missed opportunities for them to work with the more able.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well and have very positive attitudes towards learning. Their great enjoyment of school is evident in their smiles and laughter in lessons and when, for example, singing in the choir. Pupils thoroughly enjoy learning new things because, as one commented, 'Every day is different.' They are especially positive about activities such as the 'beach school' (visits to work on the nearby beach), visits and clubs.
- The school promotes equal opportunities and tackles discrimination robustly so that all pupils are enabled to take part and learn well. Newly arrived pupils are warmly welcomed by their classmates and settle very quickly.
- Pupils are very polite and friendly. In lessons, pupils are keen to do their best and they work hard, although just occasionally some do not concentrate well enough if they have to sit on the carpet for too long at the start of lessons.
- The school council gives pupils a very strong voice in the life of the school. They feel that they are listened to by adults and they enjoy sharing their ideas with the governing body.
- Pupils say that they feel very safe at school. They have a thorough grasp of the importance of safety. For example, they can explain how to avoid dangers around the school building site and know that it is important to stay safe when using the internet. They are happy to speak to members of staff if they have a problem, and they say that any form of bullying or 'falling out' is very rare and is dealt with 'straight away' by adults.
- Rates of attendance are rising and are now broadly average. The school continues to work with parents and carers to help all understand why they should not take their children on holiday during term time.
- Parents and carers are very pleased with how well the school helps children to develop a love of learning. They make comments such as 'Learning is exciting, stimulating and engaging.'

The leadership and management are good

- Under the strong guidance of the headteacher, senior leaders ensure that the school continues to improve quickly. They check the work of the school carefully and are identifying the right priorities for improvement. Their commitment to providing the best for all pupils shines through in all their work and in the highly effective way that they have established the school at the heart of the local community.
- The local authority has provided light touch support to this good school. Leaders work well with other local schools. They share expertise and support each other in areas such as how to provide extra assistance for pupils with English as an additional language.
- Systems to check and improve teaching are very thorough. Senior leaders regularly observe lessons and they give teachers very clear guidance about what they are doing well and what they need to do to improve. There is no complacency and leaders are committed to ensuring that even more teaching is outstanding. Where weaknesses are identified they are robustly followed up and sharp targets are set for improvement.
- The school has a wealth of data about pupils' progress and this is used well to identify individuals who are in danger of falling behind. However, there are still some missed opportunities to use these data more sharply by, for example, comparing the progress of different groups, even if they are small in number, and by ensuring that all members of staff have an equally good knowledge of what data can show in their area of responsibility. There are

good plans to tackle this in the next academic year as the school is transferring information to a new computing system which will make the interrogation of data less time-consuming.

- The money the school receives through the pupil premium is used effectively to support the pupils involved. The funding provides additional small-group or individual teaching and access to clubs and visits.
 - The curriculum (topics and the subjects taught) supports learning well. It fosters creativity very effectively through music and art. Visits and visitors make a very strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils talk very knowledgeably about life in other countries following a recent visit by teachers from Poland, Turkey and Slovenia. They confidently debate complex moral issues such as the unfairness of apartheid.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body provides good challenge and support to other leaders. Governors are knowledgeable about the school and how well it is performing in comparison with others because they visit regularly to talk to teachers and pupils and to drop-in on lessons. The governing body is well involved in planning for school development and has a good understanding of the main priorities. Financial planning is very thorough. The pupil premium is used well to close the gap for eligible pupils and governors ensure that only good teaching is rewarded financially. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are thorough and meet statutory requirements.
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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	126037
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	412060

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	252
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tony Lucas
Headteacher	Katharine Amaladoss
Date of previous school inspection	23–24 March 2010
Telephone number	01243 822287
Fax number	01243 841588
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