

St Margaret's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 103995 |
| Local Authority | Sandwell |
| Inspection number | 363684 |
| Inspection dates | 6–7 July 2011 |
| Reporting inspector | Helen Morrison |

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

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|--|--|
| 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 | 244 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Martin Rutter |
| Headteacher | Jayne Stackhouse |
| Date of previous school inspection | 9 October 2007 |
| School address | Birmingham Road Great Barr, Birmingham B43 7AP |
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. A total of 19 lessons taught by ten teachers were seen. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, school leaders and other staff and representatives of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at curriculum planning, data on pupils' achievement including their current progress, documents relating to safeguarding (care and protection of pupils), plans for improvement, pupils' work and records of the school's monitoring of its performance. They also analysed 111 questionnaires that were returned by parents and carers, together with 111 from pupils and 11 from staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How well do all pupils attain and how much progress are they making, particularly in mathematics?
- How well does teaching ensure that all pupils make good progress, particularly in Key Stage 1 and throughout the school for more able pupils?
- Have leaders and managers successfully tackled the issues from the last inspection?

Information about the school

St Margaret's is an average-sized primary school situated in Great Barr though around half of its pupils come from neighbouring areas of Walsall and Birmingham. Just under half of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language is above average, though very few are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average as is that of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, although this varies between year groups. The Early Years Foundation Stage comprises a Nursery class, which provides part-time education, and a full-time Reception class.

There have been changes to the leadership team since the last inspection and it now comprises the headteacher, deputy headteacher and four strategic leaders. The leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage was new to the school this year.

The school has gained the Active Mark and it has National Healthy Schools status.

Independently managed before- and after-school care for pupils aged from four to 11 operates each day. This is subject to a separate inspection and report.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

St Margaret's Church of England Primary is a good school. Children are given an outstanding start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage and one child's comment is typical of many: 'I love coming to school.' The curriculum is exciting and engaging so that pupils enjoy school and it is no surprise that attendance is high. A wide range of partnerships with local schools and community groups provide exciting learning opportunities for pupils.

Teaching is good and as a result all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress and achieve well, especially the more able. There is some outstanding teaching in Year 6, Reception and the Nursery class. Early Years Foundation Stage staff make learning fun and really challenge children to think and work together; for example, Nursery children enjoyed digging, sifting and comparing their findings when acting as explorers hunting for mini-beasts. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are encouraged to talk about their activities so that they quickly gain confidence, particularly those with speech and communication difficulties, and make outstanding progress. The school recognises that some lessons, particularly in Key Stage 1, though satisfactory, do not always provide pupils with enough challenge to work quickly and interest for them to progress as well as they could. Pupils across the school regularly evaluate their own learning in lessons, although marking is not always linked closely enough to their learning targets and does not consistently tell pupils what they need to do to improve their work.

The school is caring and welcoming and pupils enjoy being there. Pupils know they will be listened to if they approach an adult with a concern and as a result they feel safe in school. Pupils learn to be tolerant and care for one another and are eager to take on responsibilities, such as acting as 'welcomers' or members of the school council. Pupils' behaviour is good and they say that any misbehaviour or bullying is dealt with promptly and effectively. Pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is reflected in their lively understanding of themselves and the world around them and they have a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong.

The headteacher and senior leaders have a clear knowledge of the needs of pupils and their families as well as a clear vision for the future improvement of the school, to which all staff are committed. The Early Years Foundation Stage outdoor learning area has been improved since the last inspection and is now good, though there are exciting plans to make it even better. Good leadership has been effective in ensuring that challenging targets for pupils' attainment have been met and this underpins the school's good capacity for sustained improvement. Accurate school self-evaluation is based on detailed analysis of data about pupils' performance, which is shared with all staff so that any underachievement is identified promptly and interventions put in place to address it. As a

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result, the attainment of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, has risen, particularly in mathematics across the school. Members of the governing body are supportive of the school although they do not have enough first-hand involvement in the school's self-evaluation to hold senior leaders sufficiently to account. Senior staff regularly monitor teaching, which has led to well-targeted professional development, although examples of good and outstanding practice are not always shared enough to ensure that satisfactory teaching is improved to good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of high quality teaching so that, by the end of the 2011/12 school year, 80% of lessons are good or better through:
 - sharing current good and outstanding practice regarding the expectations and engagement of pupils and the pace at which they progress
 - ensuring that teachers' marking provides pupils with good advice on what they need to do to improve their work.
- Increase the effectiveness of the governing body by further involving them in the school's self-evaluation so that they are able to provide well-informed challenge to school leaders.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

All groups of pupils across the school enjoy learning and achieve well, with pupils making fastest progress where the teaching is consistently good or outstanding. For example, pupils in Year 6 responded enthusiastically to inspiring teaching and calculated mathematical formulae at a very high standard for their age. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress because they are given personalised support in lessons, often by highly skilled teaching assistants. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 have risen this year and current Year 6 pupils' work shows standards above expectations, especially in mathematics.

Children enter the school with skills that are typical for their age, and make outstanding progress in the Nursery and Reception classes. Outcomes in Key Stage 1 have been average for several years, but current work in pupils' books shows that attainment has risen and is above average. Pupils' learning and progress are well promoted in lessons which are engaging and ensure pupils maintain concentration. For example, in Year 1 pupils were fascinated by a 'wizard's cloak' found in their classroom and wrote interesting descriptive lists of the possible contents of the pockets.

Pupils have a good understanding of a healthy diet and the importance of taking regular exercise. Specialist sports coaching sessions and well-attended after-school clubs ensure pupils enjoy a wide range of sporting activities such as football, dance and basketball. There is a strong sense of working together to help one another in school and pupils make a good contribution to the wider community through collections for local and national charities. Attendance is high and this, together with pupils' interest in learning and increasing awareness of the world of work, contributes to a good preparation for the next stage of their education and later life.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

| | |
|---|----------|
| Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning | 2 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attainment ¹ | 2 |
| The quality of pupils' learning and their progress | 2 |
| The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils feel safe | 2 |
| Pupils' behaviour | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community | 2 |
| The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 2 |
| Taking into account: | |
| Pupils' attendance ¹ | 1 |
| The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

In the best lessons, teachers use good subject knowledge to teach inspiring and exciting lessons, often relating learning to everyday experiences which enthuses pupils and captures their interest. Where lessons are satisfactory, teachers' explanations are sometimes too long and time is not always used effectively so that pupils do not make as much progress as they could. Pupils' learning is enriched by high quality experiences such as those provided by visits and visitors. Partnerships with local schools enhance the curriculum; for example, more-able pupils enjoy very challenging mathematics activities led by a teacher from a local secondary school.

The school is a very caring community where pupils' welfare is given high priority. Pupils are looked after well and they and their families are well known to staff. Pupils from minority ethnic groups are included successfully in all school activities because of good levels of care. Staff work effectively with a wide range of agencies to support pupils with special educational needs and or/disabilities and those whose circumstances make them vulnerable so they are fully included in all aspects of school life and achieve well.

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These are the grades for the quality of provision

| | |
|--|----------|
| The quality of teaching | 2 |
| Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning | 2 |
| The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships | 2 |
| The effectiveness of care, guidance and support | 2 |

How effective are leadership and management?

The drive and ambition of the headteacher and senior leaders have brought about good improvement since the last inspection. There is a tremendous team spirit and all staff are determined to provide the very best education for all pupils, based on accurate self-evaluation. Pupils' progress is carefully checked through termly pupils' progress meetings and robust monitoring of teaching. These are used effectively by senior leaders to improve teaching and learning in order to raise standards.

The school is committed to equality of opportunity so that additional support is provided promptly for pupils identified as underachieving, ensuring they catch up quickly. As a result all groups of pupils make good progress. The school has a good understanding of the needs of its own and neighbouring communities and pupils learn about different cultures and beliefs so that pupils from different backgrounds get on well together, any discrimination is tackled and community cohesion is promoted well.

Members of the governing body are supportive of the school and fulfil their statutory duties. However they are not sufficiently involved in strategic planning. Safeguarding procedures are good with robust risk assessments and regularly-updated training for all staff. As a result, pupils are safe and secure in school.

Extensive and effective partnerships with the church, local schools and a wide range of agencies make an outstanding contribution to pupils' learning and well-being. The school is an active member of a local learning community, and links with businesses and community groups enrich and extend the curriculum very effectively. Parents and carers are encouraged to support their children's education through curriculum workshops and home-learning projects so that the work of the school is valued and appreciated. As one parent commented, 'St Margaret's has some of the smartest, kindest teachers you could ever wish your child to be taught by.'

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These are the grades for leadership and management

| | |
|--|----------|
| The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement | 2 |
| Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met | 3 |
| The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers | 2 |
| The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being | 1 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination | 2 |
| The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion | 2 |
| The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money | 2 |

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage classrooms provide children with an exciting range of activities that encourage them to wonder, ask questions, explore and develop independence. For example, they use a programmable toy to explore a 'treasure map' and dig for 'gold' in the sand. Children are very involved in their learning and during the inspection Reception children were enthralled with their 'pirates' topic, enjoying counting 'treasure' into different-sized treasure chests, singing pirate songs and using their excellent knowledge of the sounds letters make to write lists of the treasure they had found.

Staff are skilful teachers and make learning fun and very enjoyable. They challenge children to think and work together; for example, pupils excitedly took turns and counted accurately when playing a number game involving throwing dice. Adults are highly enthusiastic play partners and make excellent use of a wide range of resources, indoors and out, to enhance children's enjoyment, learning and structured play. As a result children make very rapid progress in all areas of their learning and development.

Excellent leadership and management, outstanding teaching and care for each individual child ensure that all children exceed the expected levels for their age on entry to Year 1. All adults have excellent knowledge and understanding of the personal and learning needs of young children. This ensures that children make excellent progress in their personal, social and emotional development and, together with good induction procedures, ensures children are well equipped for their move to Year 1. Assessments are very thorough and clearly chart children's outstanding progress in all the areas of learning.

A good partnership is formed with parents and carers, who feel their children have an excellent start. One parent said, 'My son has come such a long way. He loves school and we couldn't wish for a better start to his education.'

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

| | |
|--|----------|
| Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1 |
| Taking into account: | 1 |
| Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1 |
| The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1 |
| The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage | 1 |

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are very supportive of the school, with almost all saying their child enjoys school and is helped to lead a healthy lifestyle. Most parents and carers say they are happy with their child's experience at St Margaret's and feel well-informed about their child's progress. Responses to all questions indicate that a higher proportion than that found nationally hold positive views about the school. A few parents and carers highlighted concerns over behaviour but inspectors saw generally good behaviour and pupils say that any misbehaviour or bullying is dealt with well by staff. A very small minority of parents and carers commented that they felt the school could do more to meet their child's particular needs. Inspectors found that staff take pupils' well-being very seriously and plan lessons carefully so that pupils make good progress. Parents and carers are welcomed to talk about any concerns at the beginning and end of each day as well as during termly parents' and carers' evenings.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Margaret's CofE Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 111 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 244 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements | Strongly agree | | Agree | | Disagree | | Strongly disagree | |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
| | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % | Total | % |
| My child enjoys school | 76 | 68 | 33 | 30 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe | 73 | 66 | 34 | 31 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| My school informs me about my child's progress | 57 | 51 | 50 | 45 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school | 49 | 44 | 53 | 48 | 7 | 6 | 1 | 1 |
| The teaching is good at this school | 59 | 53 | 47 | 42 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning | 48 | 43 | 50 | 45 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 3 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle | 51 | 46 | 58 | 52 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment) | 46 | 41 | 55 | 50 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs | 49 | 44 | 47 | 42 | 8 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour | 48 | 43 | 50 | 45 | 8 | 7 | 4 | 4 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns | 44 | 40 | 56 | 50 | 7 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is led and managed effectively | 58 | 52 | 48 | 43 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school | 64 | 58 | 43 | 39 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 |

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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 | 48 | 6 | 0 |
| Primary schools | 6 | 47 | 40 | 7 |
| Secondary schools | 12 | 39 | 38 | 11 |
| Sixth forms | 13 | 42 | 41 | 3 |
| Special schools | 28 | 49 | 19 | 4 |
| Pupil referral units | 14 | 45 | 31 | 10 |
| All schools | 10 | 46 | 37 | 7 |

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see 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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Achievement: | the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training. |
| Attainment: | the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. |
| Capacity to improve: | the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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: | <p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support. |
| 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. |

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.



8 July 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Margaret's CofE Primary School, Birmingham, B43 7AP

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and showing us what you are learning. We really enjoyed talking to you, sharing your lessons and reading your questionnaires and we agree with you that St Margaret's is a good school. Here are some of the reasons why.

Your teachers care for you and look after you well so you feel safe.

The children in the Nursery and Reception get an excellent start to their school life.

You make good progress and by the end of Year 6 you reach standards that are higher than those of most eleven-year-olds.

You come to school every day because you enjoy exciting activities and your teachers work hard to make learning fun for you, so you are actively involved.

Those of you who find work difficult are given lots of support so you can keep up with your classmates.

You enjoy meeting pupils from other schools and learning from visitors to your school.

In order that your school improves further we have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to do the following.

Make all lessons as good as the best ones are now.

Ensure that teachers' marking of your work helps you all to know what you need to do to improve.

Make sure members of the governing body find out all they can about your school to help them lead it well.

All the adults in your school want you to do well. All of you can help by continuing to try to do your best at everything you do.

Yours sincerely

Helen Morrison

Lead Inspector

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