

St Mary's Bryanston Square CofE Primary School

Enford Street, London W1H 1DL

Inspection dates	23–24 June 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
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

- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher has passionately driven forward improvements in all aspects of the school's work. School leaders work well together to ensure that all pupils receive a good and increasingly improving education.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning, as well as the care given to ensure their personal development, safety and welfare, are excellent.
- The quality of teaching has markedly improved and is now good. Teachers prepare exciting learning and enrichment activities that engage pupils well and enable them to learn successfully.
- Across the year groups, current pupils are making good progress from their varying starting points. Those experiencing difficulties are effectively supported to achieve well.
- Governors know the school well because they make frequent checks on its work. They support and challenge school leaders well.
- Children get off to a good start in the early years as they are well taught and engage in a range of interesting activities that prepare them for a successful entry into Year 1.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Work set is not consistently challenging enough to ensure that pupils make outstanding progress overall.
- Although improving, pupils do not yet have enough opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in a wide range of reasoning and problem-solving tasks.
- Some teachers move onto new work in mathematics before those pupils who have difficulties in mathematics have fully grasped the current topic.
- Outdoor provision in the early years is not as effective in promoting learning as that indoors.
- A few adults in the early years do not engage children in enough dialogue to increase their vocabulary or question them to think more deeply.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching further so that more is outstanding by:
 - teachers setting more challenging work so that increasingly pupils make rapid progress
 - teachers learning from the elements of outstanding practice already found in the school
 - ensuring that any pupil experiencing difficulty in mathematics is helped to fully grasp the concepts being taught before moving on to a new topic
 - continuing to extend the opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills in solving practical problems.

- Improve the early years provision by:
 - developing the outdoor area even further so that it provides learning opportunities that are as stimulating as those found indoors, especially in developing children's literacy skills
 - ensuring that all adults are trained to engage children in plentiful dialogue so that children quickly increase their vocabulary and are challenged to think more deeply.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher (who took up post just prior to the previous inspection) has provided determined and aspirational leadership. Together with other school leaders and governors, she has brought about a marked shift in the school's culture and in the quality of education that it provides. Leaders consulted with staff, parents and pupils and all have agreed to an ethos of 'excellence with compassion'. As a result, all members of the school community strive to ensure that pupils experience a very broad range of learning and social development opportunities. Pupils themselves now display excellent attitudes and behaviour, and they are well prepared to make a strong contribution to society in modern Britain in their future lives.
- Leaders have established robust systems of self-evaluation and school improvement planning. They monitor and review the impact of actions taken on a frequent basis and make changes as appropriate. Leaders, therefore, are continually aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have a sound understanding of what they need to do to continue the improvement journey to secure outstanding practice in all areas.
- Leaders, teachers and other staff have many opportunities to enhance their skills and effectiveness. Leaders have established links with other schools and all staff have had opportunities to learn from best practice in other settings. Senior and subject leaders work with colleagues in other schools, as well as with the local authority, the diocesan advisor and other external consultants, to gain expertise in their areas of responsibility. They, in turn, train their colleagues in school. Leaders link and identify training needs and provision to school improvement priorities as well as to individual development needs identified during robust appraisal reviews. As a result, the effectiveness of leadership and the quality of teaching have markedly improved and, consequently, so have the rates of progress that pupils make in their learning.
- Leaders are fully committed to equality of opportunity. The leadership and provision are good for pupils who have special educational needs or disability, who speak English as an additional language and those who join other than at the usual time. Pupils make good progress because of the effective teaching and pastoral support they receive. Leaders regularly check the progress of all pupils, including the most able, against their ambitious targets so that any underperformance is identified and addressed effectively. In addition, leaders work very closely with the pupils and their families whose circumstances make them vulnerable so that they can overcome any barriers to their learning or personal development.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively. Leaders reviewed how the funding was spent and its impact and this year have made some changes to ensure that eligible pupils get even better support. As a result, the gap between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in the school is closing and, in some cases, current eligible pupils are achieving better outcomes than their peers.
- School leaders make effective use of the additional sport funding grant to develop teachers' skills and to provide many more sporting opportunities. These include fencing, rock climbing, kayaking and involvement in competitive tournaments. Participation by pupils has increased.
- Leaders have developed a very vibrant and engaging curriculum covering a broad range of subjects, including weekly science and Spanish lessons. Careful planning ensures that pupils are able to make links across the subjects and understand the relevance of what they are learning. For instance, in one class, pupils have been learning about endangered species. As part of their learning they visited London Zoo, including learning about the work of the World Wildlife Fund in protecting endangered animals. They have been reading books in class about gorillas, seen a short video of how they interact with humans and used their imaginations in writing stories about their adventures with a gorilla. Learning is further enhanced through specific focus weeks, such as science, arts and music, and international weeks.
- Leaders avail themselves of the excellent opportunities that central London offers. Pupils visit and attend a wide range of cultural facilities, workshops and businesses. These include, for instance, a visit to Lord's Cricket Ground to take part in an art workshop and attendance at a live filming event at Sadler's Wells. Year 6 pupils performed a piece of drama they worked on as part of 'The Tomorrow Project', run by a theatre in Covent Garden, to explore what the world will be like in 30 years' time. The pupils' presentation, complete with virtual reality goggles, was about the sort of skills people need for different jobs and what classrooms in the future might look like. Most-able pupils work with volunteers from a city bank on challenging mathematical and scientific projects. Older pupils visit students on a day out to Oxford University to help raise their aspirations for the future. As a result, pupils immensely enjoy their learning, enthusiastically finding out new things and gaining a very broad range of skills, knowledge and understanding. They are well prepared for their future lives.

- Leaders work very closely with parents. Every week, parents are invited into school for a workshop with a particular focus. These have included helping parents to support their children's learning, how to teach children about the use of money and a presentation by an educational psychologist on developing emotionally healthy and resilient children.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors bring a broad range of skills and experience, such as in education, special needs, finance, religion, human resources, local politics and business, to support their work.
 - Governors ensure that the performance management of the headteacher and other staff is rigorous. They ensure that rewards are commensurate with performance and, equally, that leaders, teachers and other staff are supported well in their professional development.
 - Governors are very well informed about all aspects of the school's work, including the quality of teaching, pupils' outcomes, safety and behaviour. They are closely involved in the forming and monitoring of the school's improvement plans. They visit the school regularly to check on its work, receive and scrutinise leader's reports and commission external consultants to verify their findings.
 - Governors undertake training and external reviews to improve their own effectiveness.
 - The governors work very well with the headteacher and have made a strong contribution to the improvements made since the previous inspection.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All staff receive regular training on all aspects of child protection and safeguarding. Leaders have established close links with a range of agencies and act with alacrity in contacting and working with them should any concern arise. Governors are extremely rigorous in ensuring that safeguarding is a top priority. A number have attended training, including that on the 'Prevent' duty and 'Channel' strategy to safeguard pupils from extremism and radicalisation. Parents are well supported through workshops such as that on internet safety and receive assistance in putting parental controls onto their digital devices.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment **is good**

- Teaching across the school is good and improving, and teachers are trained effectively. The school has introduced new teaching strategies this academic year and is making effective use of a new system for assessing pupils' achievement. All these features are ensuring that pupils are making sustained good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers and teaching assistants enjoy a very strong rapport with pupils. They have high expectations of behaviour and use assessment information well to prepare work that is stimulating and engaging. As a result, pupils learn well and make good progress.
- Typically, teachers give pupils clear explanations to broaden their knowledge and deepen their understanding. They give well-defined guidance to pupils on how to set about their work so that they know what to do to become successful learners. Teachers adhere to the school's marking and feedback policy so pupils are well informed about what they have done well and what they need to do to 'fix it'.
- Teachers and teaching assistants provide well-tailored support to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs or disability learn well and make good progress. Similarly, they ensure that those for whom English is an additional language and the late joiners, some of whom have little or no prior English or schooling, make good progress.
- Usually, more-challenging work is prepared and given to the most able to ensure that they are challenged and helped to meet their potential. Occasionally, the level of challenge set for middle- and higher-ability pupils is not sharp enough to fully stretch them to achieve their very best. This means that not enough pupils are making the rapid progress of which they are capable.
- The teaching of writing has improved and is now good because teachers have agreed a consistent approach to develop and support pupils' writing. Year on year they build on pupils' skills and now give pupils extensive opportunities to practise their writing for a wide range of purposes and audiences. As a result, the progress that pupils make is much better than at the time of the previous inspection.
- Teachers, and the mathematics leader, have received much training in the teaching of mathematics since the previous inspection. New ways of teaching have been agreed and introduced and this means that current pupils are making good progress across the school. Occasionally, when some pupils struggle with a mathematical concept, the teacher moves on to a new topic before ensuring that these pupils have fully grasped the previous topics. This slows their progress. Teachers give pupils opportunities to apply their mathematical skills to solve everyday problems. This is making a good contribution to pupils' increased rates of progress. Leaders have correctly identified the need to extend these opportunities further and

develop pupils' reasoning skills so that more pupils can make rapid progress.

- The new homework policy, introduced this year, is making a strong contribution to pupils' learning. Pupils' weekly 'learning logs' show that they are expected to read, learn spellings, carry out a mathematical task and complete a piece of work, including research, on a different topic such as science, geography and history. Homework, therefore, consolidates pupils' learning or prepares them well for new learning.
- Teaching makes a very strong contribution to pupils' personal development. Inspectors observed Year 6 pupils involved in the 'fiver project' where group members had each to put in five pounds to set up a business. Pupils used their mathematical, enterprise, team building and creative skills in designing, manufacturing and selling their products to learn how to run a successful business.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupil's personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are immensely proud of their school and enjoy participating in the multitude of formal, enrichment and extra-curricular activities available to them.
- Pupils are very aware about how to keep themselves safe in various situations. Year 5 and 6 pupils recently attended a 'gang awareness' workshop. Pupils are acutely aware of internet safety as well as road safety, for instance, especially as a pedestrian in central London's busy streets, which they have to negotiate each day.
- Leaders follow up any absenteeism with rigour to make sure there is no danger of any pupil being missing from education. The inclusion team and learning mentor work very effectively to support any pupil or family whose circumstances make them vulnerable. They have established strong working relationships with a range of agencies to ensure pupils' safety and well-being. Staff are extremely vigilant and, at any hint of a potential problem, immediately make contact with the relevant agencies.
- The curriculum ensures that there are many opportunities for pupils to learn about and participate in activities to keep themselves physically fit and mentally healthy. Leaders target any pupils they identify as needing additional help and ensure that they participate in specific activities or access appropriate external support to improve their health or develop their self-esteem.
- Pupils have many opportunities to take on responsibilities. Prospective school councillors have to write a manifesto and campaign for election. One former school councillor proudly told an inspector that he was involved in the interview for the new headteacher and was proud that the governors accepted the school council's recommendation. The 'playground council' befriends any lonely pupils and the 'green council' looks after the environment.
- Pupils are proud of the contributions they make to society and their participation in wider community events. They arrange activities to raise funds for charity and contribute to the local foodbank. They enjoy participating in the 'Westminster Mile' run and members of the choir sing at the Royal Albert Hall.
- Pupils have opportunities to discuss current affairs in class and to debate issues in the debating club. They were very well informed about the European Union referendum and, during an assembly, debated sensibly the pros and cons of a possible exit by Great Britain.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils are unfailingly polite and welcoming to visitors. They get on very well with each other in this harmonious community, no matter what race, faith or culture, because all subscribe fully to the school's inclusive values.
- Pupils have excellent attitudes to their learning. They readily follow their teachers' instructions and try their best to succeed. They endeavour to keep their books neat and tidy as they take pride in their work and its presentation. Pupils told inspectors that when they get stuck, they try to think for themselves in the first instance but if that fails, then the next step is to ask a 'buddy' for help. Pupils who have already understood gladly help their classmates.
- Behaviour around the school, in the dining hall and playground is equally outstanding. Pupils are acutely aware of others and so take great care when playing games and running around the playground to look out for others and not bump into them or kick a ball directly at them.
- Pupils arrive punctually to school. Leaders reward good attendance and work with parents whose children do not attend regularly. External agencies are called in when appropriate. As a result, pupils whose former attendance has been poor now attend school regularly.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Current pupils across the school are making good progress in their learning, including in English and mathematics.
- Children join the early years with skills, knowledge and understanding that are lower than are typically found for their age, especially in language and communication, and in social skills. Progress rates have much improved since the previous inspection. By the time children join Year 1, they are ready to start following the national curriculum. This represents good progress.
- The good quality of teaching in phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) ensured that an above average proportion of Year 1 pupils met the expected standard in the phonics screening check in 2015. Current Year 1 pupils are expected to do just as well.
- In the 2015 national tests, pupils in Years 2 and 6 reached broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. This represented a sound overall improvement since the previous inspection, and pupils made good progress in reading and mathematics at key stage 1, and in reading and writing at key stage 2. The published figures include a proportion of pupils that joined the school part way through the year. Some joined the school with very little English and some in the lower years without any prior schooling. They did not all reach the age-related expected standards. They did, however, make good progress from their starting points.
- Inspection evidence confirms the school's own data that the progress of current pupils in Years 1 to 6 is good in English, mathematics and other subjects. There are no significant gaps between any groups. This was confirmed by work in pupils' books. Evidence also shows that late joiners are making good and sometimes rapid progress from their respective starting points.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disabilities, as well as those who speak English as an additional language, make equally good progress because of the effective support that they receive.
- The current progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils has improved as a result of better support this year. The school's information from assessment shows that gaps in attainment are narrower than they were in 2015. In some instances, these pupils are making faster progress to reach higher standards than their peers.
- The overall outcomes for the most able pupils in key stage 2 were above those of similar pupils nationally in 2015 in reading, writing, spelling, punctuation and grammar. Their attainment was below that of similar pupils nationally in mathematics. The current most able pupils across the school are making good progress in all subjects and achieving well overall.

Early years provision

is good

- Leaders have an accurate view of the strengths and areas for improvement in the early years. They take effective action to address underperformance, not least by improving the quality of teaching. As a result, the overall proportion of children reaching a good level of development in 2015 improved by 13% from the previous year.
- Nevertheless, the proportion of boys reaching a good level of development was below the national figure and well below that of girls in the school. Girls' achievement was above that for girls nationally. This year, leaders have responded by making changes to the curriculum to make it more engaging for boys such as working on the topic of 'superheroes'. The school's information confirms that boys currently in Reception are making good progress and a much higher proportion have reached a good level of development.
- The proportion of disadvantaged children achieving a good level of development is similar overall to that of other children, and better than this in some areas such as communication and language, and literacy.
- Positive, nurturing relationships with adults who have consistently high expectations of children's behaviour ensure that children adopt a positive attitude to learning and learn to be independent. Children know the setting's routines and follow them well. They make decisions for themselves, including choosing what they want to learn, putting on coats for outdoor activities and asking for food when hungry. They are good at sharing and helping each other.
- Staff place children's welfare and safety high on the agenda. As a result, children are happy, safe and become increasingly confident learners.
- Teachers plan learning well. As in the school, topics and opportunities for learning are well linked. For example, children wrote sentences linked to work on habitats. This was also linked to home learning where parents worked with their children to discover the habitats of mini-beasts. Most adults skilfully

question children to extend their thinking, consolidate learning and ensure that they expand their vocabulary, which in many cases is limited when they join the early years. A very small number of adults are not fully trained on how to do this to a similar high standard.

- Teachers' assessment of children's achievement in the early years is accurate and has been verified by the local authority. The school's systems ensure that leaders have an accurate understanding of the progress individual children make. The information is used well in planning activities to support effective learning. Children in need of additional help and support are identified quickly and given the right support to help them catch up. Most children are ready and well-prepared for Year 1.
- Early years staff communicate and work very supportively with parents. Parents are encouraged to share with staff their observations of their children's learning at home and to come into the setting to read with their children.
- Good use is made of the stimulating indoor space. Resources are attractive, well organised and inviting so that children are provided with a range of opportunities for imaginative play and exploration. The outdoors, although much improved since the time of the previous inspection, is not as well developed as the indoors, particularly to promote children's literacy skills. Leaders have already identified this as a priority for further development.

School details

Unique reference number	101136
Local authority	Westminster
Inspection number	10011943

This inspection 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	218
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jon Ward
Headteacher	Emily Norman
Telephone number	020 7641 4130
Website	http://stmarys.bryanston.net
Email address	office@stmbs.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	6–7 February 2014

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds and most pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium is above that found nationally. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support the learning of those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- A below-average proportion of pupils have special educational needs or disabilities. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is well above that found nationally.
- The early years provision comprises a Nursery class for three-year-olds and a Reception class for four-year-olds, who all attend full time.
- A well above average proportion of pupils join and leave the school other than at the usual time.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- The school's website meets requirements for the publication of information.
- The school had a section 48 inspection of religious education in December 2014 and was judged to be good.
- Since the time of the previous inspection, there has been a large turnover of governors, including a new chair, and in September 2015 the school's leadership team was restructured.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 13 parts of lessons. All of these observations were made jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. Inspectors also read with pupils.
- Inspectors looked closely at the work in pupils' books to inform further the judgements made about pupils' progress, attainment and the quality of teaching.
- Inspectors met with a group of pupils and spoke informally to other pupils in lessons and during breaks and lunchtimes. Inspectors also met with the teachers and teaching assistants in addition to school leaders.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, including the chair, and with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors examined a range of documentation such as that relating to pupils' attainment and progress, information about how teachers' performance is managed, and minutes of governing body meetings. They also looked at records and documentation about pupils' behaviour and attendance and the ways in which the school keeps pupils safe.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents gathered from the 43 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, from the responses of the school's own recent survey of parents' views and from informal conversations in the playground. Inspectors also took account of the views of five members of staff who responded to the inspection questionnaire.

Inspection team

David Radomsky, lead inspector

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