

St Martin's Garden Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	133290
Local authority	Bath And North East Somerset
Inspection number	381489
Inspection dates	20–21 March 2012
Lead inspector	Ann Henderson HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	181
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Cross
Headteacher	Keith Ford
Date of previous school inspection	18–19 November 2008
School address	Lympsham Green Odd Down Bath BA2 2UN
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Ann Henderson

Her Majesty's Inspector

Barry Wood

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 19 lessons taught by 11 teachers, of which three were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, inspectors carried out short visits to classes to focus on behaviour and safety, and the quality of pupils' learning in lessons. Discussions were held with parents and carers, pupils, and staff, including senior and middle leaders, and the Chair of the Governing Body. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at school documentation which included the school development plan, safeguarding documents, information on pupils' attainment and progress, external monitoring reports and the governing body minutes. Inspectors analysed 61 questionnaires from parents and carers, and other questionnaires from pupils and staff.

Information about the school

St Martin's Garden is a smaller than average-sized primary school. The Early Years Foundation Stage children are taught in one Reception class. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is just below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is well above average. The proportion of pupils entering or leaving the school other than at the usual times is higher than the national average for primary schools. The school has a resourced-based provision catering for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder which is managed by the governing body. It is known as the Margaret Coates Centre. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

The school has received a number of awards in recognition of its work; these include Activemark, Healthy Schools Plus status, the local authority inclusion quality mark and Bike It! Bronze awards.

There is a children's centre on the school site which is not managed by the governing body. The centre also provides before- and after-school care. These services were not part of this inspection.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. The school has improved markedly over the last 18 months and is moving forward securely in many areas. Senior leaders have improved teaching and pupils' learning to satisfactory levels, but both remain inconsistent. It is not good because, although pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics has improved, some underachievement remains.
- Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Nearly all pupils, including those who are disabled or who have special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Pupils in the specialist centre benefit from effective provision and make good progress. Pupils' attainment has improved to broadly average by the time they leave in Year 6. Progress, however, is uneven across the school. Where teaching is weaker, pupils' progress is more limited.
- The quality of teaching is typically satisfactory. School records and inspection evidence indicate that the proportion of good or better teaching is increasing. However, these improvements have not had sufficient time to have a full impact on pupils' progress. Marking and feedback to pupils remains inconsistent and pupils' targets are not used with sufficient precision to accelerate their progress. The quality of teaching in the Margaret Coates Centre is never less than good.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour in lessons and around the school are good over time. They say they feel safe and that incidences of bullying are rare. Attendance has improved and is now broadly average. Pupils are polite and courteous. Parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive about the behaviour of pupils, and all said their child feels safe at school.
- Leaders and managers are strongly committed to improving outcomes for pupils. They provide good support to teaching staff. While monitoring activities, including the management of teaching, are a regular feature of the school's

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work, there is insufficient rigour and challenge to bring about rapid improvement.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By the end of July 2013, improve pupils' progress and raise their achievement across the school, so that a very large majority reach the levels of attainment expected for their age by:
 - improving the proportion of consistently good or better teaching, so that it secures good progress in all lessons
 - consistently providing pupils with clear pointers for improvement through marking and feedback in all subjects
 - making more effective use of targets to enable pupils to monitor their own progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Increase the rigour of monitoring activities so that leaders, managers and the governing body provide greater challenge to accelerate pupils' progress.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Most parents and carers who responded to the parental questionnaire or who spoke to inspectors felt their child was making good progress, and many commented on how much the school had improved over recent years. The inspection found that, although many improvements have been recently made, they have not been in place long enough to have a sustained impact on raising pupils' achievement. Consequently, pupils' achievement is satisfactory, but uneven across the school.

From below expected starting points, particularly in language development, children settle quickly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and most make good progress. There is an appropriate balance of adult-led and child-initiated learning opportunities. However, during child-initiated activities, sometimes chances are missed to interact with children to increase their knowledge and understanding across the range of areas of learning. Pupils enter Year 1 with skills that are broadly in line with those expected for their age. The focused teaching of early literacy has ensured that pupils are making satisfactory and improving progress in Key Stage 1. Pupils at an early stage of reading know their sounds well, were able to blend and sound out words, and were keen to read aloud. Pupils' attainment in reading by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 is broadly average.

There has been a legacy of underachievement. As a result, pupils' attainment in

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writing and mathematics is not as strong as their reading. The school is effectively working to improve pupils' progress and address previous underachievement. Pupils are keen to learn, cooperate well with teachers and have good attitudes to learning. Relationships are good. Pupils work well with one another in pairs and trios, particularly during whole-class teaching. This contributes well to their enjoyment of school. In the Year 2 class, pupils enjoyed discussing the groupings of a range of words to identify connectives, verbs and adjectives. They showed a good understanding of the use of connectives and were able to create complex sentences linked to their topic about owls. Since the start of this school year, progress has started to accelerate, and the gap between the attainment of pupils in this school and those nationally is beginning to close. However, there are still inconsistencies in the progress of pupils in different classes, particularly in lower Key Stage 2.

Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make similar progress to their peers because they are provided with good support. Pupils in the Margaret Coates Centre make good progress because relationships are very good, expectations are clear, and a range of communication and language opportunities are provided to encourage pupils to articulate their views.

Quality of teaching

Parents and carers hold very positive views about how well their child is taught. Pupils are making better progress because the quality of teaching has improved and it makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The planned curriculum supports pupils' academic and personal development increasingly well, through interesting topics and a good range of visits and visitors to stimulate learning. During the inspection, the Year 5 and 6 pupils visited a local Hindu Temple, providing a range of opportunities to develop independent learning and to gain a greater understanding of other cultures and religions.

Teachers use their knowledge of subjects well and, in the best lessons, ask incisive questions to drive learning and accelerate progress. In a mathematics lesson for higher-achieving Year 6 pupils, the use of a range of complex problems helped pupils develop their understanding of how to calculate angles. Effective use of mathematical language, high expectations, good teacher questioning and a broad range of resources were key features that supported pupils to make accelerated progress. Pupils demonstrated very good mathematical skills and successfully solved a range of problems. However, these features are not sufficiently evident in all lessons, which accounts for the variations in pupils' progress.

Assessment procedures have improved recently and teachers are making better use of more accurate information about how well pupils are progressing, to plan lessons to meet the needs of groups of pupils. However, planning does not always sharply focus on ensuring pupils make accelerated progress. Pupils say that feedback provided to them is helpful. Nevertheless, inspection evidence from pupils' past work shows that marking and feedback to pupils is inconsistent and does not always help

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them to understand what they need to do to improve their work. In addition, expectations are not always sufficiently high to enable all groups of pupils to make good or accelerated progress. Evidence from pupils' work shows that presentation of pupils' work is inconsistent. Some pupils set out their work neatly using rulers and headings to present their work well, but this is not always the case. There is insufficient focus on good standards of presentation. Furthermore, discussions with pupils indicate that they do not fully know the targets set for them in writing and mathematics, and they are not used with sufficient precision to enable them to monitor their own progress.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The vast majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire feel that behaviour is typically good. This was confirmed through discussions with pupils. There are incidents of unacceptable behaviour from time to time, but these are recorded in the school's behaviour log. Inspection evidence confirms that the school deals with these incidents effectively. Pupils agree that this is the case. The strategies for dealing with challenging behaviour are effective and the behaviour policy is consistently applied. As a result, the school provides a calm and purposeful learning environment, where pupils are polite and courteous, play well together and have good relationships with one another and with adults.

The school has successfully worked with pupils, parents and carers to improve rates of attendance and reduce the persistent absence of some pupils. It has also significantly reduced exclusion rates. So much so that, this academic year, no pupils have been subject to an exclusion. This is a clear indicator that pupils are keen to come to school and enjoy the learning opportunities provided for them.

All parents and carers say their child feels safe in school, and pupils agree. The school has taken robust action to improve safeguarding procedures, which are now good.

Leadership and management

The headteacher and senior leaders have a clear vision for the school. They have developed the leadership skills of middle leaders and successfully distributed leadership throughout the school. Leaders and managers are determined to raise the achievement of pupils further. The school's mission statement, 'No child left behind...', underpins the school's focus on equality of opportunity. Discrimination in any form is not tolerated and contributes significantly to the harmonious school community. The resolve to improve has been shown by the school's success in addressing the areas for improvement from the previous inspection. For example, safeguarding systems are now robust. Staff training is up to date and all staff are trained at a suitable level according to their responsibilities. Records are well organised and expectations are clearly communicated to all staff. Pupils are making improved progress in reading because there is a clear focus in classrooms on promoting a love of reading. In addition, leaders have successfully improved

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behaviour and the attendance rates of pupils. This illustrates the school's satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school has developed the curriculum to provide well-organised and appropriate opportunities for learning for all groups of pupils. For example, pupils in the Margaret Coates Centre thoroughly enjoyed a music session, participating well in rhythmic activities and singing together. Overall, the curriculum is having a satisfactory impact on promoting pupils' learning and progress, although it is more effective in the Margaret Coates Centre where specialist provision helps pupils achieve well.

Leaders, managers and the governing body know the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have, together with the local authority, developed a single plan to drive improvement. However, their monitoring activities do not always rigorously check on the most important aspects to drive and increase the rate of progress for all pupils. Good use has been made of consultant support to improve the quality of teaching to at least satisfactory levels, and to establish a positive learning environment and consistent expectations for learning in all lessons. Teaching and learning are monitored regularly by senior leaders. As a result, the quality of teaching is steadily improving over time and there are examples of more effective teaching in some classes.

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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).

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.



22 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Martin's Garden Primary School, Bath BA2 2UN

Thank you for welcoming us to your school, and special thanks to those of you who took the time to talk to us. We found you extremely interesting to talk to, and very polite and helpful. You spoke enthusiastically about your school and how much you enjoy learning.

Your school is providing you with a satisfactory education. You behave well, and feel safe in school and know there is always someone to talk to if you have a problem. You enjoy learning, which is reflected in your improved attendance. Those of you with particular needs in the Margaret Coates Centre learn well and make good progress, because the adults know you well and understand how to meet your learning needs. Throughout the school, teachers support your learning appropriately through their marking of your work, but we think that you could be provided with more information about how to improve your work. Not all teaching is as good as it could be. We have asked the school to always make sure that teachers help you to make good progress and to help you to understand how you can use your targets to check on your own progress in learning.

You told us you enjoy many of the things you learn about in school. Your headteacher, the staff and members of the governing body are doing many good things to make your school even better. We think those who lead and manage your school need to check really carefully on the progress that is being made to improve your school, to make sure the improvements they have planned bring about swift improvement, and to support you all to make at least good progress in your learning.

We enjoyed visiting your school. Continue to work hard and, most of all, enjoy your learning. Thank you again for your help.

Yours sincerely

Ann Henderson
Her Majesty's Inspector

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