

St Mary Redcliffe and Temple School

Somerset Square, Bristol, BS1 6RT

Inspection dates 15–16 April 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Sixth form provision		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The leadership of the inspirational headteacher and her senior team is outstanding. This has successfully enabled the school to continue to provide an excellent standard of education to its diverse student community.
- Systems to monitor and improve the quality of teaching are well established, comprehensive and highly effective. Staff are encouraged to develop leadership roles, including working with, and helping to improve, other local schools. All leaders contribute extremely well to improving teaching and learning.
- Church school status makes an important and distinctive contribution to the school's exceptionally positive values and beliefs. Leaders and the highly effective governing body ensure that students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are given the highest possible priority.
- Students' behaviour, both within classrooms and around the school site, is extremely impressive. This reflects their high level of maturity and social responsibility. Attitudes to learning are overwhelmingly positive; students are appreciative of staff's efforts to help them to be successful at school.
- Students report that they feel exceptionally safe. They are highly knowledgeable about a wide range of safety-related social issues.
- Teaching is consistently of very high quality. Teachers routinely plan lessons that provide suitable challenge for students of all abilities. Teachers' expectations of students are typically very high.
- Teaching is strong in all subjects, including in English and in mathematics. All students quickly gain the literacy and numeracy skills which they need to enable them to achieve extremely well across the curriculum.
- Students achieve exceptionally well in a range of GCSE subjects. The proportion gaining five good GCSEs, including English and mathematics, has remained well above the national average since the previous inspection.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs are very well looked after and achieve as well as their peers in school. Rates of progress for all groups of students, including those who are disadvantaged, are rapidly increasing across both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4.
- The outstanding sixth form makes an excellent contribution to St Mary Redcliffe. As in the rest of the school, students benefit from consistently high quality teaching.
- Students in the sixth form have an exemplary attitude to their studies and reach high academic standards. Almost all students continue into Year 13 from Year 12, indicating high levels of achievement and students' satisfaction with their course choices.

Information about this inspection

- During the inspection, 44 part-lessons were observed, including visits to an assembly and tutorial time. Meetings were held with: senior leaders, including the headteacher; middle leaders; members of the governing body; and four groups of students. In addition, the lead inspector met with a senior local authority officer responsible for school improvement.
- Inspectors looked at: planning and school self-evaluation documentation; information on students' progress; examples of students' work; and a range of policy documents.
- Inspectors took account of the 186 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). In addition, inspectors took account of the 80 responses to a questionnaire for members of staff.
- On the first morning of the inspection, inspectors observed students' participation in a service at the nearby St Mary Redcliffe Church.

Inspection team

Ken Bush, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Martin Marsh	Additional Inspector
Joanna Pike	Additional Inspector
Elizabeth Stiddard	Additional Inspector
James Dyke	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- St Mary Redcliffe and Temple School is much larger than most secondary schools.
- The school has a very large sixth form, which is continuing to increase in size. An increasing proportion of its students joins the sixth form having attended other schools up to the age of 16. These students now make up the majority of those on roll in Year 12.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs in the school as a whole is close to the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged students for whom the school receives the pupil premium is below average, but increasing. This is additional government funding for those students known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- About two thirds of students are of White British heritage. The remaining one third of students on roll is made up of a wide range of minority ethnic groups.
- A very small number of students in Years 10 and 11 follow vocational courses at The Park for part of their education. The achievement of these students is not reported in detail to avoid identifying individuals.
- The school meets the government's floor targets, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher is a national leader of education. She provides extensive support to other schools within the Bristol area. Ten staff at the school are specialist leaders of education, also working to improve provision in other local schools. St Mary Redcliffe has Teaching School status. Among other enterprises, this involves responsibility for initial teacher training.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that staff give more timely support to those students who are prone to make errors or who fail to record information correctly in their books, so that the risk of them falling behind their classmates is reduced.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Leadership and management at St Mary Redcliffe are exceptional at all levels, including in the sixth form. The headteacher conveys great passion and ambition for all students and staff. She and her team have made sure that the high standards highlighted by Ofsted at the school's previous inspection have been maintained. The school has continued to develop its mission of providing consistently excellent education for an increasingly diverse student body.
- Ensuring that teaching is of the highest possible quality remains the school's chief priority. Systems to improve, monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching are robust and well established. Leaders have a very clear and accurate view of what constitutes effective teaching and learning; they evaluate strengths and areas for improvement with skill and tenacity.
- The school invests heavily and productively in ensuring that staff and leaders have every opportunity to develop their expertise for the benefit of students. Professional development for staff is extremely well planned and implemented; it is linked closely to teachers' targets for improvement. Leaders ensure that pay progression is closely aligned to performance, with salary increases dependent upon students achieving consistently well.
- Highly effective systems to recruit, develop and retain outstanding leaders have enabled the school to maintain impressive standards. The school takes its Teaching School status extremely seriously. It has a proven track record of developing staff both at St Mary Redcliffe and beyond. The responses to the staff questionnaires indicate that morale is high.
- Middle leaders, including those responsible for subjects, were unanimous in confirming that they are held rigorously to account for the work of their teams. They appreciate the high quality of support provided to them by senior leaders. They also value the opportunity to use their initiative to find creative approaches to improving teaching and learning. Middle leadership, including that of the House system, is extremely effective, leading to measurable gains in students' achievement.
- The curriculum is extremely broad and well balanced. It enables all groups of students to pursue suitable options at Key Stage 4. The effectiveness of the curriculum is reflected in the consistently high levels of student achievement.
- The promotion of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is extremely impressive and contributes enormously to the welcoming ethos of the school. Equality of opportunity is vigorously promoted; discrimination in any form is not tolerated. Students are highly reflective about matters of faith and personal responsibility; their social awareness is remarkably perceptive.
- Very well planned programmes of study, including through the Values in Practice initiative, provide an excellent foundation for students' appreciation of modern British values, such as respect for the law and democracy. There are many and varied opportunities for students to demonstrate their leadership skills, including through the highly active and well-run school council.
- Students are given high quality advice and guidance about careers and the next stage of their education by knowledgeable staff. Take up of sixth form places for mostly academic subjects is consistently high. Those students benefiting from vocational courses are also well supported in the transition to local colleges and on to apprenticeships.
- The school has been creative and resourceful in how it has gone about using the additional funding for disadvantaged students. All students who benefit from this funding are very well supported by learning mentors, as well as being provided with additional 'booster' sessions in English and in mathematics.
- The school wisely does not make the assumption that the needs of all students in this group are the same. Increasingly, the precise nature of the support provided to disadvantaged students is tailored to individual circumstances. Current Year 11 students have gained considerably from the Progress + programme. This involves students having access to mathematics coaching, the expertise of a GCSE examiner in English and one-to-one review sessions which focus on making the most of students' progress in both subjects.
- Parental satisfaction with the school is extraordinarily high. In the responses to Parent View, 98% of parents indicated that they would recommend the school to another parent. Positive responses to all the questions posed are much higher than those found typically for secondary schools.
- The local authority provides only light touch support to the school. This is because local authority officers consider that St Mary Redcliffe is one of the highest achieving schools in the city. Alongside the headteacher, they have successfully brokered opportunities for a number of leaders from the school, including specialist leaders in education, to support colleagues in other Bristol schools. This has helped both partner schools and St Mary Redcliffe's leaders to expand their leadership experience.
- Leaders work in close partnership with the alternative education provider, The Park, to make sure that

students' progress and attendance are effectively monitored. They also make sure that rigorous arrangements are in place for the students who attend the off-site provision to be safe.

- Safeguarding arrangements are extremely well maintained and meet all current requirements. Leaders and other staff with responsibilities in this area, such as learning mentors, are experienced and exceptionally proficient in ensuring that staff's training needs are kept fully up to date. E-safety is given a particularly high priority through assemblies and information and communication technology programmes of work. A dedicated member of staff ensures that the safety and learning needs of looked after children are taken especially seriously.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is extremely effective. Along with the school's accomplished leadership team, it has ensured the provision of high quality education at St Mary Redcliffe over a sustained period.
 - Governors are very knowledgeable about how well the school performs compared with others nationally and the quality of teaching at the school. They ensure that staff pay increases are entirely justifiable and related closely to students' achievement. The use of additional funding for disadvantaged students is closely monitored. Leaders are held firmly to account for the school's performance.

The behaviour and safety of students are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is outstanding. Students, including those in the sixth form, display exceptionally positive attitudes to learning in the full range of subjects. Those spoken to by inspectors in classrooms, in pre-arranged meetings and informally around the school were equally enthusiastic about all aspects of school life. They were also very keen to express how well they feel that the school looks after them and prepares them for life outside of, and beyond, school.
- Behaviour in lessons is typically excellent, with low-level disruption extremely rare. Students express great confidence in staff's ability to deal with any minor issues and believe passionately that the system of rewards and sanctions is fair. Conduct around the school at break and at lunchtime was sensible, calm and orderly, but also suitably relaxed; little adult supervision is required.
- During the journey from school to the local church and back, students conducted themselves extremely well, reflecting how well they understand what is expected of them when they are outside in the wider community. Their behaviour while inside the church was highly respectful. Parents who responded to Parent View were almost unanimous in their opinion that students are well behaved. Staff gave a similarly strong affirmation in the questionnaire that behaviour is of a very high standard.
- Records show that the rate of fixed-term exclusions from school is below the national average. Students who join the school with known behavioural, emotional or social difficulties are extremely well managed. School records show numerous examples of where students' behaviour has been radically improved as a result of the expertise of leaders, teachers and other staff.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding. Leaders and other staff are extremely vigilant about all aspects of safety, including ensuring that the school site is well maintained and secure. Arrangements for checking visitors to the school are robust. Child protection procedures are exceptionally thorough and regularly reviewed. All staff spoken to about this aspect of the school's work were clear about what was expected of them.
- Students are highly knowledgeable about safety-related issues that might affect them outside of school. This includes child sexual exploitation, domestic violence, substance abuse and radicalisation.
- Students reported that bullying of any kind, including homophobic bullying and that relating to social media, is very rare. They attribute much of this to the very effective tutorial arrangements which enable older students to mentor and support younger ones. Students have a very strong sense of the importance of tolerance and mutual respect, and see the diversity evident within their school community as one of its chief strengths.
- Students attend school regularly. Absence rates are consistently below the national average and improving further. Systems to monitor and follow up absences are exemplary and include the use of a full-time attendance officer. Students behave consistently well when working off site at The Park. Like other students, they are kept exceptionally safe.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- The consistently high quality of teaching provided by the school, including in the sixth form, is underpinned by excellent relationships between staff and students. Teachers' expectations are routinely very high, enabling students to progress rapidly in their learning and achieve extremely well in different subjects.
- Lessons are well planned and carefully tailored to meet the different needs and aptitudes of students. Teachers make very effective use of what students already know, understand and can do to ensure that all groups of students are given the right degree of challenge. The excellent subject knowledge of teachers enables them to provide interesting work for students, which promotes deep understanding and curiosity about learning.
- The teaching of English is extremely effective. This helps students both to be articulate in expressing themselves and proficient and enthusiastic readers. Students' writing skills are also very well developed in a range of subjects. Most can write with confidence for different purposes. Students also develop the literacy skills needed to be successful in examinations.
- Teachers' expert use of questioning develops students' thinking skills well, including in mathematics. Teachers in this subject are adept at finding a range of different ways to stimulate students' understanding and engagement. The quality of teaching in mathematics has improved since the previous inspection, resulting in higher grades at GCSE level.
- Students of low ability or who have special educational needs develop their basic skills quickly in both English and mathematics. This is a result of excellent teaching in class and well-planned interventions outside of class, where needed.
- Students who find learning difficult, or who struggle with organising their books and folders efficiently, sometimes forget to record key information or they make simple errors. This is not always picked up quickly enough by staff and rectified. Occasionally, this then becomes an obstacle in helping these students to progress as quickly as their classmates. In every other respect, the quality of support for students, including that provided by teaching assistants, is first class.
- In most cases, teachers' marking provides students with clear guidance about how to improve their work. Students spoken to during the inspection were extremely complimentary about how teachers' comments and the targets they are set help them to progress quickly.
- Homework has a high profile in the school and is regularly set and marked in all subjects. Nine in ten parents who responded to Parent View agreed with inspectors that homework makes a valuable contribution to students' learning.

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Students' achievement is outstanding. When students leave at the end of Year 11, they typically reach standards which are consistently above national averages. For example, the proportion of students gaining five good GCSEs, including English and mathematics, was 15% above the national average in 2014; this gap increased notably compared with the previous year.
- Attainment is consistently high across a range of subjects at GCSE level. Students perform especially well in English, history, religious education and science. In the very few subjects where attainment was less strong in 2014, there is evidence of marked improvements for current Year 11 students. This demonstrates the school's well-developed capacity to address any relative underperformance quickly and effectively.
- Rates of progress are rapidly increasing for all groups of students currently in the school, both in Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. This reflects the school's successful efforts to ensure that the quality of teaching is equally strong across the school. With only minor variations from year to year, students from different minority ethnic groups achieve as well as other students.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs are catered for extremely well. Consequently, they make significant gains in confidence and thrive academically and socially at St Mary Redcliffe. They progress at a similarly rapid rate to their peers in school.
- The most-able students are routinely challenged to do as well as possible. Their attainment is high, as can be seen in the well-above-average proportion who gain A* or A grades at GCSE level across the range of the curriculum. These students progress more rapidly than similar students nationally.
- In 2014, the attainment of Year 11 disadvantaged students supported by additional funding was the equivalent of half a GCSE grade behind in English and a grade behind in mathematics when compared with other students nationally. The gaps with other students in the school, who achieved exceptionally

well, were a little wider at about a grade in English and a grade and a half in mathematics. This relatively small group of disadvantaged students, some with significant additional needs and challenging personal circumstances, were overall much less able than their peers in school. Nevertheless, some individuals still made outstanding progress and gained the higher A* and A grades.

- The overall rate of progress made by disadvantaged students has increased year on year since the previous inspection, bringing them much closer to the rate made by other students nationally. Their progress is accelerating rapidly across all year groups. In a number of instances, especially in Key Stage 3, their progress exceeds that of other students in the school. Inspection evidence indicates that Year 11 students in this group are securely on track to significantly narrow any attainment gaps in this summer's examinations, including in English and mathematics.
- The very few students who attend alternative provision for part of their education achieve well. They benefit greatly from their study of vocational courses. This enables these students, along with others in the school, to be extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- The school does not enter any students for GCSE examinations before the completion of courses towards the end of Year 11.
- The excellent results gained by students in the sixth form over time make a strong contribution to the school's outstanding achievement overall.

The sixth form provision

is outstanding

- Students in the very large sixth form typically attain well above average standards in a range of subjects. There was a slight dip in performance in a few subjects at A level in 2014 compared with previous years. Inspection evidence indicates strongly that results overall in 2015 are well on track to rise further.
- Disadvantaged students achieve at least as well as others as a result of excellent support from tutors and others working in a mentoring role. The relatively few students who take re-sit GCSE examinations in English and in mathematics attain well in these subjects.
- As in the rest of the school, teachers in the sixth form have extremely high expectations of all students. They use their knowledge and expertise to motivate and inspire students to do as well as possible. They are highly proficient in enabling students to think in depth about their studies. Students also develop well their critical study skills. They are highly adept at undertaking personal research and keeping detailed and effective notes on their work.
- All students who spoke to inspectors were extremely positive about the quality of education they receive and the difference it makes to their lives. In class, they show exceptional levels of commitment and engagement with learning. Behaviour is unfailingly impeccable. Like younger students, they understand fully how to keep safe and how to navigate risks outside of school.
- Leadership in the sixth form is outstanding. There is a clear focus on continuing to improve the quality of teaching and learning for all groups of students. Leaders ensure that students are exceptionally well prepared for the next stages of education, training and careers. The information, advice and guidance given are extremely comprehensive and well coordinated.
- Students' transition from age 16 is carefully managed, including for the rapidly growing proportion of students joining the sixth form from schools other than St Mary Redcliffe. Excellent liaison arrangements with other schools are in place. The proportion of students who remain in the sixth form after their first year is routinely very high. This reflects both excellent achievement in Year 12 and high levels of student satisfaction with the courses that they have chosen.

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	109327
Local authority	City of Bristol
Inspection number	461599

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,659
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	579
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lynne Alba
Headteacher	Elisabeth Gilpin
Date of previous school inspection	18–19 January 2012
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