

St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Coronation Crescent, Madeley, Telford, Shropshire, TF7 5EJ

Inspection dates

21–22 May 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders provide clear direction to staff and pupils. High expectations are driving improvement.
- Governors have a wide range of skills and are supportive of the school. They contribute to its continuous improvement.
- Pupils are polite, behave well and interact with other pupils well. The school atmosphere is calm and purposeful.
- Parents and carers are positive about this school. They feel that their children learn well and are safe and well cared for.
- The school has made significant improvements to ensuring that more pupils consistently attend school more frequently.
- Reading is taught well across all year groups. Teachers prioritise using a range of texts and subject content to expand pupils' vocabulary and widen their knowledge base.
- A broad and balanced curriculum provides a good range of experiences through lessons, educational visits, events and opportunities.
- The school prioritise meeting the social, emotional and mental health needs of the pupils. As a result, behaviour is outstanding and children engage well with learning.
- Children in early years make a very good start, in a secure and nurturing setting. They have access to a wide range of experiences that help develop strong early learning skills.
- Despite rapid improvements, not enough pupils achieve at least age-related expectations in English and mathematics at the end of key stage 2.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is improving rapidly. However, although their progress is improving, the attainment of this group of pupils is still too low.
- Teachers occasionally do not give pupils work that challenges them sufficiently. The proportions of pupils attaining the higher standard and greater depth in English and mathematics are not high enough.
- Middle leaders are relatively new to their roles and have not had the time to monitor the impact of improvements to the curriculum or their impact on progress and attainment.
- Although pupils are increasingly becoming confident and independent learners, more opportunities could still be provided to encourage this further.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

Leaders and those responsible for governance should:

- secure good progress for all groups of pupils, and particularly disadvantaged pupils and the most able pupils, by ensuring that all teachers are able to accurately identify what pupils have learnt and what they need to do to achieve at least, age-related expectations
- ensure that middle leadership at the school is further strengthened so that these leaders are able to hold all teaching staff to account for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment
- ensure that all pupils develop effective learning behaviours so they are able to independently recall what they know in order to make sense of new information and solve problems.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders have worked hard to identify any weaknesses in the quality of education. They use a range of monitoring systems to ensure they have a detailed understanding of the strengths of the school. This information is then used to identify a set of strategies to improve outcomes. As a result, pupils' progress is improving and the achievement gap between pupils at the school and other pupils nationally, is closing.
- Leaders and those responsible for governance have ensured that the school is calm, welcoming and supportive. As a result, pupils feel safe, valued, engage well with learning and are encouraged to accept and learn from each other.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced and ensures that all children have the opportunities to develop skills in a range of areas. The school has planned its curriculum well so that it inspires the pupils and gives them rich learning experiences that enhance their academic progress and their personal development effectively. The curriculum is consistent with British values, which are given high priority throughout the school, and this prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- Staff's views about the effectiveness of the school are positive and they are confident about the vision to move the school forward. They believe that leaders are incredibly supportive of them, while ensuring that they are all working to get the very best outcomes for pupils. Training for staff is carefully targeted to meet the school's needs and it gives staff the opportunity to effectively develop their professional skills.
- Parents and carers are very positive about the school and feel their children are happy at school. One parent who responded to the free text service said: 'The teachers are all very caring and, as a parent, I feel the children's needs are always a priority.' Parents overwhelmingly would recommend the school to other families.
- Leaders have been relentless in ensuring that disadvantaged pupils make stronger progress. The pupil premium is used to support a range of strategies and interventions to ensure that disadvantaged pupils make at least the same levels of progress as other pupils nationally. Leaders have used this money for: additional staff to provide small groups for reading, writing and phonics, to purchase additional support to ensure that children attend school more regularly and to provide support from educational psychologists who provide training on improving the mental health of pupils.
- The physical education (PE) and sport premium is used well to ensure that all pupils have access to high quality physical development in the school. Leaders are using the money to provide additional sports coaches. These members of staff provide sports experiences for the pupils, while modelling good practice to the school's teachers. As a result, the school staff are now becoming proficient in providing high quality PE. Pupils say this is one of the 'best bits' about the school.
- Leaders have worked hard to welcome a number of pupils who have not been as successful at other schools. All staff welcome these pupils to the school and work hard to make sure they settle quickly and feel valued. Parents of these pupils are positive about how the school achieves this. Leaders have now identified systems to ensure that when pupils start with low levels of achievement, the gaps between their

attainment and that of other pupils is closed quickly. However, this development is at an early stage.

- As a response to weaknesses identified by leaders, the school has appointed a middle leadership group to the school. These members of staff lead on the development of English, mathematics and science across the school. Middle leaders are relatively new to their post and are still currently developing their understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of teaching and learning.

Governance of the school

- Governance is strong.
- Both the chair of governors and vice-chair meet regularly with school leaders to offer support, advice and guidance.
- The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities for the school well and ensures that leaders remain appropriately challenged in ensuring that all pupils achieve good outcomes. For example, members have regular reviews about how the provision for disadvantaged pupils is being developed.
- Governors undergo a range of visits to the school, including joint monitoring meetings with leaders. As a result, they are able to hold leaders to account about the quality of provision at the school. Staff say that the governors visit the school often and are a source of support and encouragement.
- Minutes from meetings show that governors work hard to deepen their understanding of the school. As a result, they have a detailed understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school has a strong culture of safeguarding and all members of the community share in this commitment to keep children safe.
- Leaders have ensured that all relevant checks are made on adults before they are allowed to start working or volunteering in the school. Records are kept in a good order and are regularly checked by governors and school leaders.
- Staff have received relevant training in, for example, child protection, radicalisation and child sexual exploitation. Consequently, adults at the school are alert to concerns regarding pupils' welfare.
- Leaders have developed an effective system for recording and acting upon safeguarding concerns. There is an effective approach to ensuring that pupils and their families receive any extra support from outside agencies quickly and effectively.
- The great majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, agree that their child feels safe at the school and is well looked after.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is good and improving. Pupils are engaged in lessons and proud to share what they are doing. One Year 6 pupil explained, 'We learn lots of new things. The teachers really help us.' Positive attitudes to learning across the school mean that more pupils are making good levels of progress.
- Where there are small pockets of inconsistent teaching, leaders are addressing this through ongoing support, monitoring and additional training. When needed, leaders have taken decisive action to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment quickly.
- Teachers use a range of different questioning styles to challenge the thinking of pupils and deepen their understanding. As a result, teachers are able to quickly address misunderstandings.
- Teachers work hard to ensure that all pupils are working towards age-related expectations at all stages within the school. While this demonstrates increasing aspirations for all the pupils, occasionally some pupils do not have the necessary prior skills to learn these higher skills. As a result, this affects how effectively these pupils can engage with learning.
- The most able pupils are making increasingly greater levels of progress. Outcomes in books shows that the quality of provision for the most able pupils is developing well. For example, some pupils in Year 2 are already achieving expectations in line with older pupils. However, leaders have identified that this continues to be an area for improvement. They have rightly identified that more pupils need to be learning to a greater depth, or exceeding age-related expectations.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make very strong progress. Teachers have a detailed understanding of the needs of these pupils and work hard to identify provision that meets their needs. While the school has identified that some of these pupils have lower starting points than other pupils, teachers are confident that their progress will match that of their peers. Outcomes in books shows that pupils take pride in their work and are becoming more confident in evaluating their learning. For example, in Year 5 writing books, pupils were identifying mistakes in their writing and how well they had achieved the objectives for that lesson. While this is not consistent in all areas and subjects across the school, it is a positive step in securing more confident and independent learners.
- Phonics is well taught in the school. As a result of high expectations and carefully planned reading opportunities in the early years and Year 1, the vast majority of pupils achieve age-related expectations in the national phonics test. Pupils have access to a wide range of texts and are confident in using a range of strategies to read. As a result, more pupils are achieving age-related expectations in Year 2 and Year 6.
- The quality of writing continues to develop across the school. More pupils are writing for increasing periods of time. As pupils progress through the school, expectations remain high for them to be able to write accurately and for a range of purposes. As pupils get older, they are becoming better at checking the accuracy of their writing and, when needed, in making corrections.
- Teaching assistants are well deployed across the school. They work hard to ensure that

pupils access the learning within classes and, where needed, provide enhanced one-to-one or small group work. As a result, those pupils who require additional support receive this quickly.

- Where teaching is strongest pupils are effective in reviewing the quality of their own learning. They make decisions about whether their work is accurate and how well they are achieving the intended outcomes of the lesson or scheme of work. They are developing the skills of identifying what they need to do to improve the quality of their work and are eager to improve.
- Leaders monitor the quality of learning well and ensure that systems are well used to ensure that teachers are held to account for the progress that pupils make. Systems to monitor the performance of teachers include a range of methods, such as book reviews, progress analysis and the views of pupils. As a result, leaders are able to accurately assess where the strengths and weaknesses of teaching, learning and assessment are.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and trust the adults to look after them well. They feel that they have access to a range of different opportunities and feel that teachers work hard to help them improve.
- Pupils feel that teachers give them good feedback about their work, particularly in mathematics and reading. They are proud to share what they are doing in class and are confident in speaking to a range of different people.
- Some pupils were not able to recall what methods they could use to achieve the aim of their work. This limited their ability solve problems or be independent learners.
- All groups of pupils feel safe across all areas of school. Playtime supervision is well managed and there are plenty of adults to look after pupils. Pupils have access to a range of outdoor play equipment that effectively promotes their physical and social development.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, especially online safety. They know what they need to do to keep their personal details safe and that they must be very careful about posting information online. They have learnt a lot about safety outside school from assemblies and lessons.
- Pupils have access to a range of opportunities to help them take on additional responsibilities. A number of the Year 6 children take on 'ambassador' roles in the school. These ambassadors prioritise helping other pupils at breaktime and lunchtime. They have completed training on playing with other pupils and basic child protection. Some pupils also take on head boy or head girl roles.
- The development of charity work has an incredibly high profile in the school and reflects its strong Catholic ethos. A number of pupils take on the role of 'Mini Vinnies'. 'Mini Vinnies' are pupils who, with the permission of their parents and the support of the school, are encouraged to raise money for, and awareness of, charities across the

world. Some pupils told inspectors how they have recently raised money for children in India to attend school.

- Assemblies and lessons support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. They reflect the strong caring ethos of the school. The school provides a range of extra-curricular opportunities including before-school breakfast clubs and after-school clubs. Pupils enjoy their lessons and their learning is reinforced by related educational visits.
- There are a wide range of opportunities for pupils to take part in a range of sporting enrichment activities.
- Attendance for all groups is rapidly improving and the number of pupils who regularly miss school is reducing quickly. Attendance policies and procedures are effectively managed by a highly skilled team.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- The school behaviour policy has been carefully constructed to ensure that pupils can take a leading role in managing their own emotions and actions. The 'four R's' of respectful, resilient, responsible and reflective, underpin the approach of the school. Two pupils were keen to share with inspectors what these mean and how they help them in school.
- The highly effective approach to managing behaviour is pivotal to pupils' progress. By taking strong action to understand the causes of certain types of behaviour, leaders are able to identify the most appropriate strategies to reduce their incidence. Leaders have been effective in implementing support for families and bringing in additional sources of intervention, such as anger management and mindfulness training.
- Detailed behaviour records show that leaders analyse incidents to look for patterns and causes. The school has been very successful in modifying the behaviour of individual pupils who struggle to control their actions. Exclusions have occurred but have rapidly reduced over time.
- Bullying is rare, and pupils know what to do if they feel that someone is bullying them. They have a detailed knowledge of the types of bullying. This knowledge is reinforced through lessons and the high profile the school places on 'anti-bullying' week. Pupils are beginning to link the reasons for bullying to a developing awareness of the protected characteristics of the Equality Act, such as age, disability, race and religion.
- Pupils conduct themselves well in lessons, around school, in the dining hall and on the playground. They greet visitors in a friendly way and remember to stand aside and hold doors open for adults.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Leaders and governors took decisive action in 2018 to improve outcomes because progress and attainment at key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics were below the national average. Attainment at key stage 1 had broadly in line with the

national average for reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders' actions include implementing a range of strategies, such as enhancing staff numbers and targeted training. The school's current assessment information indicates all pupils are making better progress. While levels are still expected to be slightly lower than national averages, at key stage 2, the gap has closed significantly.

- Work in books and the school's own assessment information indicates that most pupils now make good progress across a range of subjects, including English and mathematics. This is because of the improvements in the quality of teaching resulting from targeted training and coaching. However, while many pupils achieve well, some of the most able pupils do not always achieve the higher standards they are capable of.
- Work in pupils' mathematics books and school records show that most pupils are making good progress. Pupils' knowledge and skills are improving and they are developing a deeper understanding of the calculation processes. However, opportunities to say how they arrive at their answers and to develop their reasoning skills are less well developed. Pupils across the school are beginning to draw on their increasing mathematical knowledge and understanding to explain their thought processes, but their explanations lack sufficient detail.
- Pupils' writing includes a variety of sentence structures and phrases to add interest. Older pupils include a range of extensive vocabulary and description in their work. Teachers have high expectations and include examples from different aspects of the curriculum to enthuse pupils. For example, in one class, the pupils were using examples from apartheid to develop persuasive writing. This approach ensures that most pupils are making good progress and older pupils are producing emotive and cohesive pieces of writing.
- Pupils read with appropriate fluency and comprehension, considering their age and ability. They use their knowledge of phonics to read unfamiliar words well. They read widely and are developing a real enjoyment of learning. Pupils in Year 1 consistently achieve well in the national phonics check.
- While in the past attainment for disadvantage pupils was not as strong as that of other pupils nationally, this has been an area of real improvement. Current school assessment information shows that this area has rapidly improved and the gap is closing quickly. Outcomes in books support this judgement. This improvement is due to the effective range of strategies that leaders and teachers have put into place to ensure that no child fails to make the necessary progress. While improvements have been made, this remains a priority for leaders.
- Pupils with SEND make good progress from their starting points. The leader of the provision for pupils with SEND manages provision effectively and identifies pupils' needs well. Pupils benefit from carefully planned interventions and high expectations from all staff.
- Pupils acquire appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills in a range of subjects other than in English and mathematics. Work in their books show that the majority of pupils are making good progress. For example, in Year 4, a strong focus on vocabulary and practical learning shows that pupils are starting to develop strong scientific enquiry skills.
- Pupils are well prepared for the next stages in their learning and transition to

secondary school. Leaders and teachers work closely with families to identify the most appropriate provision for secondary school. When the school has been chosen, teachers work closely with Year 7 teachers to make sure that transition is effective and pupils settle quickly. For example, for pupils with SEND, the school offers them additional supported visits and resources to support their understanding of the new school.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years' provision is good because teaching is consistently good and children thrive in the setting. They enjoy learning in a secure, stimulating and nurturing environment.
- Effective transition arrangements are in place and include liaison meetings with the feeder nurseries and close partnerships with families. These pave the way for a smooth entry into school. Children settle well into routines and parents have confidence in the care and teaching their children experience.
- Children join the reception class with abilities that are generally below those typical for their age. They make good progress so that when they move to Year 1, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development are close to national averages.
- The very few children with SEND are also making good progress because staff support their needs skilfully.
- The teaching of phonics is strong and this is pivotal to the improvements in reading and writing. Adults use questioning well to extend and deepen learning.
- There are high expectations of work in books and early writing is of good quality. Children are writing in a range of different locations. For example, inspectors observed a session where children were using sticky notes to label different structures they had built.
- Children work and play well together in a kind and cooperative manner. They know how to keep themselves safe. Inspectors observed two children advising other children how to play safely with the construction equipment.
- Parents have a very positive view of the setting and the work of the staff. Parents receive good information about their child's progress through monthly 'parent drop in' sessions. They also contribute well to detailed learning journals.
- Welfare requirements and safeguarding arrangements are secure. There are clear procedures for first aid and medicine administration.
- The early years' teacher provides strong direction for the provision and is aiming high for the children. Assessment is accurate and robust and the skills of the team are regularly reviewed and developed.
- The learning environment is vibrant and rich in language, supporting different areas of learning well. Children enjoy choosing from a wide variety of stimulating activities. The outside area provides opportunities to deepen understanding and practise a range of skills. Staff use this area well to further develop learning opportunities.
- While progress is good, there is a growing number of children who could be further

challenged to exceed age-related expectations. In these cases, children have reached a good level of development quickly and need to be provided with further opportunities to develop new skills that will prepare them for further success in Year 1.

School details

Unique reference number	123556
Local authority	Telford & Wrekin
Inspection number	10083953

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	205
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Peyton
Headteacher	Samantha Griffiths
Telephone number	01952388255
Website	www.stmarysmadeley.taw.org.uk/
Email address	a3357@telford.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	11 June 2014

Information about this school

- St Mary's Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school. It has grown in size substantially over recent years.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well above the national average.
- The proportions of pupils with SEND and those who have an education, health and care plan are below the national average.
- The headteacher and senior leadership team have been in post since the last section 5 inspection (June 2014).
- The headteacher is a local leader of education and has provided support to other schools.
- The school runs a before-school breakfast club and a range of after-school clubs. These are managed by the governing body.

- The school receives school improvement support from an external school improvement partner.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 15 lessons or part-lessons across all classes to assess pupils' learning. The headteacher or assistant headteacher viewed lessons jointly with inspectors.
- The inspectors listened to a sample of pupils reading.
- Inspectors sampled work from all year groups in English, mathematics and a range of subjects, including science.
- Inspectors conducted meetings with senior leaders; governors; middle leaders; class teachers; the school business manager; an officer from the local authority and the school improvement partner.
- Inspectors analysed information from a range of sources. These included the school website, school policies, newsletters, previous inspection reports, reports from the school improvement partner, external reports from the local authority and the school's current assessment information.
- The inspectors looked at the school's monitoring information for the performance management of teachers. They also looked extensively at safeguarding documentation.
- Inspectors took the views of parents into account through informal discussions with parents at the end of the school day. They also analysed the 17 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including the six free-text responses.
- The inspectors considered the views of pupils through a meeting with Year 6 pupils. Inspectors met groups of pupils informally at playtime and lunchtime and spoke with pupils during lessons.
- The inspectors considered the views of staff by analysing the 23 responses to the school's own staff survey and by meeting with a group of staff.

Inspection team

Chris Pollitt, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Julie Griffiths

Ofsted Inspector

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