

St Martin's Primary School

Holly Bush Walk, Hereford, Herefordshire HR2 6AF

Inspection dates

16 to 17 July 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have inspired the staff to share their vision and high expectations. Together, they have made significant improvements to the school since the previous inspection.
- Leaders and governors have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have developed a highly effective collaboration with two other local schools. They work well with the local authority.
- Pupils make good progress in key stages 1 and 2 and subjects across the curriculum, including reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They learn well together and enjoy school, although a small proportion of pupils do not attend regularly enough.
- Leaders have outstanding personal development and welfare support for pupils. As a result, pupils flourish and thrive at the school.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) made good progress. Teachers give interesting lessons that meet pupils' needs.
- Children in the early years make outstanding progress. Strong leadership ensures that children learn very well and develop curiosity and good habits of learning.
- Leaders ensure that teaching, learning and assessment is good. They have put in place an effective professional development programme. Staff morale is very high.
- The curriculum is rich, varied and interesting. There are a wide range of effective extra-curricular and enrichment activities.
- Parents and carers are very supportive of the school. They value the ways the school includes and informs them of pupils' learning and progress.
- A minority of most-able pupils do not make the progress that the school expects. This is because teaching for these pupils is not yet challenging enough.
- Safeguarding is very effective. It is at the heart of the school's ethos.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attendance for pupils by helping all parents know how to access the support leaders make available.
- Leaders should further improve outcomes for most-able pupils by ensuring that teaching challenges most-able pupils to extend their writing skills in key stages 1 and 2.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher and leadership team give exceptionally strong leadership to the school. As a result, they have made significant improvements since the last inspection. Pupils achieve well. Behaviour is consistently good. The early years provision is excellent. The safeguarding and welfare culture is of a very high standard.
- Leaders have very high expectations of pupils, colleagues and themselves. They know pupils well, so they set learning targets that are accurate, helpful and help bring about consistently good progress.
- Leaders have a clarity of vision, and staff are included in the planning of school change and the monitoring of its success. This means they bring about improvements in a sustainable and secure manner.
- Staff morale is very high. Staff are inspired by their leaders. They strive to give the best possible education. The school community shares leaders' passion for improving pupils' life chances. Leaders give staff training that is well matched to teachers' needs. This has resulted in the school making considerable improvements in the quality of teaching and learning.
- The school has a strong community ethos: parents are thoroughly involved and place a high value on what the school offers. Parents are very supportive of the school, and they are very pleased with their children's education. They take part in workshops that staff give on aspects of the curriculum and, as a result, they are well prepared to help their children. Parents enjoy attending assemblies, where the whole school celebrates pupils' successes and achievements.
- The curriculum is very well planned. Leaders ensure that pupils learn, practise and develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in a systematic manner. Leaders have carefully arranged the order of skills development. For example, pupils have the opportunity to practice new skills and then revisit them later in each year. This makes sure teachers identify and correct pupils' misunderstandings. The result is that pupils make good progress in their learning, and this has significantly improved since the last inspection.
- The curriculum for mathematics and literacy is especially well led. Leaders have put into practice excellent quality whole-school plans. As a result, pupils make strong progress from year to year, and pupils are very well prepared for the next stages of their education.
- There is a rich extra-curricular provision, including learning Spanish, Lego clubs, choral singing, physical education, and multi-skills workshops. These are well attended, and they make sure that pupils deepen their enjoyment of, for example, technology, music and learning in teams.
- Pupils take part in a wide range of enrichment activities, such as visits to Barry Island and the West Midlands Safari Park, learning about African drumming and exploring the local Mappa Mundi exhibition. Experiences such as these ensure that pupils are interested in and enjoy their learning.

- The school's assessment policy is highly effective and consistently applied. This means that teachers plan in an effective manner for the next steps in pupils' learning. Leaders ensure that staff give helpful feedback to pupils and accurate reports of pupils' progress to parents.
- Leaders make very good use of the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils. Resources and training are well planned so that lessons motivate disadvantaged pupils. There is a wide range of challenging and accessible reading material, for example. As a consequence, disadvantaged pupils make good progress. Leaders deploy the physical education (PE) and sport premium funding for primary schools very well. Pupils enjoy taking part in sports activities in school and after school and understand that fitness and healthy living are important.
- There is very strong leadership of provision for pupils with SEND. As a result, pupils make very good progress. The coordinator for SEND makes sure that pupils' targets are carefully devised, that they build on accurate assessments and are effectively reviewed. This means pupils' learning develops well over time.
- The behaviour of pupils is very well led. The behaviour policy is clear and consistently applied. Rewards and sanctions are fairly applied by staff. Pupils feel safe and secure.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is central to the work of the school. It informs the calm, welcoming and diligent approach pupils take to their lessons. Pupils understand diversity and see difference as positive.
- Leaders have developed an outstanding safeguarding and welfare culture. Pupils are very well known to the staff, who go to great lengths to make sure that each pupil is nurtured and guided to develop their potential. As a result, pupils are confident, they enjoy school and they flourish.

Governance of the school

- Governors are committed, skilled and very effective. They work closely with school leaders to plan and evaluate school strategy. Governors helpfully support and challenge leaders in their monitoring of the strong whole-school improvement plan. They receive accurate and unflinching information from school leaders and are well trained to ask searching questions. Governors are meticulous in following up strategic issues raised by leaders or themselves.
- Since the last inspection, governors have planned a very successful collaboration between St Martin's and two other local primary schools. This has led to better sharing of good teaching practice and efficiencies in staff deployment and training. Governors have used this collaboration to develop their expertise. They are open and cooperative with colleague governors in the partner schools.
- Governors have an excellent relationship with the local authority. This means that they act on the guidance and monitoring they receive and use this positively to help make further improvements.
- Governors have an effective commitment to safeguarding pupils. The safeguarding governor is highly skilled, and she ensures that her experience is disseminated to other governors. This means that the governing body safely recruit staff, and it monitors the school's safeguarding arrangements, using the latest guidance from the secretary of

state.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders have put into practice an excellent safeguarding policy, and they constantly update their training, so the staff work to the highest standards of safeguarding practice.
- Leaders place the highest value on keeping pupils safe. As a result, they plan and deliver an effective safeguarding curriculum, use high-quality pupil welfare records, and appoint staff only after the most scrupulous checks.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and know who they can go to if they have any concerns. They are encouraged to share their worries and achievements. Pupils say that bullying is rare, and they say it is dealt with quickly and well by staff.
- Pupils are effectively taught about staying safe online. They understand how to report quickly anything online that might worry them.
- Risk assessments are secure, and they ensure that staff put into place high standards of health and safety. For example, in forest school learning, pupils are encouraged safely to explore trees, earth and plant growth. Staff strike a good balance between promoting pupils' curiosity and keeping safety at the centre of their practice.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment are consistently good across both key stages and across the curriculum. Staff enable pupils to thrive, to work diligently and to enjoy learning. This represents a significant improvement in the school since the last inspection. Leaders and staff have worked very effectively together, and they give lessons that are consistently interesting and focus on clear curriculum objectives.
- Teachers have excellent subject knowledge because leaders train them well. Staff make sure that there is a high standard of literacy and mathematics across the curriculum. For example, there is a successful focus on learning new vocabulary in science. Teachers are consistent in how they teach basic mathematics skills in a range of subjects. Interventions to support pupils who fall behind are well planned and help good progress.
- Teachers use their good subject knowledge to devise ways for pupils to think deeply. They set questions that extend the way pupils learn. The result is that pupils are challenged well in most lessons. Some most-able pupils, however, are not working at greater depth in writing in key stage 1 and in key stage 2.
- Pupils enjoy doing well and are interested in learning. They want to improve their knowledge, understanding and skills. For example, they respond well to teachers' feedback and respond eagerly to the questions teachers ask.
- The school's assessment policy is followed effectively right across the school. This means that teachers know precisely what skills pupils need. They make accurate evaluations of pupils' work, sharing these together well to moderate and standardise accurately.

- Teaching and learning for pupils with SEND is good. Teachers helpfully adapt resources to meet pupils' needs. High-quality withdrawal support lessons are offered by teaching assistants, and pupils enjoy this extra help. Speech and language therapists work well with pupils. As a result, pupils develop confidence and skills in, for example, reading. Pupils develop their reading skills securely, and they enjoy reading a wide range of fiction and non-fiction.
- Key stage 1 teachers are skilled at building on the knowledge pupils have gained in the early years provision. For example, teachers help pupils use phonics well to learn new words and overcome difficulties when faced with unfamiliar spellings.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are very well known to staff. This is a cornerstone of the school's welfare arrangements. Leaders have developed excellent transition arrangements, a wide range of family learning workshops and highly efficient use of information about pupils' needs.
- Staff promote personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education effectively in lessons and assemblies. Pastoral staff and specialist therapists improve pupils' confidence and help them develop highly positive attitudes to learning. Across both key stages, the pupils experience the consistently caring, supportive ethos of the school.
- Pupils are well supported before and after school in breakfast clubs and in a rich range of extra-curricular clubs and workshops. As a result, pupils enjoy coming to school and feel safe and motivated to learn.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves healthy. Pupils are able to explain about healthy eating and the importance of physical exercise. In PE lessons, for example, staff reinforce the school's commitment to fairness, personal resilience and high expectations of pupils for one another.
- Leaders have put in place a fair and well-regarded rewards system. Pupils enjoy being recognised, work hard for this and understand that such honours are given for doing more than would be normally expected for the school community. Pupils take considerable pride in their work, and this plays a strong role in the good progress they make.
- Pupils are good at working together and on their own when required. For example, in extended work on the fiction of Beatrix Potter, pupils engaged in skilled personal research and team-based presentations. Pupils are highly focused on their personal development. They make secure improvements in self-confidence and attitudes to learning.

Behaviour

- Pupils' behaviour is good. They are typically courteous, thoughtful and considerate in and out of lessons. They respect their teachers, listen to them thoughtfully and value their guidance. Pupils move around the school site safely and securely.
- Staff apply the school's behaviour policy consistently well. As a result, there are high expectations from staff for good behaviour throughout the school. Pupils enjoy this, seeing it as fair and as something that gives them security. A typical comment from a pupil was, 'I like school because you know they're going to look after you, and it's safe wherever you go.'
- Staff encourage a restorative approach to solving problems between individuals. Wherever appropriate, staff help pupils to make amends for any behaviour that falls below the expected standard.
- Overall, attendance is very high and persistent absence is low and declining. Leaders have strong support for those pupils whose attendance is too low, and they work well with the local authority to help families. However, the school has yet to be successful in ensuring that a small minority of parents are convinced that regularly high pupil attendance is essential. As a result, the persistent absence of a very small proportion of pupils remains too high.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils make good progress in subjects across the curriculum, including in reading, writing and mathematics. This is the case in key stages 1 and 2. These outcomes represent a significant improvement in pupils' outcomes since the last inspection. As a result, pupils are well prepared for the next steps in their education.
- In 2018, the proportion of pupils leaving Year 6 and reaching the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics was above the national averages. Provisional results for 2019 suggest that this proportion is even higher. The proportions of pupils achieving greater depth in these subjects is improving. These outcomes indicate that pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' attainment in 2018, and in the provisional results for 2019, shows that pupils did very well in the key stage 1 tests in reading, writing and mathematics. A high proportion of pupils passed the phonics screening test in 2018. This was better than the national average. Provisional results in 2019 indicate this also to be the case. Pupils make good progress across the curriculum in key stage 1.
- Pupils' reading skills are very strong. For example, pupils learn effectively how to make inferences and how to use evidence from books in English and history. Pupils read widely and with enjoyment and fluency in both key stages.
- Pupils' mathematics understanding is strong. This is because teachers plan the curriculum carefully, giving pupils the opportunity to learn, practise and repeat basic skills. Consequently, pupils move on confidently to more complex mathematical skills.
- Teachers give clear and thorough explanations to pupils, including those with SEND. As a result, pupils with SEND make excellent progress. Additional learning support from

the very skilled group of teaching assistants is well deployed.

- Most pupils at the school are disadvantaged. They make good progress because teachers plan engaging lessons that focus on essential skills in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Most-able pupils currently at the school are making better progress than those in previous years. However, they do not make the greater depth progress the school expects, especially in writing in key stages 1 and 2.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- Exceptional leadership of nursery and reception classes has led to children achieving better than those nationally of a similar age and ability. Leaders have designed a strong curriculum that meets the needs of children. Most children begin the nursery and reception classes with levels of development that are below children of a similar age. By the time they leave early years provision, a high proportion of children are working at, or above, the level expected for their age.
- Teachers have a broad range of skills and a deep understanding of how to support and challenge children in early years. As a result, children love learning, they are curious, and they are very well behaved.
- Children play well together. They are carefully prompted by teachers, to cooperate, to solve problems and to explore the world around them. For example, children use technology resources to explore the properties of a range of woods and metals. They do this while all the time developing their speech vocabulary. Staff thoughtfully suggest new words and sentence types, encouraging children to experiment with language and so make very good progress.
- Children have learned a wide range of phonics skills. This means their reading is especially strong. Children enjoy reading non-fiction books and stories. They cannot wait to read their own early writing to each other and to adults. Their confidence in reading is high. The reading curriculum is very well led. Staff know which sounds and blends should follow another in their teaching, so children securely learn letter sounds and blends.
- Boys and girls make equally strong progress across the curriculum. For example, in writing, boys eagerly sound out their letters and concentrate thoughtfully when writing and checking words. They are proud of their learning, politely showing off their work to others. Girls work well together on their writing, listening to one another and encouraging one another to succeed. Throughout, teaching support is well judged, allowing children to make mistakes so that they want to improve and do not become frustrated.
- Behaviour is excellent. Children learn how to work and play well together and to enjoy their learning unselfishly. Teachers nurture, correct and guide children. Staff have high expectations of their children and a deep understanding of each child's needs. As a result, safeguarding is highly effective.
- Leaders are successful at helping children make the change from pre-school to early years learning. Teachers visit children at their pre-school setting to discuss their learning. Most children receive a home visit from staff before their first day. This

ensures that parents feel involved right from the start. Typical comments from parents included, 'We are delighted with the start our child has made,' and 'This school is amazing. My child's reading is so much better.'

School details

Unique reference number	116685
Local authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	10088480

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	370
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andy Goode
Headteacher	Tracey Kneale
Telephone number	01432 273 633
Website	www.st-martins-hereford.com
Email address	admin@st-martins.hereford.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 to 29 March 2017

Information about this school

- St Martin's Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school. The school has arranged an informal collaboration with two local primary schools.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is slightly below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is above the national average.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 27 lessons or parts of lessons. Some of these were conducted jointly with the headteacher and other senior and middle managers.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils discussing their learning and experience of life at the school. Inspectors heard pupils read. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour before, after and during the school day.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the senior leadership team, other leaders and staff. The lead inspector had a meeting with the chair and other members of the governing body.
- A wide range of documentation and systems were scrutinised by the inspection team. These included: the ways the school conducts its self-evaluation, development plans, minutes of the governing body's meetings, the single central record, records relating to recruitment and vetting of staff, school performance data and a wide range of policies and information for parents on the school website.
- Inspectors took into account the 59 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 15 free-text responses. Inspectors asked parents' opinions after three school assemblies and at the end of the school day. Inspectors scrutinised the 133 responses to the online pupils' questionnaire and the 22 returns from the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Graham Tyrer, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Derek Barnes	Ofsted Inspector
Sara Arkle	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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