

# Inspection of a good school: St Mary's Church of England Primary School

Yew Tree Road, Slough, Berkshire SL1 2AR

---

Inspection dates:

8–9 October 2019

## Outcome

St Mary's Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders have created a positive, welcoming environment in which pupils can learn. Leaders have high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour. They know their pupils well and want the very best for them. Pupils enjoy coming to school because leaders work hard to give all pupils the support they need to be happy and to learn. Pupils are polite, friendly and have positive attitudes towards their learning.

Pupils keep active during playtimes and lunchtimes. There are lots of physical activities and games for them to enjoy. Most of the time, pupils play together well. In the dining hall, they chat happily with their friends over their lunch.

Pupils learn to celebrate people's differences and they are respectful of one another. All pupils spoken to during the inspection said that bullying is rare. Pupils are confident that, when bullying occasionally happens, adults take it very seriously and they deal with it quickly.

## What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders are developing a challenging curriculum and are ambitious for pupils. They have planned the key knowledge and skills that they want pupils to learn. In most subjects, this planning is effective in practice. Leaders make sure that teachers are trained to deliver these subjects well. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) also makes sure that staff have the skills they need to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The SENCo knows these pupils very well. She plans effective support for these pupils. Pupils, including those with SEND and those who are disadvantaged, do well across the curriculum.

Pupils achieve well in reading because teachers have good subject knowledge. Teachers follow a carefully sequenced plan for phonics. In the early years, children get off to a good start with learning phonics. They listen attentively and join in their learning with enthusiasm. Pupils needing extra help with their reading are given effective support.

Teachers help these pupils to catch up. For example, they help pupils to use their knowledge to read unknown words. Older pupils develop important reading skills. Teachers plan activities that deepen pupils' understanding of the books they read. Leaders have created a culture where pupils become keen, confident readers. Teachers use reading 'passports' to challenge pupils to read a wide range of books. Pupils love this challenge.

Leaders' high expectations can be seen in many subjects. For example, in mathematics teachers plan challenging learning that builds on what pupils can already do. Teachers explain mathematical concepts well, using practical resources to support pupils' understanding. Pupils develop a secure understanding in this subject. This is also the case in art. Over time, pupils develop a variety of artistic techniques that become increasingly complex as they progress through the school. Pupils carefully consider how they use these skills when creating pieces of artwork. To enhance pupils' experiences in art, teachers organise visits to art galleries.

Some other subjects are less well developed, including science, history and geography. Pupils' understanding of subject-specific concepts and methods is not as strong in these subjects. For example, they do not employ investigation skills in science and enquiry methods in history. Leaders have started work to improve these subjects. This is to make sure that specific skills are taught well.

The school's curriculum promotes pupils' broader development well. Memorable visits and experiences add to pupils' enjoyment of their learning. Pupils take part in a wide range of sports and some sing in the school choir. Leaders ensure that all pupils benefit from these opportunities, including those who are disadvantaged and those with SEND. Leaders also plan opportunities for pupils to learn about different religions and cultures. Pupils develop a strong sense of respect for people's differences, which are celebrated. They also develop a good awareness of their own mental health. They know who to turn to if they have any worries or concerns.

Most of the time, pupils listen carefully and work hard because teaching is generally strong. Occasionally, during breaktimes, play becomes a little boisterous. Pupils are not worried by this because adults are really good at sorting it out. They say that adults are firm but fair.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a culture where pupils' welfare is paramount. Leaders make sure that all staff working in school have a good understanding of how to keep children safe. They provide all staff with regular training. This means that staff are vigilant in their responsibilities. They know how to report any concerns they might have.

Through the school's curriculum, pupils are taught how to stay safe. For example, pupils are taught how to keep safe online and how to keep safe in the sun. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have developed a challenging curriculum. They have planned, in detail, the order in which pupils will learn key skills and knowledge. However, in science, history and geography these expectations are not yet embedded. It is clear from the actions that leaders have already taken to address this, coupled with the improvements that they have made in art and design and technology, that leaders are in the process of bringing this about.
- Leaders now need to ensure that teachers develop a stronger understanding of subject-specific concepts and methods, for example investigative skills in science and enquiry skills in history. Leaders must make sure that the teaching of these concepts and methods are carefully sequenced. The headteacher must ensure that leaders for these subjects continue to be given the support and training they need to deliver these improvements. This is to ensure that all pupils achieve the best possible outcomes across the curriculum.

## Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged St Mary's Church of England Primary School to be good on 27–28 January 2016.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	109995
<b>Local authority</b>	Slough
<b>Inspection number</b>	10111273
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	660
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Mr David Kill
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Rachel Cross
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stmarys.slough.sch.uk">www.stmarys.slough.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	27–28 January 2016

## Information about this school

- St Mary’s Church of England Primary School is located in the Diocese of Oxford. Its last section 48 inspection took place in June 2019.
- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school operates a Nursery for three- to four-year-old children.

## Information about this inspection

- During the inspection, inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the SENCo and the chair of the governing body. A meeting was also held with a representative from the local authority and a telephone conversation was held with a representative from the diocese.
- In order to explore the quality of education, inspectors focused in depth on four subjects: reading, mathematics, science and art. This included meeting with the curriculum leaders for these subjects, visiting lessons, talking to pupils, listening to pupils read, speaking with teachers and looking at pupils’ work.
- Inspectors met with the school’s designated safeguarding leads and scrutinised the school’s safeguarding records. This included a check on the single central record of

recruitment checks on adults working with pupils.

- During breaktime and lunchtime inspectors observed pupils' behaviour and spoke to pupils informally. Inspectors also met formally with groups of pupils. 89 responses to the pupils' survey were also considered.
- There were 22 responses to Ofsted's Parent View survey, including 10 free-text comments, which were considered. Inspectors also met with parents at the beginning of the first day.
- Inspectors met with a range of staff during the inspection, including teachers and support staff. 67 responses to the survey for staff were also considered.

### **Inspection team**

Leah Goulding, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Liz Bowes

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates:  
<http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2019