

Inspection of St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Cobden Road, Worthing, West Sussex BN11 4BD

Inspection dates: 16–17 October 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy their lessons and love finding out as much as they can. Teachers capture pupils' imagination. They do this through 'stunning starts' and 'fabulous finishes to learning'. Pupils are eager to rise to their teachers' expectations that they will always do their best.

Pupils feel very safe in their school. They describe the school as a place where they are cared for. They know that adults are looking out for them. Pupils also know that they can go to their teachers for help at any time. Bullying hardly happens but pupils say that if it does, staff sort it out straightaway. As one parent said, 'Teachers all care about the children and want them to be the best they can be.'

Pupils behave well. They treat everyone with respect and kindness. They understand the school rules and faithfully follow them. At social times, pupils enjoy the varied activities that are available.

The school is a warm and welcoming community where pupils and teachers work in a happy and harmonious way. Its motto of 'living, loving, learning' sums up the school's values very well. As one pupil explained, 'St Mary's is like family and that's why I love it so much.'

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

The school provides pupils with a broad curriculum. Leaders are ambitious for what they want pupils to learn. They have ensured that plans for English and mathematics are clear. Teachers' expertise in knowing what to teach, how and when is growing. As a result, pupils are doing better than before in their reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders concentrate their efforts on enriching pupils' learning and developing their knowledge and skills across a wide range of subjects. Not all areas of the curriculum are fully developed, but this work is well under way alongside further training for staff. For instance, teachers have sequenced learning in history. As a result, pupils have a grasp of historical periods as well as key facts. They remember what they learn and use this knowledge to make useful connections.

Teachers support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) with close care and attention. Adults support pupils with well-judged resources and guidance. This means pupils with SEND are able to take part in the full range of learning.

Leaders have made sure that a clear programme for teaching phonics is in place. This gets pupils off to a purposeful start in reading. Children learn phonics early on in Reception Year, which they love. Leaders have made effective improvements to how pupils develop their reading skills. Teachers spot any pupils who fall behind through regular checks. Pupils receive the right support to develop their reading. As a result, more pupils are learning to read quicker than before. Leaders are determined to improve the rate of reading progress even further.

Leaders have introduced pupils to a rich range of books throughout the school. Many pupils talk about how much they love reading. Year 3 pupils were eager to tell inspectors about the amazing facts they had read about the Romans. Pupils are proud of how much they read. They value the knowledge they gain as a result.

The early years provides pupils with a strong start to their education. The early years curriculum is well organised. Teachers pace the learning to suit each child. In this way, children learn well from the moment they begin school. They are calm, confident and settled.

Pupils' good behaviour means that everyone can get on with their work. Pupils love expanding their knowledge through trips they go on. For instance, they were full of the facts they had gained from their recent trip to Arundel Castle. Back at school, they used what they had learned not only in their history lessons, but also in their story writing.

Pupils say that they have plenty of opportunities to get involved in school life. Teachers encourage them to take up roles such as house captains and learning ushers. Pupils take part in fundraising events. In assemblies, pupils have moments of reflection as well as opportunities to celebrate achievements. Pupils learn the difference between right and wrong.

The trust leaders with the headteacher have brought about many improvements at the school. Every pupil matters to them. This is clear in their every action. All staff share their vision. Governors work to ensure that every pupil receives the best quality of education possible. Staff feel very supported by leaders. Many believe they have become better teachers because of this support.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well informed about safeguarding matters. They receive regular updates and training from school leaders. Staff are very clear about what they must do if they believe a child is at risk. They report concerns promptly. Leaders follow these up with urgency. The inclusion team builds strong links with families. As a result, they are very well informed about changing circumstances. This helps them to provide support quickly when needed.

Governors are knowledgeable about their safeguarding responsibilities. They carry out regular and thorough checks.

Pupils and parents believe the school is a safe and secure place. Staff ensure that it remains so.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have high ambitions for what the curriculum will deliver for the pupils. They have ensured that there is a wide range of subjects for pupils to learn. However, not all subjects have yet been through the rigorous review of planning that leaders have begun. Leaders need to keep to the schedule for this work to ensure that the content of each subject on the curriculum is thoroughly planned, logically sequenced and completed in good time.
- To aid the successful delivery of the curriculum, leaders need to ensure that teachers have the relevant skills and knowledge to help pupils learn well across all subjects.

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're 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

Unique reference number	144401
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10122192
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	251
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Martin Farrell
Headteacher	Gemma Irvine
Website	www.stmarysworthing.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- In April 2017 St Mary's joined the Bosco Catholic Education Trust as a sponsored academy.
- Since becoming an academy there have been significant changes to leadership, staffing and governance.
- The school underwent a section 48 inspection in March 2018.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, subject and phase leaders, the chief executive officer of the trust, trust member, four governors including the chair of the local governing body, local authority adviser and representative from the diocese.
- Inspectors looked in detail at reading, writing, mathematics, history and art on the first day of the inspection. Inspectors met with the relevant subject leaders, made visits to lessons relating to the focus subjects throughout the school, looked at pupils' work and spoke with teachers and pupils.

- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding records, including the single central record of recruitment checks on staff.
- Inspectors considered the views of 31 parents who responded to the Ofsted parental questionnaire, including 16 free-text responses.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff from meetings with groups of staff as well as the 17 responses to the Ofsted staff survey.

Inspection team

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