

Inspection of St Mary's, Prittlewell, C of E Primary School

Boston Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS2 6JH

Inspection dates: 4–5 February 2020

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy, polite and energetic. The school's core values of trust, responsibility, respect and friendship are demonstrated in what pupils say and do. Most pupils are enthusiastic learners and participate well in lessons. Pupils enjoy a wide range of exciting opportunities that enrich their learning. There are many opportunities for pupils to take part fully in school life. Pupils love drama, sporting competitions and performing in the school orchestra.

Children get off to a good start in the early years. They learn about the wider world, for example learning about the danger of plastics in the oceans and the impact of the Australian bush fires.

Pupils respect differences. They are reflective about their own beliefs and show interest in the variety of different cultures within the school. There is a well-structured curriculum that supports pupils' development.

Most pupils behave well throughout the school. Lunchtimes and breaktimes are sociable affairs. Most parents are extremely positive about school. However, some parents raised concerns about pupils' behaviour. Some pupils said that adults deal with poor behaviour differently. They said that some adults are stricter than others. Pupils say they feel safe and most parents agree that they are.

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

There have been some changes in teaching staff that have impacted significantly on the school community. This has raised concerns for some parents. The headteacher has secured an effective and committed senior leadership team. The team work purposefully with staff to ensure that teachers get the support they need. In addition, they routinely check pupils' achievement in different subjects to ensure that the quality of education remains good.

Leaders ensure that all learning is accessible for all. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported very well to achieve the best they can in all subject areas. This includes drama and physical education. Pupils have opportunities to be included in different aspects of school life, such as being a journalist at sporting events, school councillor or a pupil governor.

Pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, achieve well. They are supported well to read. They use their phonics skills to help them read accurately. However, some have not had the focused support that they need to catch up quickly. Leaders know this is a high priority and have reviewed their teaching programme to ensure that pupils catch up quicker.

Curriculum leaders of most subjects have developed clear plans that set out what pupils need to know and do. This is particularly the case in mathematics and writing. Teachers deliver effectively what leaders intend. In some subjects, such as history and science, curriculum plans do not specify when skills will be taught in each year group.

Leaders have been very reflective after disappointing reading results achieved at the end of Year 6 in 2019. They have identified what they need to do to ensure pupils can achieve better in reading. Leaders' actions are showing positive signs of improvement. Leaders have ensured that children develop a love of reading when they start in Reception. The 'hub' enables parents to share books and have reading time with their children. Pupils have access to high-quality texts across the school, and they talk enthusiastically about their favourite authors.

Developing pupils' vocabulary has been a focus. This is being addressed with 'word of the day' and the school's 'Big Read'. In addition, assemblies give pupils opportunities to practise their drama, speaking and listening skills. Leaders' plans, however, do not yet set out specifically how pupils will build on their vocabulary across year groups or subjects.

In Reception, teachers have high expectations of what children can do. Activities are exciting, and the children are keen learners. Children transition well into key stage 1. Year 1 pupils told us they love their history work. They spoke maturely about their learning of the Crimean war and the dedicated work of Florence Nightingale.

Leaders, including governors, have an accurate view of the school. They have engaged well with the support provided by the local authority. Governors are ambitious for the pupils, and they ensure that they challenge and support school leaders effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders carry out all checks on staff to make sure that they are suitable to work with children. Pupils know how to stay safe when using the internet. Records show that staff report incidents of poor behaviour, including bullying incidents, when they happen. Concerns recorded are followed up appropriately. However, some pupils and parents are not confident that all staff consistently apply the behaviour policy well enough. Leaders know that there is more work to do to reassure parents that all behaviour concerns are followed up appropriately.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not been specific enough in their curriculum plans for ensuring that pupils build on and extend their knowledge and use of vocabulary as well as they could. The plans do not set out what vocabulary pupils need to learn across

subject areas in each year group. For pupils to be able to build and extend their vocabulary, teachers need to know what has been taught previously so that they can plan to extend and deepen pupils' understanding effectively.

- In some curriculum subjects, plans are not specific enough to show clear progression from year-to-year. Leaders' curriculum plans need to be precise so that teachers can plan and teach skills sequentially for each subject.
- Some pupils who fall behind in their reading are not catching up quickly, because teaching and learning in phonics has not been specific enough to help pupils catch up. This is particularly the case for some pupils in Year 2. Leaders need to ensure that the right support is put in place to help the pupils catch up as quickly as possible, before they leave key stage 1.
- Not all staff deal with poor behaviour in the same way. This is because the behaviour policy is not being applied consistently. Some pupils and parents have the perception that poor behaviour goes unnoticed. It is imperative that leaders ensure all staff apply the behaviour policy in the same agreed way. In addition, they must make sure that pupils and parents are clear about how poor behaviour is dealt with in the school.

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 the school and 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

Unique reference number	115145
Local authority	Southend-on-Sea
Inspection number	10133409
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	690
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Dionne Mason
Headteacher	Nicholas Booth
Website	www.st-marysprittlewell.com
Date of previous inspection	12–13 May 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Pupil numbers have increased significantly since the previous inspection.
- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school has had significant staff changes over the last year.

Information about this inspection

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

- During the inspection, we met with the headteacher, senior leaders, the special educational needs coordinator and teachers from all year groups. We also spoke to several groups of pupils to talk about their learning across the curriculum. The lead inspector met with three members of the local governing body, including the chair of governors, and a representative from the local authority.
- We did deep dives in the following subjects: reading, writing, mathematics, history, science and physical education. We spoke to leaders of these subjects. We visited lessons, spoke with pupils and teachers, listened to pupils read, and looked at pupils' work, and documentation to understand the quality of education.

- We looked at the school systems and processes for checking adults suitability to work with children. We spoke with teachers, staff and pupils to check safeguarding arrangements.
- We considered the 120 parent responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View, 86 responses to Ofsted’s free-text survey, 33 responses to Ofsted’s pupils’ survey and 66 responses to Ofsted’s survey for staff. We spoke with staff and pupils to gain their view of the school. We also spoke with parents on the playground at the beginning of the day.

Inspection team

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