

Inspection of a good school: St Margaret Mary RC Junior and Infant School

Perry Common Road, Erdington, Birmingham, West Midlands B23 7AB

Inspection dates:

4–5 March 2020

Outcome

St Margaret Mary RC Junior and Infant School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and want to come to school. They are hungry to learn and attend regularly. Leaders have high expectations for them. They have crafted a broad and interesting curriculum which links subjects together well. Leaders make the most of Birmingham's industrial heritage. They use it to bring learning to life.

Pupils feel safe in school and get on well together. Incidents of bullying are rare and staff sort issues out quickly. Staff care for the pupils and this is clear to see. Pupils are confident that if they need help, an adult will be there for them.

There are many opportunities for pupils to take on extra responsibilities, such as being a well-being warrior or a school librarian. For those with a skill for leading others, the school parliament is a favourite. Pupils are excellent fundraisers. They help charities, including a group who support refugees and asylum seekers.

St Margaret Mary RC Junior and Infant School is a vibrant school. Every term, pupils go out on visits to different places. Teachers carefully plan visits to link to learning. Pupils enjoy learning to play musical instruments and the chance to attend a range of clubs.

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

The headteacher leads a strong, committed staff team. Governors know the strengths and areas for improvement and are considerate of staff well-being. Staff value the support and coaching they receive. They say it has improved their teaching and given them confidence to raise their expectations of what pupils are capable of.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are successfully included in school life. Staff are very clear about their needs and know how best to adapt the curriculum for them.

Children get off to a good start in Reception. Staff make sure that learning is well matched to children's needs and interests. Children behave well because they know what is expected of them. The focus on developing skills in reading, writing and mathematics means that children are well prepared to move into Year 1. Parents are encouraged to support their children at home, particularly with reading. Leaders have improved the way they teach phonics. They check that it is being taught well in the early years and in key stage 1. If pupils are at risk of falling behind, they get extra support. Leaders have improved the range of early reading books. This is making sure that pupils read books with the sounds that they know.

Reading is promoted throughout the school. The new library is enjoyed by all. Teachers choose exciting books to read to pupils. These extend pupils' knowledge of vocabulary and stimulate their imagination. Pupils enjoy reading. They learn to read well and use this skill in other subjects. Staff want pupils to 'read like a writer' and 'write like a reader'. This is successful. Yet, although the work in pupils' books is detailed, it is not always well presented. Sometimes teachers do not pick up errors quickly enough or make sure pupils correct them.

Subject leaders are positive about the school. They have been given the right balance of support, guidance and independence. They lead their subjects well. In most subjects, teachers plan lessons in a way that ensures pupils develop the knowledge and skills they need to be successful. For example, in mathematics lessons are sequenced in a logical way so that pupils use the knowledge they have learned previously to solve a range of mathematical problems. Mathematics is a subject that has been strengthened recently, not least because of the high-quality staff training.

Furthermore, in most subjects, teachers help pupils to remember what they have learned. However, this is not yet consistent. In design and technology, teachers have not had the subject training they need to plan lessons that are suitably ambitious. This limits the opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge and practise their skills.

Pupils listen to their teachers and are well behaved. They are thoughtful and friendly and respect each other. They see themselves as learners and want to learn. They told us that 'it matters what you learn, not what you have got wrong'. Pupils are being well prepared for life in modern Britain. They learn about different cultures and faiths through studying a range of artists, alongside visits to local places of worship, museums and theatres. Democracy is promoted through a range of activities, including the active school parliament.

Staff are proud to be part of the school. They value leaders' work to ensure that their workload is manageable.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders use regular training and weekly updates to ensure that staff are well trained. Leaders respond to concerns quickly and appropriately. This means that all pupils, including the most vulnerable, get the help they need.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in different situations. They value visits from the local police community support officer. They learn much about keeping safe from these visits. This is also reinforced through the personal, social and health education days they have each half term. Pupils are aware of online dangers. They know that online posts leave a digital footprint, even if they have been deleted.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, pupils make mistakes in their work that are not picked up by teachers. This means that misconceptions can develop. Leaders should ensure that teachers identify misconceptions so that pupils do not continue to make the same mistakes.
- Teachers do not have the subject content knowledge and skills they need to teach design and technology. This prevents pupils developing the knowledge and range of skills they need to be successful. Leaders should provide training for teachers so that they have the knowledge and skills they need to be able to plan lessons that will support pupils to become successful designers and creators.

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 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 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 second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 4–5 November 2010.

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	103453
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10111767
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	389
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Simon Ellis
Headteacher	Michael Aldred
Website	www.stmgtmry.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 January 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- An inspection of denominational education and collective worship was carried out under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in November 2015.

Information about this inspection

- I met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the leader for pupils with SEND. I met members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. I also met with a representative from the Archdiocese of Birmingham.
- I looked at a range of information about the school, including content on the school's website and curriculum plans. I also analysed published information about the progress and attainment of pupils in national tests and assessments.
- I considered reading, mathematics and history in depth. I visited lessons and spoke to subject leaders, teachers and pupils about pupils' learning. I looked at pupils' work and listened to pupils read. I also considered leaders' curriculum plans and reviewed pupils' work.
- I checked the school's work to keep pupils safe. I looked at policies, procedures and the school's central record of employment checks on adults working in the school to ensure that they are suitable to work with children. I observed playtimes and

lunchtimes and I talked to pupils about safeguarding and behaviour. I spoke to staff to check the school's safeguarding arrangements.

- I spoke to parents informally at the beginning of the day. I also took account of 19 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 19 to the Parent View free-text service.
- I considered 20 responses to the pupil survey and 15 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Kirsty Foulkes, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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