

# Inspection of St Mary's RC Primary School

Victoria Road, Horwich, Bolton, Lancashire BL6 6EP

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Inspection dates: 3–4 March 2020

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

The previous 'outstanding' judgement reflected the school's overall effectiveness in February 2009 under the relevant inspection framework at that time.

The new judgement of 'good' reflects the current inspection framework as well as any changes at the school since the last inspection.

The school has not been inspected for 11 years, which is longer than the five-year maximum interval between inspections. Changes in school effectiveness may have happened at any point in that period. The long time between inspections is because the law changed in 2011; it made outstanding schools exempt from routine inspection.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils and staff agree that this is a happy and welcoming school. Pupils and their families are greeted by staff as they arrive each morning. The pupils told us that they enjoy school. They described their teachers as kind and helpful. Staff help pupils to achieve the school's mission statement, 'We care, we pray, we work, we play in Jesus' way.'

Staff provide a wide range of support to ensure that pupils achieve well. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). In 2019 at the end of key stage 2, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was higher than that of pupils nationally.

Pupils told us how much they enjoy the many trips that leaders provide. They are excited to learn about French culture, including staying in a chateau, visiting a French market and eating traditional French food. Through their links with other schools, pupils described how they make friends with children with different religions. Pupils learn to appreciate diversity.

Pupils typically behave well. They play well together, enjoying the new playground chill and relax area. Pupils said that bullying is rare. They are confident that staff listen to any concerns they have.

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

Leaders have planned a broad and engaging curriculum. Pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education, including pupils with SEND. They develop skills and knowledge across a range of subjects.

Reading lies at the heart of the school's curriculum. Teachers share a wide range of books with pupils. The proportion of pupils who met the Year 1 phonics screening check was well above the national average in 2019. Children start learning phonics as soon as they start in the Reception class. Teachers make regular checks on how well pupils are learning. They make sure that teaching builds on the letters and sounds that pupils already know. Pupils have plenty of practice in reading. Reading books match pupils' reading ability. Pupils falling behind in their reading are given a range of effective support to help them catch up. Pupils leave the school as confident and fluent readers. They enjoy reading and read for pleasure.

Leaders have revised curriculum planning to ensure that pupils develop a secure understanding of topics and concepts. Subject plans build on pupils' previous learning. For example, in design technology, across different year groups, pupils increase their knowledge of nutrition. In mathematics, staff plan with care the steps that pupils need to develop their written calculation skills.

Leaders have ensured that the school is resourced well. Pupils enjoy the wide range of practical activities that teachers plan. For example, in history, a trip to a museum helped pupils deepen their understanding of Egyptians. In science, children in Reception took great care planting seeds as part of their topic on growing. For pupils with SEND, staff plan activities which match pupils' abilities.

In subjects including mathematics and computing, teachers have identified what knowledge they want pupils to know and remember. In some subjects, leaders are improving the details that curriculum plans include. Some staff do not have detailed knowledge about the curriculum in year groups other than their own.

In mathematics and English, staff make very regular checks on pupils' learning. They use these checks to plan a wide range of support to ensure that pupils do not fall behind. In some subjects, leaders are improving the checks that they make on pupils' learning within that subject. This is to help staff identify any gaps that pupils may have in their understanding.

Through a variety of leadership roles, pupils develop their character. Pupil chaplains spoke with pride about their charitable fundraising and visits to the elderly. Science ambassadors lead whole-school science activities. Pupils enjoy regular residential trips, with adventurous activities such as climbing and archery. Pupils develop as thoughtful and independent individuals.

Leaders have ensured that the school's curriculum helps pupils understand how to stay healthy. Visitors to school help pupils understand about mental health, including how to relax. Pupils enjoy meditation sessions. They value the wide variety of sports activities, including netball, cricket and cross-country running.

Pupils behave well. They are polite and welcoming to visitors. During our visit, children in Reception listened carefully to adults. In lessons, pupils are keen to produce their best work. They work cooperatively and contribute to class discussions.

Staff enjoy working at the school. They told us that leaders are supportive. Staff appreciate the regular opportunities they have to develop their skills. For example, teachers work with staff from other schools to develop their expertise.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have regular training. This means they know how to check for signs that a pupil may be at risk. Leaders work with professionals to ensure that pupils get support when needed. Leaders check the staff recruited to work in school to ensure that they pose no threat to pupils.

Staff and visitors to school teach pupils about the risks that they might face. Pupils learn how to stay safe when using technology. Pupil road safety ambassadors help

pupils learn about road safety. Pupils know that they should speak to an adult in school if they are concerned about anything.

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

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

- In some subjects, leaders are improving curriculum plans. This is because some curriculum plans lack precision about the knowledge and skills leaders want pupils to acquire. Leaders need to ensure that teachers have a good understanding of the most important content of the curriculum that they want pupils to acquire.
- In some subjects, teachers lack detailed knowledge about how the curriculum progresses from start to end points. This means that in year groups other than their own, staff are not aware of the steps that pupils need to make in their learning. Leaders should develop teachers' understanding of the curriculum sequencing across key stages and year groups. They should ensure that teachers use this understanding when planning.
- Systems to check pupils' learning are not developed in some curriculum areas. This means that teachers do not have precise information about gaps in pupils' learning. Leaders need to ensure that effective checks are in place which can be used by teachers to develop pupils' learning.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	105250
<b>Local authority</b>	Bolton
<b>Inspection number</b>	10122150
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	219
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	John Shannon
<b>Headteacher</b>	Anne-Marie Davies
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.st-marys-horwich.bolton.sch.uk">www.st-marys-horwich.bolton.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	25 February 2009

## Information about this school

- A new headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The school had a section 48 inspection on 28 November 2019.

## Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

The previous 'outstanding' judgement reflected the school's overall effectiveness in February 2009 under the relevant inspection framework at that time.

The new judgement of 'good' reflects the current inspection framework as well as any changes at the school since the last inspection.

The school has not been inspected for 11 years, which is longer than the five-year maximum interval between inspections under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. Changes in school effectiveness may have happened at any point in that period. The long time between inspections is because the law changed in 2011; it made most outstanding schools exempt from routine inspection.

- We met with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. We held a meeting with five governors.
- We met with the coordinator of the provision for pupils with SEND and with the early years leader.
- We checked the school's safeguarding policies and procedures and the school's single central record. We met with leaders, staff and pupils to check how effective safeguarding is in school.
- We met with a representative of the local authority and a representative of the diocese.
- We met with parents and carers at the school gate to seek their views. We also considered 62 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, including free-text responses. We considered one written response from a parent.
- During the inspection, we met with groups of pupils, including pupils with SEND, and we observed lunchtimes and breaktimes.
- We examined a range of documents. These included: the school's development plans and self-evaluation documents; minutes of the governing body meetings; and safeguarding documentation.
- We met with leaders to discuss pupils' attendance and behaviour.
- We considered 49 responses to Ofsted's survey for pupils and 28 responses to Ofsted's survey for staff.
- Design technology, reading, mathematics and science were considered as part of this inspection. Inspection activities included: discussions with leaders; visits to lessons; discussions with teachers; scrutiny of pupils' work; and discussions with pupils about their learning. In reading, we observed members of staff listening to pupils read.
- We also met with the subject leaders for art and design, computing and history. We scrutinised work in these subjects.

### **Inspection team**

Elizabeth Stevens, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Lesley Curtis

Ofsted Inspector

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