

# Inspection of a good school: St Mary's Bryanston Square CofE School

Enford Street, London W1H 1DL

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Inspection dates:

25–26 February 2020

## **Outcome**

St Mary's Bryanston Square CofE School continues to be a good school.

However, inspectors have some concerns that one or more areas may be declining, as set out below.

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

Pupils like coming to school and are happy here. They enjoy their learning, and value the range of clubs and exciting visits the school provides. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about learning new skills on their outward-bound residential visits. They were especially proud about working with the Mayor of London's office to introduce a range of measures aimed at cutting pollution in and around the school site.

The new leaders have high expectations for pupils' behaviour and achievement. Leaders have worked hard to make improvements, but realise they still have work to do. Pupils usually work hard and behave well in lessons because they are respectful and attentive to their teachers. However, behaviour in the playground is not as good because some pupils can be too boisterous.

Pupils enjoy reading and are developing their reading skills because leaders have well-designed plans for how reading is taught. However, some subjects are not planned or taught as effectively.

Pupils feel safe in school. They could describe ways of staying safe and could identify a number of adults in school who they could approach if they ever felt unsafe. Pupils said that bullying is rare and that it is always sorted out quickly if it happens.

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

This school has experienced a lot of change since its last inspection. Almost everyone spoken to during the inspection thought that the new headteacher and his leadership team are working hard to improve the school. Leaders realise, however, that they still have more work to do. Some subjects are not planned or taught effectively enough.

The headteacher has been swift in accurately evaluating the school's strengths and weaknesses. He and the leadership team have a clear vision for the school which staff share and understand. Work has started in several areas of school life. Some of this work, such as improving pupils' reading and behaviour in classrooms, has been successful. However, in other areas, new subject leaders are in the very early stages of establishing their roles, and developing and embedding their plans. As a result, curriculum planning is varied and does not always allow pupils to learn what is important as they move through the school.

Leaders have prioritised the development of pupils' reading skills. The teaching of early reading is improving. This is because teachers are knowledgeable and well trained. Leaders check carefully how well pupils are doing, and this allows them to identify quickly any who fall behind. These pupils are supported well, by a skilled team of staff, to catch up with their peers. However, there remain some pupils who do not apply the skills they have been taught. As a result, some pupils continue to struggle to make sense of what they are reading.

Pupils enjoy reading and listen attentively to the stories that are told to them. They answer questions showing they have a good understanding of the text. Children in the early years readily join in familiar parts of the story. Parents spoken to during the inspection value the support and the opportunities the school provides for them to read with their children at the start of the school day.

Leaders have high ambition for all pupils, and make sure that learning is exciting. Children in the early years are confident when working alone or with friends. They show determination to succeed when they find things challenging. Equally, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are fully involved in lessons. This is because they are well supported by adults who know them well. However, some subjects are not planned carefully enough.

In mathematics, for example, pupils do not learn some of the concepts they should cover in younger year groups. As a result, older pupils have misconceptions and gaps in their mathematical knowledge. In history and geography, plans clearly identify the skills that pupils should develop. This has resulted, for example, in pupils confidently using different types of information, such as photographs, film and objects from the past, to compare life in ancient Greece to life today. The knowledge that pupils should learn in these subjects from year to year is not planned with the same clarity. This means that important facts are sometimes missed, and pupils struggle to recall what they have learned.

Behaviour in lessons has improved because of simple rules that are consistently applied. Adults ensure that any low-level disruption to lessons, which is rare, is swiftly resolved. The school monitors incidents and the behaviour of individuals. This has allowed the school to identify when improvements are needed. Pupils' behaviour at lunchtime is not consistently good and staff do not intervene swiftly enough to ensure that it improves.

Leaders have introduced a range of innovative practices that celebrate good attendance and challenge poor attendance. However, these practices are not embedded. As a result, attendance for pupils who are disadvantaged and who have SEND remains low.

Pupils' personal development is very important in this school. Pupils' experiences have been carefully planned to help them develop as individuals and as citizens. A number of effective partnerships beyond the school ensure that pupils have opportunities to pursue interests in the arts and in a range of sports. Leaders organise activities in which pupils work with professionals who help them learn how to keep safe, and gain insights into challenging environmental and political issues. For example, pupils have played an active role in the campaign for cleaner streets in the local community.

Despite the high number of changes at the school, staff are very positive about the support they receive from leaders. Staff spoken to during the inspection said they are well supported to develop as teachers and as leaders. They felt that leaders were approachable and made sure that workloads were manageable and focused on what would make the biggest difference to pupils.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All required checks on staff are carried out effectively. Staff are well trained to promptly report any concerns they have. Leaders work well with external agencies. This results in swift support for pupils and families, when required.

Leaders understand the risks pupils might face in the local area. They have ensured such risks are addressed through the curriculum. For example, work has taken place with older pupils on the risks of gang crime and knife crime. The majority of parents who completed the online survey stated that they felt their children were safe and happy at school.

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

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

In discussion with the headteacher, we agreed that the following areas may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

- Subject leaders have started to review the curriculum. As a result of this work, the quality of pupils' reading is improving. However, this is not the case in all subjects. Leaders need to continue to improve planning in subjects other than reading. Leaders need to make sure that these subjects are consistently planned so that teachers understand the knowledge and skills pupils should be taught as they move through the school.
- Many subject leaders are new to their roles and have not developed or embedded plans for their curriculum areas. Senior leaders should ensure that they have the training and support needed. This is so that pupils' learning is shaped by schemes of work that help them to build their knowledge and understanding across the curriculum.
- Leaders have improved the behaviour of pupils in lessons and when moving around the school. However, behaviour in the playground can still be boisterous and is allowed to

persist for too long. Leaders need to ensure that the same high expectations which exist for behaviour in lessons extend to when pupils are on the playground.

- Overall attendance, including attendance for pupils who are disadvantaged or have SEND, is low. Although leaders have recently introduced a range of strategies to improve attendance, these have not had time to embed. Leaders need to make sure that these strategies are checked so that attendance improves for all pupils.

## 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 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 the school to be good in June 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 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>	101136
<b>Local authority</b>	Westminster
<b>Inspection number</b>	10121607
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	184
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Sarah Bedford
<b>Headteacher</b>	Lee Duffy
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://stmarys.bryanston.net">http://stmarys.bryanston.net</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	23–24 June 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Since the time of the previous inspection, there has been a large turnover of staff. A new headteacher was appointed in September 2019.
- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club.
- This is a voluntary-aided Church of England school.

## Information about this inspection

- I did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. To do this, I met with senior leaders and subject leaders. I conducted interviews with staff and pupils, visited lessons and looked at pupils' work.
- I spoke with a representative of the local authority and a representative of the London Diocesan Board for Schools. I met with four governors, including the chair of governors.
- I reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding by scrutinising safeguarding records and questioning staff, and through discussions with pupils.

- I took into account the views of parents, staff and pupils gathered through discussions and Ofsted's surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Nick Turvey, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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