

# Inspection of St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Edlington

Bungalow Road, Edlington, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN12 1DL

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Inspection dates: 7 and 8 December 2021

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

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

St Mary's Catholic Primary School is a place where pupils love to learn. Leaders and staff want the very best for all pupils. They go over and above to make sure that this happens. Pupils' comments included: 'Teachers believe in you.'

Pupils enjoy playing and learning together. They are respectful and sensitive towards each other. Bullying is rare and pupils feel safe. Pupils said that the behaviour system works. They are right. The behaviour of pupils at this school is, quite simply, spectacular.

Pupils always try their best and help each other to learn. Teachers make learning fun and explain things clearly. Pupils said that adults will do anything they can to help.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) do well at this school because staff think very carefully about how to help them. The relationships between staff and pupils are very strong.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of clubs, especially 'Scotty's Heroes'. Some pupils have special jobs to do, such as the reading ambassadors, which helps them to learn about responsibility.

Curriculum plans in some subjects, such as history, are not fully developed. Pupils do not always recall important knowledge. Leaders are addressing this.

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

A talented team of new leaders and staff have transformed this school since its last inspection. They have tackled the right things to ensure that pupils have the basic skills they need to access the rest of the curriculum. There is a consistent and effective approach to the teaching of reading and mathematics across the school, starting in the early years.

Leaders ensure that staff receive the training they need to develop their teaching and leadership skills. Those who are new to the school, or in the early stages of their careers, feel very well supported.

Children get off to a quick start by learning phonics straight away. Adults make sure that the books pupils read closely match the sounds that they know. Staff keep a close eye on pupils' progress and provide extra help for those who need it. As a result, pupils read with increasing accuracy and fluency. Leaders have developed a new reading room in school. Pupils said that this is a nice place to share a story with their teacher and to choose a new book.

Very quickly, leaders recognised that the curriculum was not helping pupils to learn and remember the most important things. As a result, pupils have gaps in their

knowledge. Leaders have redesigned an ambitious curriculum for all pupils which reflects the school motto, 'Dream it, Believe it, Achieve it'. They have recently introduced a new curriculum for history and geography. Teachers have started to put this into practice, but some are still getting to grips with it.

The special educational needs coordinator is an expert in her field. She provides staff with helpful advice and guidance. This means that pupils with SEND get the help they need to access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. Teachers adapt their lessons to meet pupils' individual needs. This helps all pupils, but especially those with SEND, to feel confident and learn well.

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are exceptional. They show tremendous respect for, and kindness towards, each other. Pupils' behaviour does not get in the way of learning. In fact, it is quite the opposite. Girls and boys work and play together in harmony. Leaders' hard work to improve attendance and punctuality has paid off. Pupils come to school regularly and on time.

Throughout the school, adults encourage pupils to express their opinions. School councillors have influenced playground provision, and when pupils said they wanted a choir, staff listened. Leaders have re-established a full enrichment programme which pupils value. Leaders have ensured that pupils develop a healthy understanding of difference and equality. Opportunities to learn about other religions are more limited. Pupils do not fully understand the beliefs of others, in readiness for life in modern Britain.

In the early years, children get off to a good start. Teachers show them how to behave and children settle into routines quickly. Adults help children to learn new words, which they use when talking to each other. When children work directly with adults, they make strong progress. Adults ask thoughtful questions and develop the children's curiosity. This is not always the case when children work at activities on their own.

The chair of the governing body is very knowledgeable and experienced. He knows the school well and is proud of its improvement. The governing body is working with the diocese to shape the future direction of the school. Governors are accessing training to develop the skills they need to hold leaders to account.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are alert to any concerns about pupils' welfare. They know what to do, and make diligent records. Leaders take timely and appropriate action to keep pupils safe. Staff welcome the weekly '1-minute guides' that leaders produce to keep them up to date. Staff fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities well.

Leaders ensure that staff have the necessary pre-employment checks before they begin working at the school.

Leaders have planned the safety curriculum carefully. Pupils know about online dangers, and know what to do if they come across something that worries them.

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

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

- The school's curriculum is not yet sufficiently well developed in some subjects. However, it is clear that leaders have already taken action to strengthen the curriculum and train staff in how to deliver it. For this reason, the transitional arrangements have been applied.
- There is no substantive early years' leader at the school. The executive headteacher has expertise in this area and extra support has been brokered from another school. However, staff do not plan independent learning opportunities that sustain pupils' interest and develop their skills consistently well. As a result, some pupils flit from one activity to another, which slows their progress. Leaders should continue to develop the subject and pedagogical knowledge of staff to improve curriculum planning.
- Teachers are only just starting to implement the new curriculum in some subjects. This means that pupils still have gaps in their knowledge. Leaders should continue to check and refine their curriculum plans to ensure that gaps in pupils' knowledge are identified and addressed, including in religious education where pupils' knowledge of different religions is limited. Leaders should ensure that all subjects are planned and sequenced to the same high standard.

## 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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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>	106773
<b>Local authority</b>	Doncaster
<b>Inspection number</b>	10200675
<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>	159
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	John Cape
<b>Headteacher</b>	Bernadette Nesbit
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.st-marys-pri.doncaster.sch.uk/">www.st-marys-pri.doncaster.sch.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	20 and 21 February 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, there have been significant changes to staffing and leadership. The executive headteacher took up post in January 2020, and most of the teaching staff were appointed after that time.
- The local authority, in partnership with the diocese, has provided intensive support and challenge for the school.
- St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School is part of the Diocese of Hallam. The school's last section 48 inspection was in June 2018. The next inspection is due during this academic year.
- The school runs a breakfast club.

## Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about some other subjects.
- Inspectors checked the school's safeguarding policies and procedures, and the checks made on staff. The lead inspector met with leaders to discuss how they keep pupils safe in school. Inspectors considered records of concerns, work with external agencies and staff training. Inspectors also spoke with staff and pupils throughout the inspection.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including curriculum plans, behaviour and attendance records, the school's development plans, self-evaluation documents and safeguarding documentation.
- Inspectors met with leaders, staff and pupils to check the effectiveness of safeguarding in school. An inspector also checked the arrangements for pupils attending alternative provision.
- Inspectors considered responses to the staff survey. There were no responses to the pupil survey. There were insufficient responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey, but inspectors did consider the seven free-text responses. Inspectors also spoke with parents and carers to seek their views.

### **Inspection team**

Jo Bentley, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Andrew Cummings	Ofsted Inspector

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