

Inspection of a good school: St Martin's Church of England Primary School

Spring Hill, Worle, Weston-Super-Mare, Somerset BS22 9BQ

Inspection dates:

11 and 12 January 2022

Outcome

St Martin's Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy school. They behave well, showing respect towards adults and each other. Pupils feel safe. They are confident that should bullying occur, staff will deal with it effectively. Pupils concentrate well in lessons and like to be challenged. They take pride in their learning, presenting their work with care.

The school's personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum helps pupils learn how to lead healthy lives. It also helps pupils understand how they can make a positive contribution to the world around them. Leaders prioritise pupils' well-being and mental health.

Staff have high expectations of pupils. They know pupils well, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers use most support staff well to provide the right help for the pupils who need it. However, there are pockets of inconsistency in some phonics lessons where this is less effective.

Children in the early years get off to a strong start. They settle well into routines and know what is expected of them. Older pupils continue to make strong progress in mathematics and phonics. However, pupils' learning in a few subjects, such as history and geography, is less strong.

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

Leaders, governors and trustees know the school well. They use their accurate understanding to prioritise the right areas for improvement. Leaders at all levels use a range of information to make sure their actions are having a positive impact on the school. Staff appreciate leaders' efforts to manage their workload. They feel that leaders are supportive and highly approachable.

Mathematics is a strength of the school. The mathematics curriculum is well established, so staff understand it well. Teachers help pupils to learn new concepts, starting in the

early years. As pupils get older, they develop a strong understanding of how to solve different types of problems. Teachers adapt the curriculum skilfully to meet the varying needs of pupils.

Leaders are in the process of reviewing the way they teach phonics. The current approach is mostly effective, but there remain a few aspects to refine. Teachers know how best to ensure pupils learn letters and the sounds they make with increasing accuracy and fluency. Mostly, pupils read books that contain sounds they know. Teachers use support staff during phonics sessions to give extra help to pupils, but this is not always precise enough. As a result, a few pupils continue to struggle with being able to recognise letters, sounds and words in the early stages of reading.

In subjects such as history and geography, curriculum plans help teachers to know what knowledge they expect pupils to learn. However, these plans give teachers too much to teach in the time they have. Some plans contain facts and information that are unhelpful for pupils to know and remember. Pupils can remember some important information but this is not yet consistent. Curriculum leaders are in the process of slimming down what needs to be taught and the order in which this is delivered.

Staff identify pupils with SEND in a timely manner. They work closely with the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) to ensure that any support is well matched to pupils' specific needs. Staff set precise targets for pupils which are appropriately challenging. Pupils have plenty of opportunities to work towards achieving their targets. Staff review targets to make sure they remain relevant for pupils.

The school's Christian values of hope, forgiveness, thankfulness, compassion, endurance, trust, friendship and wisdom underpin the school's approach to develop caring and conscientious pupils. The school's PSHE curriculum is structured to give pupils a strong understanding of how to lead informed, healthy lives in modern Britain.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that they only appoint adults who are suitable to work with children. Staff receive the induction and ongoing training they need, which helps them to spot potential concerns about pupils' welfare. There are clear systems for staff to pass concerns on to leaders. Where needed, leaders raise these further with external agencies. Leaders, governors and trustees keep a watchful eye on the school's safeguarding processes. This gives them the assurance they need that pupils get the help they need in a timely manner.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In subjects such as history and geography, curriculum plans contain too much content for pupils to learn, some of which is unnecessary or unhelpful for their future learning.

Consequently, some pupils struggle to remember the more important knowledge. Leaders need to slim down curriculum plans, prioritising the most important knowledge that they want pupils to know and remember.

- Teachers' adaptation of the phonics curriculum is not as strong as it could be, particularly for the small number of pupils who need to catch up. The help provided by support staff, and the books they provide for pupils to read, is not always closely matched to pupils' needs. Leaders need to ensure that these pupils get the support they need and read books that contain sounds they know.

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 outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, St Martin's Church of England Primary School, to be good in February 2015.

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

Unique reference number	144921
Local authority	North Somerset
Inspection number	10212150
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	367
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Tristan Cogan
Headteacher	Yvonne Barnes
Website	www.stmartinsschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The predecessor school was inspected in February 2015. The school then closed when it joined Kaleidoscope Multi-Academy Trust in September 2017. The headteacher has been in post since September 2021.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography and history. The inspector 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.
- The inspector met with the designated safeguarding leader to consider staff recruitment procedures. This meeting included scrutinising the school's single central record and considering how well staff and leaders notice and pass on concerns they have about pupils' welfare.

- The inspector considered pupils' behaviour throughout the inspection, including during lesson visits.
- The inspector spoke with the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust and met with four representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The inspector also met the SENCo to consider the provision and support for pupils with SEND.
- The inspector considered 42 responses to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including 31 free-text responses from parents and carers. He also considered responses to the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Nathan Kemp, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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