

Inspection of St Mary's CofE Foundation Primary School

Hampton Road, Stansted, Essex CM24 8FE

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 January 2022

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their school. They are keen to show visitors around and introduce them to their favourite places. They are very happy. Pupils know about bullying but say it rarely happens. They say they always feel safe; parents and teachers agree. Teachers have their pupils' very best interests at the forefront of their minds.

Pupils work hard. They say they enjoy their lessons. Reading is very important for everyone. Pupils like to talk about which books they have read. There are books everywhere and there are many places where pupils can sit down and read.

Pupils behave very well. They are kind and respectful to each other and adults. Teachers care very much about the pupils. There are lots of activities for pupils before school, at lunchtime and after school.

Many parents say that the school has much improved. Leaders have created a very colourful and attractive school environment in which pupils can learn and play.

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

Leaders have made reading a priority. Teachers share an infectious love of reading. There are books and images from classic children's literature all around the school. All pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), learn to read well. Teachers ensure that children learn sounds from the beginning of Reception class. They soon start reading words and sentences. Pupils get even better at reading over time. By the end of key stage 1, pupils can read fluently and with expression. Any pupils who fall behind are given appropriate support to quickly catch up. All pupils say that they like reading, most love it. Older pupils gain very sophisticated reading skills. They can retell and summarise stories easily in their own words. They can make alternative suggestions about the meaning of texts. They can change language to make it more exciting and convincing. The strengths in reading are also evident in the quality of pupils' writing.

The curriculum is well designed for all pupils, including those pupils with SEND. Teachers' strong subject knowledge ensures that most subjects are taught well. Leaders have thought carefully about what pupils should know and how it should be taught. They build new knowledge carefully on what pupils have learned before. Pupils have many opportunities to practise what they know so that they remember it very well. Teachers regularly deal with mistakes in learning and show pupils how to improve. This helps pupils to remember better over time. In a small number of subjects, pupils do not learn as much they could do. Leaders know this and are keen to improve the curriculum even further.

Pupils behave very well. They are kind and respectful. They work hard and play well together. Older pupils know how to solve disagreements without always needing

help from adults. The school's motto of 'learning to love, loving to learn' does ring true. The values of faith, joy, hope, love, and respect are at the heart of the school.

Bullying is very rare and is quickly dealt with by teachers. Pupils learn about other faiths and cultures from their own. They understand about difference and diversity. Pupils can take part in a range of clubs and activities which enable them to learn to compete, be creative and to work as a team. They learn about democracy by voting for their class representatives. Older pupils have the opportunity to lead others, younger pupils would also like to do this.

Leaders and governors have brought about many improvements. They have been well supported by the local authority in developing teachers' subject knowledge. Leaders have a clear understanding of what they do well and where there are still further improvements to make. Governors understand the challenges the school has faced. They carefully check that systems work effectively. They explore reasons behind the decisions leaders make. Staff, pupils and most parents have a very high opinion about the school and its work. However, a small number of parents feel that leaders could communicate more effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Teachers are vigilant about children's safety. Pupils are safe and they know how to stay safe. The school has taught them how to respond to dangers and risks. Teachers teach pupils about how to keep safe online. Pupils know who to talk to if they have any concerns or worries. Safeguarding systems in the school work very well. Staff know how to report concerns and they have confidence that these will be dealt with swiftly. Staff regularly receive safeguarding training. Governors regularly check that children are being kept safe.

All pre-employment checks are carried out on newly appointed staff.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have constructed a strong curriculum. However, in a small number of subjects, learning could be designed and ordered even more effectively. Leaders need to refine their curriculum design so essential knowledge is clear and allows pupils to learn and remember even more over time.
- A minority of parents feel that leaders do not communicate in a timely way. As a result of this, parents are, at times, not aware of what is happening in the school. Leaders and governors need to review their communication with the parent body to ensure concerns are alleviated.

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	115269
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10207084
Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation / Maintained
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	262
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Tracey Harrison
Headteacher	Matthew Curzon
Website	http://www.stmarysstansted.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 – 23 May 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is slightly smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of the pupils are of white British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below average. However, the proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is slightly above average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding is below average.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

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 met the headteacher, senior leaders, support staff, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, history, art and computing. These included discussions with subject leaders, visits to lessons, meetings with staff and pupils, and scrutiny of pupils' work.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's single central record and met with the designated safeguarding leader.
- Inspectors considered the views of pupils, staff and parents. There were 13 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey, there were 20 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and 35 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors considered 26 free-text responses from parents.

Inspection team

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