

# Inspection of Middleton St Mary's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Moor Flatts Road, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS10 3SW

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Inspection dates: 24 and 25 May 2022

<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	Requires Improvement

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

Every pupil is treated as an individual at Middleton St Mary's. Relationships are sincere because leaders have created a culture where understanding every pupil is important. Staff know pupils well and want the best for all pupils. Leaders' vision is to make the school a real hub of the community. They are well on their way to achieving this.

Leaders ensure that pupils receive a broad curriculum. All subjects, including geography, history and science, are well organised, so pupils are well prepared to meet ambitious end-points. Leaders have made reading a real priority in their school. There is a tangible love for good-quality children's literature. Pupils meet with local authors and illustrators. This helps pupils to further develop their love of reading.

Pupils are happy and feel safe at this school. They are polite and respectful towards each other. Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour, and pupils do behave well. Pupils know that they are expected to do 'The St Mary's Walk'. This promotes a calm and purposeful atmosphere. Pupils work hard and are rightly proud of their work. Pupils say that bullying is rare. If it does happen, they know that there are plenty of adults who will promptly resolve their concerns.

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

Leaders have developed a curriculum that takes account of what pupils need to learn and when. This starts in early years, where children get off to a strong start. The learning opportunities children experience in the early years foundation stage prepare them well for in Year 1 and beyond. The learning environment captures children's imagination. The school's curriculum progressively develops pupils' knowledge and skills as they move from Reception through to Year 6. As a result, pupils are prepared well for secondary school.

Leaders have ensured that those responsible for leading subjects are skilled in evaluating the quality of teaching and learning. They understand and carry out their responsibilities well. They are given the time to discharge these responsibilities and they welcome the strong support they have received from the school's senior curriculum leader. Teachers are knowledgeable, and they plan interesting lessons for pupils. Teachers explain new learning clearly. They make regular checks on what pupils have learned and remembered. This helps teachers to make changes to their teaching so that pupils make good progress. However, teachers do not always plan consistently for pupils to deepen their knowledge in subjects.

The teaching of phonics is consistent across the school because staff are trained well. They are supported by a passionate and knowledgeable early reading leader, who monitors how phonics is taught and pupils' learning in detail. Leaders' plans for early reading are detailed and carefully sequenced. This means that pupils read well from an early age. Pupils who struggle to read make quick progress to catch up and

keep up. Pupils have many opportunities to read and to be heard reading by adults. Leaders promote positive reading behaviours away from school, encouraging families to support their children's reading journey. Pupils enjoy using the library. This is an inspirational place, full of interesting, exciting and current books.

The communication-rich environment in the Nursery and Reception classes promotes children's early language skills well. Leaders have high expectations of what they want children to learn. This provides children with an ambitious curriculum that prepares them well for Year 1. Children have a secure understanding of routines and rules. This allows them to explore their surroundings with safety and confidence. Effective strategies, such as masterclasses, promote effective use of new and updated areas and resources.

Pupils like coming to school. They enjoy the positive relationships that they have with other pupils and staff alike. They value the time they spend together in this safe, inclusive environment. They help each other and most get on well. If pupils fall out with their peers, staff are there to help them resolve this.

The personal development of pupils is good. They have many opportunities to take part in clubs, trips and activities that help them to develop their interests. For example, pupils enjoyed a recent competitive inter-schools football match. Year 6 pupils engaged with delight in a circus skills workshop following their national tests earlier in May.

While pupils are able to talk about aspects of Christianity with some fluency, they have a variable knowledge and understanding of different world faiths and the beliefs of others. Leaders are now reintroducing visits to different places of worship as part of their religious education programme. These were halted during the period of COVID-19 restrictions.

Leaders are supported by relatively new members of the governing body. These members are led by an experienced chairperson. There is a broad range of skills represented and governors are empowered to act as critical friends. There is support and challenge in equal measure. Governors regularly ask probing, insightful questions of leaders. They check what leaders are telling them is happening. The local authority challenges and supports leaders well. This is welcomed by leaders in supporting their school improvement agenda.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a strong safeguarding culture. Staff use their knowledge of pupils, families and the community to quickly identify any welfare or pastoral concerns. All staff know to report these concerns immediately using the agreed school systems. The safeguarding and pastoral team is quick to act when it has a concern about a pupil's welfare. It relentlessly pursues additional support and information from external agencies when needed. Excellent relationships exist with

external partners. Staff receive regular training in safeguarding from experienced leaders. Robust procedures are in place to check that staff are suitable to work with pupils.

Pupils trust the adults in school. Pupils know that their concerns and worries will be listened to. They learn how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations, including when online. They learn about respectful relationships and consent.

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

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

- The curriculum is well considered. However, leaders have not yet ensured that there is an opportunity for the deepening of pupils' knowledge in all subjects. This means that some pupils do not consistently receive the challenging opportunities on which they thrive. Leaders should further develop their plans to ensure that these are appropriately ambitious. This will enable pupils to know and remember more over time, deepening their subject-specific understanding.
- While pupils have knowledge and understanding of Christianity in this church school, they have less awareness of the beliefs of others. Leaders have identified this and should continue to develop their plans to support all pupils' greater awareness of the diversity represented in their local community and further afield. This will enable pupils to have the ability to be reflective about their own beliefs and perspectives on life and to have knowledge of, and respect for, different people's faiths, feelings and values.

## **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>	108002
<b>Local authority</b>	Leeds
<b>Inspection number</b>	10227429
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	417
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Liz Singleton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Naomi Wood
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.middletonstmarys.co.uk">www.middletonstmarys.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	7 May 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school was judged to be good at its most recent inspection of denominational education and the content of the school's collective worship under section 48 of the Education Act 2005. The school's most recent section 48 inspection took place on 11 July 2016. Section 48 inspections were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They restarted in September 2021. The next section 48 inspection will be within eight years of the previous section 48 inspection.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

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

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy and assistant headteachers, staff and pupils.
- Inspectors met with governors, including the chair of the governing body. They also met remotely and in person with representatives from Leeds local authority and the Diocese of Leeds.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, design and technology, geography, history and science. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked samples of pupils' work.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors checked the single central record of recruitment checks and talked to leaders responsible for safeguarding. Inspectors also talked to a range of staff and pupils informally.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the confidential staff survey and spoke to a range of staff about their views on the school.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the additional free-text responses.
- Inspectors met with a range of pupils to discuss their views about the school and talked to pupils informally during social times and in lessons.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and school development plan, and pupil premium and catch-up funding plans.

### **Inspection team**

Marcus Newby, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Philippa Kermotschuk

Her Majesty's Inspector

Diane Buckle

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