

# Inspection of St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Holden Road, Salterbeck, Harrington, Workington, Cumbria CA14 5LN

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Inspection dates: 8 and 9 November 2022

<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?**

Pupils are very happy coming to St Mary's Catholic Primary School. Staff have forged positive relationships with children from the Nursery class through to older pupils in Year 6. Leaders' values of respect, love and care are palpable among the staff and pupils. This helps pupils to feel safe.

Leaders have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour and learning, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These expectations are understood by pupils, who take pride in their successes and commit to their learning. Most pupils achieve well.

Pupils are very respectful and considerate of each other and of adults. They look after one another and take great care to ensure that everyone is included. Rare incidents of bullying are dealt with swiftly and effectively by leaders so they do not happen again.

Leaders place a strong emphasis on preparing pupils for life in modern Britain. Older pupils are involved in the Cumbrian Award. This initiative develops their team building, resilience and perseverance skills. Pupils have participated in community projects within this initiative. For example, they have created a business to design and make products to sell. They have raised a substantial amount of money for local charities. This helps pupils to become responsible citizens and to make a positive contribution to society.

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

Leaders have designed a broad curriculum. It is ambitious for all pupils, including pupils with SEND. Leaders have thought carefully about how the curriculum is constructed to ensure that it meets the needs of all pupils. For example, there is a focus on developing language and vocabulary from the early years and throughout the rest of the school. Teachers quickly identify any additional needs that children and pupils may have. These pupils, including pupils with SEND, are helped to have access to the same ambitious curriculum as their classmates.

Leaders have considered the essential knowledge that children and pupils should acquire from the Nursery class, including the provision for two-year-old children, to Year 6. They have carefully ordered learning so that pupils can build knowledge securely over time. In most subjects, teachers and staff check for any misconceptions that pupils may have and use this to shape future teaching. However, in some other subjects, the curriculum is new. This means that leaders are still developing strategies so that teachers can check that pupils are learning and remembering the contents of the intended curriculum.

Teachers and staff have the knowledge and expertise that they need to teach the curriculum effectively. Leaders have ensured that there are adequate resources for

the ambitious curriculum. This helps pupils, including children in the early years, to know more and to be able to do more.

Leaders have prioritised reading. They have invested in a rich variety of texts for pupils to read. Older pupils appreciate the box of recommended books in their classrooms. They told inspectors that this encourages them to read new and interesting books that their teachers or friends have recommended. Leaders have successfully introduced a new phonics curriculum from the beginning of the Reception Year. Staff have had training to ensure that they are teaching this curriculum well and with confidence. Any pupils who are struggling to keep up with the pace of the curriculum receive help to catch up. The books that pupils read match the sounds that they are learning in class. This means that pupils gain the phonics knowledge that they need to become confident and fluent readers.

Pupils behave exceptionally well. They enjoy their learning immensely. They are polite, courteous and well mannered. Children learn to follow established routines from a young age in the Nursery class. This means that there is a calm and orderly atmosphere in and around the school. Lessons are rarely disrupted by negative behaviour because pupils value their learning and follow their teachers' requests sensibly. Pupils are mature and articulate.

Leaders ensure that pupils, and children in the early years, have opportunities to learn beyond the academic curriculum. Pupils contribute positively to life in school. For example, some pupils are prefects, ambassadors or buddies. Older pupils place great importance on being positive role models for younger pupils. Pupils enjoy performing arts, dance and music. They appreciate the opportunity to perform in a theatre to showcase their talents. They talk about difference with respect and understand the importance of treating everyone equally. Some pupils write to pupils in a school in New Zealand. This helps them to understand the wider world and to celebrate different communities.

The school is well led and managed. Leaders and governors have taken effective action to address the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection. Governors know the school well. Leaders provide governors with the information they need to hold them to account and to ask challenging questions. Governors and leaders are considerate of staff's workload. They prioritise the well-being of staff, and staff feel valued.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a culture of safeguarding. Staff receive training to understand their safeguarding responsibilities and know how to identify signs of abuse and neglect. Leaders have a clear system in place for staff to report any concerns that they may have. Leaders act on any concerns in a timely manner. They help vulnerable pupils and their families swiftly and effectively. They also secure additional help from external agencies.

Staff teach pupils how to keep themselves safe, including when they are online. Staff and other agencies, such as the police, teach pupils how to recognise risks online and what to do if they have any concerns.

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

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

- In some subjects, the curriculums have been recently introduced. As a result, leaders are still developing strategies to check that the intended curriculum helps pupils to know more and remember more over time. Leaders should ensure that staff are well equipped to check that pupils are learning the intended curriculum.

## **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.

## **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>	112338
<b>Local authority</b>	Cumbria
<b>Inspection number</b>	10241180
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	190
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Gemma Duncan
<b>Executive headteacher</b>	Sheryl Slack
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stmarys-harrington.cumbria.sch.uk">www.stmarys-harrington.cumbria.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	13 May 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- This school belongs to the Diocese of Lancaster. The most recent section 48 inspection was in October 2017.
- This school has provision for two-year-old children.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

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

- This was the third routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During this inspection, inspectors met with the executive headteacher, the head of school and other leaders in school. They also spoke with a range of staff.

- The lead inspector met with five governors, including the chair of the governing body. She also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke to parents and carers at the beginning of the school day.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered the responses from the Ofsted surveys for staff and pupils.
- The lead inspector examined a range of safeguarding documents. She checked how leaders ensure that safer recruitment procedures are in place. The inspector checked records of staff's safeguarding training. Inspectors also spoke to staff to check how well they understand safeguarding procedures.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at playtimes, in lessons and around school. They also spoke to pupils about their experiences at school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, science, and design and technology. They met subject leaders and teachers and visited a sample of lessons. Inspectors spoke with pupils about their learning in these subjects. They also looked at examples of pupils' work and considered the curriculum across some other subject areas. The lead inspector observed pupils reading to trusted adults.

### **Inspection team**

Sally Timmons, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lindy Griffiths

Ofsted Inspector

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