

Inspection of St Margaret's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Town Street, Horsforth, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS18 5BL

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 November 2022

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

This school was last inspected 13 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

At St Margaret's Primary School, pupils arrive with enthusiasm and leave with special memories. This is a school where staff and pupils invest in being the best they can be. The curriculum and extra-curricular activities on offer to pupils help to nurture their talents and interests. Pupils grow in confidence and academic ability.

Leaders have high expectations for learning, behaviour and how pupils treat each other. As a result, pupils feel safe, are polite and eager to do well. Pupils achieve well in a broad range of subjects.

St Margaret's Primary School is an inclusive school that values differences and celebrates success. Older pupils mentor younger ones, offering support and help. Pupils love having responsibilities. Pupils who are part of the school council share their thoughts regularly with leaders, such as fundraising ideas for the local community. Leaders ensure pupils engage with all aspects of school life. Leaders know how pupils feel about issues such as the school environment.

Pupils behave well. Bullying does not occur frequently. If it does, pupils report it. They know that adults will deal with their worries or problems.

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

Leaders have developed an ambitious curriculum that helps pupils do well. The curriculum is logically sequenced. This helps pupils to build on what they already know. Teachers design interesting activities that support pupils to understand each topic. Pupils recall prior learning with ease. They can explain in mathematics how they step back if they are struggling and use prior knowledge to break calculations down. Staff are supportive in class and quickly pick up on any misconceptions. This means staff give whole-class and individual guidance to help with any misunderstanding and point out any potential pitfalls pupils may face.

Skilled and knowledgeable subject leaders are clear in their curriculum thinking. Effective professional development has ensured plans are clear and focused. Teachers know the curriculum well. They teach pupils the planned content. However, subject leaders very rarely get the opportunity to visit lessons. As a result, subject leaders do not have a full view of their curriculum area.

Teaching pupils to read is a top priority for all staff. Learning to read begins as soon as children start in the early years. Teachers have embraced the chosen phonics scheme. Regular meetings help to keep staff up to date on training requirements and pupils' needs. Leaders follow up meetings with planned development sessions for staff. As a result, adults swiftly spot pupils who are struggling to read and give them support. This is usually on the same day. Teachers make sure that pupils read texts that correspond to their phonics knowledge. Consequently, pupils develop reading fluency and confidence.

Pupils like exploring books by varied authors in the well-stocked library. Pupils talk with confidence about different cultures and societies.

Leaders encourage and promote staff training. Training supports staff's targets for improvement. This, in turn, allows staff to support pupils better. Skilled staff identify the needs of pupils, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders engage well with other organisations and experts. This makes sure that support is in place so that pupils with SEND can learn alongside their peers.

Pupils that attend the BASE (a specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND (specially resourced provision)) interact and learn with their peers. Professionals that support pupils in the BASE communicate frequently with staff elsewhere in the school. Classmates regard pupils who attend the BASE as part of the school community.

Staff adapt their teaching in the early years to meet the needs of the children. Play and stay sessions help children to settle down and start learning. The development of language and communication is a priority. Leaders ensure there are many opportunities for adults to model complex language. Children discuss their learning with enthusiasm and work well with others.

Pupils value diversity. Different customs and cultures fascinate them. The link with the Revival Centre in Mutugga, Uganda, is popular. It engages pupils with different views and issues faced by pupils of a similar age in another culture. Pupils learn about religions other than Christianity. They take part in a variety of activities in personal, social and health education lessons. These help them to understand fundamental British values. Pupils appreciate that tolerance and respect are part of being kind. Pupils discuss, play and cooperate at playtime.

Leaders offer a wealth of educational visits and activities that are open to pupils. Pupils enjoy these visits and talk in detail about when they visited the farm. All pupils play a musical instrument at some stage. Some pupils continue to do this as they progress further in school.

Pupils like school. Leaders and staff give rewards for good behaviour. Leaders know that consistency is crucial when managing behaviour. Staff support pupils to make good decisions. Staff give more help to pupils who struggle with their behaviour.

Governors challenge and support leaders effectively. They know their responsibilities. Governors' visits to the school happen on a regular basis. Governors have the information and skills to offer support as needed. Staff appreciate that senior leaders are considerate of workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that all staff have the necessary background checks to enable them to work at the school. Leaders are trained in safer recruitment practices. Governors actively support and oversee safeguarding policies.

The pastoral support team and designated safeguarding lead meet frequently to prepare and communicate safeguarding updates to all staff.

The carefully planned curriculum enhances pupils' understanding of risk, including how to stay safe in the community and online. Pupils feel safe. They know who to contact if they have a problem or are worried.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Opportunities for subject leaders to evaluate how well the curriculum is implemented are limited. This, in part, affects leaders' ability to offer staff support or see the impact the curriculum is having on pupils' learning. Senior leaders must ensure subject leaders are supported to review and assess the quality of the 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

Unique reference number	107990
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	10251764
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	420
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Ingunn Vallumroed and Amanda Cowie (Co-Chairs)
Headteacher	Sarah Harridge
Website	www.stmargarets.leeds.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 and 13 November 2009

Information about this school

- St Margaret's Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School is a larger-than-average-size primary school.
- The school has specially resourced provision to support pupils with autism spectrum disorder. This is called the BASE.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.
- As the school is designated as having a religious character, it is inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005. The last section 48 inspection of the school was in September 2022.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher and senior leaders.
- Representatives from Leeds local authority and the diocese met inspectors.
- A meeting was held with governors, including the two co-chairs of governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, history, religious education and science. These involved meeting with subject leaders, visiting lessons, looking at pupils' work and talking to pupils and staff.
- Inspectors visited the early years separately, in addition to lesson visits linked to deep dives.
- Information regarding pupils' attendance and behaviour was scrutinised.
- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead to discuss the arrangements in place to safeguard all members of the school community. Inspectors scrutinised checks leaders make on the suitability of staff and other safeguarding records.
- The inspection team spoke to staff about behaviour and their workload in the school. The responses to Ofsted's surveys for pupils, staff and parents were also considered.

Inspection team

Richard Jones, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Andrew Yeomans	Ofsted Inspector
Dughall McCormick	His Majesty's Inspector

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