

Inspection of St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Amphill Road, Ryde, Isle of Wight PO33 1LJ

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 November 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

At St Mary's Catholic Primary, the values of 'live, love and believe' can be seen in the actions of all. Staff make sure everyone is included and valued for who they are.

Leaders are aspirational for all pupils to access a high-quality curriculum. However, not all subjects are planned carefully. This stops pupils from building their knowledge securely. As a result, pupils do not learn as well as they should across the curriculum.

Pupils behave well. They know the school's 'Beehaviour rules'. During lessons, they eagerly contribute and share ideas. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers and work hard in lessons. Pupils use strategies such as the '5Bs' of 'Brain, Book, Board, Buddy, Boss' to help, if they get stuck.

Breaktimes are social events where pupils play well together. Pupils welcome the support given to them by adults. They know they have a trusted adult to go to if they have any worries. Bullying is not tolerated. If problems occur, leaders act promptly and effectively.

Pupils enjoy the variety of clubs, such as magic and photography. The clubs are well attended and pupils enjoy learning new skills. Pupils raise funds for national and local charities, including participating in 'Walk the Wight'.

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

Governors have recently strengthened the school's leadership. The newly appointed senior leaders have a clear vision for the school. They understand the strengths of the school and are taking effective action to improve outcomes for pupils.

The curriculum is not fully developed. Leaders have recently introduced programmes of study in English and mathematics. There is also an established curriculum in science. In these subjects, leaders have ensured new learning builds on pupils' prior knowledge. For example, in science, pupils were able to recall prior learning to identify the systems in the human body. However, for many subjects, leaders have not identified the important information pupils should learn from the early years onwards. Many subject leaders are new to their roles and much of the curriculum thinking is at an early stage of development.

Early reading is not taught consistently well. Leaders have recently introduced a new phonics scheme. Pupils are now given books that match the sounds they are learning in class to help develop their reading. However, staff subject knowledge is not yet secure and some adults pronounce sounds incorrectly. Sometimes, they use alternative strategies that hamper pupils learning to read. This is because they have not been given sufficient training. As a result, some pupils who struggle to read are

not given the support they need to catch up with their reading skills. This hinders how well they can access other areas of the curriculum.

Leaders have improved their systems for identifying pupils' additional needs. However, teachers do not always plan and structure activities that help all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, learn well enough. Teachers' checks on pupils' understanding across the curriculum are not consistent. Beyond English and mathematics, adults do not always identify gaps in pupils' understanding before introducing new ideas. This is because teachers have not had the necessary training to support their delivery of all the curriculum areas.

There is a positive learning culture. Children quickly settle into routines in the early years. Classrooms are calm, orderly places. Pupils know the school rules and understand how these keep them and their friends safe and happy.

Leaders provide effective support for pupil's personal development. Staff promote pupils' physical and emotional health well. Pupils lead Mass in school and some perform readings in local community services. They learn about different faiths and can identify the similarities and differences with their own beliefs. Pupil ambassadors lead weekly debates where all pupils are able to explore moral questions. Pupils learn that others can have different views and opinions to their own. They are tolerant and celebrate diversity. Pupils are given a range of leadership opportunities, such as house captains. They are proud of these roles and are keen to take an active role in the school.

Governors know the school well. They understand their statutory duties. Staff value the training they receive to support them in their roles. Leaders are considerate of staff workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have enhanced systems for safeguarding. They ensure all staff have regular training. Consequently, staff know how to spot the signs that might indicate potential harm to a pupil. Staff promptly report these concerns to leaders. By acting on these swiftly, leaders make sure the pupils and families get the help they need.

Through the curriculum, pupils are taught to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations. Through exploring a range of scenarios, pupils learn about potential risks, including those online. They have an age-appropriate understanding of social media and know not to share personal information online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Early reading is not yet taught well enough. As a result, some pupils struggle to read unfamiliar words and find it difficult to access the curriculum. Leaders should ensure that all staff have the knowledge and skills to support pupils learning to read.
- Beyond the core curriculum, leaders have not carefully considered the important content that pupils need to know. As a consequence, pupils' understanding does not build over time and they struggle to recall prior learning. Leaders should ensure that curriculum thinking for all subjects sets out the knowledge that pupils should know and by when from the early years onwards.
- Staff subject knowledge is variable across the curriculum. This leads to differences in how well they implement the curriculum and assess pupils' learning. Senior leaders need to ensure subject leaders and staff have subject-specific professional development to improve their expertise.

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	118195
Local authority	Isle of Wight
Inspection number	10241520
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	184
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Rod Hodgson and Alex Pettitt (co-chairs)
Headteacher	Margaret Sanderson (Executive headteacher) Sian Broome (Head of school)
Website	www.stmaryspri.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	2 and 3 April 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The executive headteacher and the head of school joined the school in September 2022.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Portsmouth. The last inspection of its religious character was in April 2016.
- The governing body manages a nursery for two- to four-year-olds and before- and-after school childcare provision.
- The school does not currently 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 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 other senior leaders. They also met with members of the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and history. 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 at samples of pupils' work.
- During the inspection, inspectors met with a range of pupils to discuss their views about the school and talked to them informally during social times.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors scrutinised a wide range of information, including a selection of the school's records. Inspectors spoke to staff and pupils about safeguarding and looked at how pupils learn to keep themselves safe. Inspectors spoke to the designated safeguarding lead about the recording and reporting of safeguarding incidents.
- Inspectors met some parents to gather their views on the school. They reviewed the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. They also took account of staff responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire.

Inspection team

Laura James, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Marian Feeley

His Majesty's Inspector

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