

Inspection of St Mary's Church of England Controlled Primary School Boston Spa

Clifford Road, Boston Spa, West Yorkshire LS23 6DB

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 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

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending this school. They feel safe and are happy. Despite this, pupils' experiences in different subjects are variable. Sometimes, leaders do not give enough thought to the ways that work is adapted for pupils in the same class but in different year groups. In some subjects, teachers do not make careful checks on what pupils remember. This means that gaps in pupils' knowledge are not identified early enough. Leaders' high expectations for all pupils are not met in all subjects.

Pupils and adults respect each other. Leaders ensure that pupils are taught how to talk about their feelings. This begins in the early years. This helps pupils to manage their emotions. Pupils are also confident about telling each other how they feel. This helps to ensure that bullying does not happen. Pupils that inspectors spoke with were not worried about bullying.

The atmosphere in the school is calm. The Christian ethos of the school is woven into behaviour routines and well understood by pupils. Sometimes, leaders do not ensure that consistent routines around behaviour are applied in lessons. Due to this, some lessons are disrupted by pupils not concentrating on lesson activities.

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

Leaders have improved the school curriculum in recent years. This curriculum begins in the early years. Leaders have mapped out the important knowledge that they want pupils to remember as they move through the school. In history, for example, learning about explorers in key stage 1 helps pupils to think about how civilisations developed when they move into key stage 2. However, not all subjects have the same level of detailed planning. In some subjects, such as mathematics, there is a lack of clarity about how different resources should be used in lessons.

Leaders have prioritised the reading curriculum. All staff have been trained in the school's phonics programme. Pupils are well supported to read and there are clear, well-embedded routines. Teachers identify pupils who need help and provide support quickly. This is a successful aspect of the school's work. In other subjects, teachers do not always have the subject knowledge that they need to adapt the curriculum to support pupils. Leaders have not made it clear to teachers how they should adapt the curriculum for classes of mixed-age pupils so that all pupils complete work which helps them to know more and remember more. The early years class is different. Staff have planned this out in detail for younger pupils. For these pupils, there is clear planning for how Year 1 pupils will experience more ambitious curriculum goals than those children in Reception.

In the strongest subjects in the school, such as reading and art and design, teachers take time at the beginning of the lesson to check what pupils can remember. In these subjects, there is a strong focus on developing pupils' vocabulary. This is not the case across all subjects. Where teachers' subject knowledge is less secure, the checks on what pupils remember are not as thorough.

The help for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is improving quickly. Leaders have recently introduced new methods for ensuring that teachers receive clear information about children with SEND. This is having a positive impact in the classroom and children with SEND are well supported to join in lesson activities as they move through the school. Children with SEND are successfully able, for example, to use scientific terminology in line with their peers.

Behaviour across the school is calm and respectful. The school rules are understood by all and pupils have a strong sense of respect for each other. On some occasions, teachers do not tackle low-level disruption early enough. This can have an impact on learning. Leaders are aware of this but do not have clear systems in place to support staff in tackling this. At social times, pupils play well together. They understand and respect the feelings of others. Leaders plan opportunities for pupils to think about those that are different to them in, for example, the books they read with teachers.

Leaders ensure that pupils learn about diversity in the school curriculum. Pupils develop a strong sense of tolerance and respect. They understand that they have the right to say no. Pupils enjoy being part of activities linked to the harvest festival and other charitable work outside school. These activities help them to respect the community where they live.

Leaders have made rapid changes to the school in recent years. These are focused on clear priorities. Governors know the school well. There is a good understanding at all levels of leadership of the work that still needs to be undertaken. Most teachers feel well supported in their work at the school, but a small number of staff feel that leaders could do more to consider workload. Leaders are aware of this. Most parents told inspectors that they felt positive about the school. A minority feel that communication could be better. Leaders are taking steps to address this by, for example, inviting parents into school before registration for reading activities. Leaders know that there is more work to do in this area.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders keep clear records and take timely actions in relation to safeguarding. Staff receive regular training and know about their responsibilities to report concerns. Leaders make adaptations to the personal, social and health education curriculum to take account of the changing risks that pupils face. This ensures that pupils know what to look out for to be safe in the community and online.

A small number of pupils and parents were concerned about the lack of secure fencing. Leaders are aware of these concerns and have taken action to ensure that there is a high staff presence in this area. Funding is in place to build more secure fencing, which is scheduled to take place this term.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There is variability in the quality of curriculum planning between subjects, particularly with regard to the exact content that leaders want pupils to learn. This means that pupils' experiences of the curriculum and of individual subjects are not consistent. Leaders should ensure that curriculum planning builds cumulative, progressive knowledge over time to ensure pupils are prepared for the next stages of education.
- Teachers' subject knowledge across the curriculum is too variable. Sometimes, work is given to pupils that does not match the end points planned for in the curriculum. Pupils do not build on prior knowledge and remember new information clearly when this happens. Leaders should ensure that teachers have the required knowledge and expertise to implement the curriculum and set work that matches its aims.
- Assessment systems do not consistently ensure teachers check that pupils are remembering the most important information. This means that sometimes pupils' work is not well matched to the areas in which they need to get better. Leaders should ensure there are clear systems for teachers to check what pupils remember and to modify lesson activities accordingly.
- On some occasions, some teachers do not deal with low-level disruption and off-task behaviour early enough. Leaders do not monitor this sufficiently to support teachers effectively. This means, on too many occasions, lessons are disrupted and pupils' learning is adversely affected. Leaders should ensure that they support teachers to establish high expectations and monitor that these are being consistently implemented.

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	107997
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	10227203
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	137
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Colin Speers
Headteacher	Su Cloke
Website	www.stmaryscofe.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	23 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, a new headteacher and deputy headteacher have been appointed. There has been a new chair of governors and a new vice chair of governors. There have also been several other new appointments to the governing body.
- The school is part of an informal cluster of schools known as the Wharfe Valley Learning Partnership. Leaders across this cluster share expertise with each other.
- St Mary's Church of England Controlled Primary School is a Church of England school. The last section 48 inspection took place in January 2017. The next inspection should take place within the prescribed period. Section 48 inspections are usually carried out every three to five years. Section 48 inspections were suspended during the COVID-19 pandemic and restarted in September 2021. The first inspection will be within eight years of the last, rather than the usual three to five years.
- The school uses no alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) 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 spoke with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and representatives from the governing body, including the chair of governors. Inspectors also spoke with the leader for the early years.
- Inspectors spoke with representatives from Leeds local authority and the diocese of York.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, geography, mathematics, and art and design. 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.
- Inspectors also spoke with leaders about curriculum planning in science and history.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils both formally and informally, including single-sex groups of pupils. Inspectors also observed social times.
- Inspectors visited an assembly and spoke to parents.
- Inspectors spoke with support staff.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors scrutinised the single central record and looked at leaders' record-keeping in relation to safeguarding incidents. Inspectors also spoke with staff and pupils about safeguarding and considered site safety.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents, pupils and staff through surveys, including Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Matthew Vellensworth, lead inspector His Majesty's Inspector

Jane Wilson Ofsted Inspector

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