

# Inspection of St Mary's Fields Primary School

21 Compton Road, Leicester LE3 2DH

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Inspection dates: 11 and 12 January 2023

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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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

Requires improvement

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

Pupils at St Mary's Fields Primary School live by the school values of being 'safe, motivated and friendly'. They experience an inclusive and supportive environment. Pupils shared that they enjoy learning at this school and have lots of friends. Those who joined the school from other countries say they feel welcome.

Pupils have very positive relationships with staff. One parent, typical of many, shared that 'staff go above and beyond to create a wonderful environment to nurture, stimulate and support my child'. Pupils feel safe. Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils behave well. They like attending school. If pupils have any concerns, they know they can tell a trusted adult, who will respond appropriately.

Some teachers' expectations for pupils' academic achievement are not as high as they could be. Pupils do not develop detailed knowledge of the subjects they study in every subject and in every classroom.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of clubs and activities. Many pupils take part in Vitamin P club, chess club and sporting activities. Pupils develop leadership skills by taking part in the eco-committee and the school council or by becoming pupil librarians.

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

Leaders have ensured that it is clear what pupils should learn and when across the different subjects. However, they have not ensured that all teachers follow these plans when teaching the subjects. On occasions, teachers make changes to the order in which they teach the curriculum in some subjects. Sometimes, aspects of some subjects' curriculums are not taught. As a result, pupils do not consistently develop their understanding over time. This is particularly the case in relation to the teaching of mathematics. In the early years, staff know exactly what to teach and when. Children successfully learn the curriculum. They are well prepared for Year 1.

Some teachers check pupils' understanding effectively. In the early years, staff use every interaction with children to teach them something. They thoroughly check children's understanding before moving learning on. This is not consistently the case across the school. Teachers do not always identify and address the gaps in pupils' knowledge.

Leaders have adopted a phonics programme to help children and pupils learn to read. Staff know precisely which sounds pupils should learn and when. Leaders have ensured that pupils read books matched to the sounds they have learned. Pupils enjoy reading. They develop their ability to read fluently and confidently over time.

Staff quickly identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Some pupils with SEND benefit from personalised support which helps them to

access the curriculum. Staff adapt learning for pupils with additional needs in the early years when necessary. Teachers do not always provide all pupils with SEND with the additional support they need. On occasions, pupils miss out on learning when they are receiving support away from the classroom.

Leaders provide support for pupils who speak English as an additional language. Staff use a range of resources to help these pupils develop their grasp of English.

Leaders have developed a well-considered personal, social, health, citizen and economic education programme. Pupils build their knowledge of topics such as relationships, identity and health. They discuss and debate issues they have studied. Pupils learn about major world religions. Staff encourage them to develop their 'character muscles', including self-control and empathy.

Staff manage behaviour consistently. Pupils enjoy receiving rewards in weekly celebration assemblies. They nominate one another for 'character muscles' awards. Pupils say that outdoor spaces are not always calm. Leaders do not analyse behaviour trends over time. This prevents them from identifying precisely enough which pupils may need support to help manage their behaviour.

There have been recent significant changes to the senior leadership team. Leaders have quickly identified some areas for improvement. They are not always clear about precisely what they are responsible for, including, for example, whether subject leaders, phase leaders or teachers make the final decision about the precise order in which the curriculum is delivered. Senior and subject leaders' oversight of the curriculum is not yet secure. Staff are incredibly positive about leaders' support for their workload and well-being.

Governors share leaders' vision and fulfil their statutory duties. They hold leaders to account over workload and the school's vision and values. Governors do not always robustly challenge leaders about the curriculum. They have yet to ensure that they help leaders to identify areas for improvement comprehensively.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a culture in which all staff know they are responsible for safeguarding. Leaders ensure that staff complete training. This includes training about the 'Prevent' duty. Staff receive regular safeguarding updates. Leaders use quizzes to assess the impact of training on staff.

Leaders work effectively with wider agencies. When necessary, they act quickly to safeguard children. Leaders keep detailed records of the actions they take.

Leaders ensure that the curriculum reflects local safeguarding priorities. Pupils talk confidently about how to keep themselves safe, including when online.

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

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

- Leaders have designed well-sequenced curriculums. However, not all teachers consistently teach the curriculum in its intended order or, on occasions, in full. This means that pupils do not always develop detailed knowledge of the subjects they study. Leaders should ensure that teachers deliver the curriculum in its intended order so that pupils are supported in developing their knowledge and understanding.
- The support for pupils with SEND is not always targeted well enough to meet their needs. Some teachers do not use effective strategies to support these pupils. Some pupils with SEND develop gaps in their knowledge or are unable to access learning. Leaders must ensure that teachers have the necessary understanding to be able to use their knowledge of pupils' additional needs to design appropriate activities and provide suitable support.
- Leaders have not always identified precise areas for improvement in relation to the teaching of the curriculum. Governors have not held leaders to account in relation to curriculum quality as effectively as they have in other areas of the school's provision. As a result, some teachers' practice related to the teaching of the curriculum is not as effective as it could be. Leaders, including governors, should ensure that the way in which they monitor the curriculum enables them to identify precise areas for improvement.

## 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>	120025
<b>Local authority</b>	Leicester
<b>Inspection number</b>	10241504
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	445
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Raj Gill-Harrison
<b>Headteacher</b>	Helen Nott
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.st-marysfields.leicester.sch.uk/">www.st-marysfields.leicester.sch.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	26 and 27 March 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- There have been significant changes to the senior leadership team in recent months. The current headteacher took up her post in February 2022. The current deputy headteacher took up her post in April 2022. There have also been changes in a number of subject leadership roles.
- The governing body is currently undergoing a change in membership, with three new governors joining imminently.
- The school currently makes use of one unregistered alternative provider.

## 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.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, science, geography and physical education. As part of deep dive activities, the inspectors

discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- An inspector listened to pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 read to a known adult.
- Inspectors met with those responsible for early years provision and visited early years provision.
- Inspectors also met with those responsible for behaviour, personal development and provision for pupils with SEND, as well as provision for pupil premium pupils, and pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- Inspectors met formally and informally with groups of pupils.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the school's arrangements for safeguarding, inspectors read the school's relevant policies, scrutinised the single central record and met with the safeguarding team. Inspectors also spoke with staff and pupils.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and a range of policies.
- Inspectors considered responses received on Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. They also considered responses to the Ofsted staff and pupil surveys.

## Inspection team

Matthew Fearn-Davies, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Vic Wilkinson	His Majesty's Inspector
Helen Williams	Ofsted Inspector

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