

Inspection of St Martin's CofE Voluntary Aided Primary School

Shady Bower, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP1 2RG

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 January 2023

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Early years provision

Inadequate

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils do not receive an acceptable standard of education. They do not learn enough in many subjects. The curriculum lacks ambition and does not give pupils the essential knowledge they need to be successful. Consequently, pupils have considerable gaps in their knowledge and are not well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Despite this, pupils enjoy coming to school and feel safe. They have positive relationships with the adults in school. They know that adults are there to help them if they have a concern. Pupils are respectful towards adults and each other. Older pupils enjoy their role as 'Young Leaders' and support younger pupils with play during social times.

Pupils say that behaviour is better since the introduction of the new system. They understand the rewards and sanctions well and appreciate the headteacher's stickers when they work hard. Pupils' conduct is generally calm in the classrooms, corridors and lunch hall. However, when learning does not match pupils' needs well enough, they become disengaged and lose focus.

Pupils understand the importance of inclusion. They know that everyone is different and say that they would welcome anyone into their school.

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

There have been many changes to leadership. However, governors have failed to hold leaders to account for the quality of pupils' education, which is poor. Leaders and governors have not improved the deep-rooted weaknesses in curriculum and teaching, which have resulted in pupils' weak progress across the curriculum.

The recently appointed headteacher is providing a clear sense of direction. She has an accurate understanding of the inherent weaknesses in the school. She is working with determination and tenacity to bring about change. Staff and pupils are fully supportive of the positive changes that she has made in a short space of time. However, it is too early to see any demonstrable impact.

The curriculum is poorly designed. Leaders do not ensure that the curriculum sets out clearly the knowledge pupils need to know and remember. It is not coherently sequenced, so that it builds on pupils' previous learning. This means that, over time, pupils do not build the knowledge and understanding they need for future learning. For example, pupils in key stage 2 do not know basic number facts securely and rely on long-winded methods and resources to carry out subtraction.

Teachers do not use assessment information well. They do not systematically correct pupils' misconceptions or adapt learning to address gaps in pupils' knowledge. Pupils

struggle to learn and lose focus. As a result, there is low-level disruption, which is not managed effectively.

The curriculum in some subjects is too narrow. As a result, pupils have significant gaps in their knowledge. For example, older pupils do not know the difference between a town, city and village. They struggle to name the oceans and continents of the world. There are no opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of field work or build their locational knowledge of the United Kingdom and the wider world.

The teaching of reading is not effective, including in Reception Year. A significant proportion of pupils do not learn to read well. Too many pupils have books that do not match the sounds they know. This means they struggle to read fluently. Pupils who fall behind do not receive the support they need to catch up. There are currently no robust plans in place to address this. This impacts on their learning in other areas of the curriculum, including pupils' writing and spelling. When pupils are able to read simple texts, they are not helped to develop knowledge and understanding about what they have read. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are low.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) do not reach their full potential. Adults do not have an accurate understanding of their needs. Until recently, pupils with SEND would often work away from their peers. This has changed since the appointment of the headteacher. However, expectations of these pupils are too low and learning is not adapted to effectively meet their needs. Support plans lack precision.

Some pupils do not attend school often enough. Leaders recognise that there is still much to do to tackle this longstanding legacy. The headteacher has put robust measures in place to address this and is supporting families to ensure that attendance improves. However, there is little impact yet.

Values-based assemblies give pupils opportunities to develop morally and spiritually. Pupils are kind towards each other and adults. They know the importance of healthy eating and keeping active. Pupils value the range of extra-curricular clubs that are on offer. However, pupils do not have a clear understanding of different faiths and cultures.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The headteacher has made sure that all adults who work in the school have regular and detailed safeguarding training. This means that adults are alert to possible signs that pupils may be at risk of harm. Adults know the pupils and families well and follow the school's procedures to record any concerns. The headteacher ensures that pupils and families receive the support they need in a timely manner.

The headteacher ensures that appropriate checks are completed, so that adults who work in the school are suitable to work with pupils. Records are meticulously kept. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe including when online. Pupils feel safe in school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum lacks ambition and is too narrow. It is not coherently designed or sequenced. As a result, pupils receive a haphazard and disconnected series of lessons. This means that there are considerable gaps in what pupils know and remember. Leaders must identify the essential knowledge they want pupils to know and remember and by when.
- The use of assessment is ineffective. Teachers do not have an accurate understanding of what pupils know and can do. Gaps in pupils' knowledge are not identified. Leaders need to implement an effective approach to using assessment, so that any deficits in knowledge can be rectified.
- Pupils do not learn to read well. Leaders do not ensure the books that pupils read match the sounds they know. Pupils are not taught how to understand the text they read. As a result, too many pupils are unable to read fluently. Leaders need to ensure that pupils read books that match the sounds they know and ensure that staff can effectively support pupils to comprehend what they read.
- Pupils with SEND do not receive the support they need. Learning is not adapted because staff do not have an accurate understanding of their needs. These pupils fail to progress well enough through the curriculum. Leaders and staff must precisely identify what support pupils need and make the necessary adaptations to learning, so that pupils with SEND achieve their potential.
- Over time, governors have not held leaders to account for the quality of education. Pupils across the school make poor progress through the curriculum. Governors must ensure that there are effective systems in place to increase the level of challenge to school leaders to improve rapidly the quality of education pupils receive.
- Leaders have not tackled the longstanding issues with pupil absence. This means that some groups of pupils miss large amounts of their education. Leaders must address this urgently, so that pupil's attendance improves quickly.
- Leaders and those responsible for governance may not appoint early career teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

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	126413
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	10256709
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	156
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mike Oldham
Headteacher	Becky McManus
Website	www.stmartinsprimaryschool.com
Date of previous inspection	5 May 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There have been significant changes in leadership since the previous inspection. The current headteacher took up post on the 31st of October 2022.
- The school does not currently have a deputy headteacher.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.
- St. Martin's is a Church of England school. The school's most recent section 48 inspection took place in November 2021.

Information about this inspection

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

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

- 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, subject leaders, local authority representative, governors and the diocese.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and physical education. 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 to leaders and pupils about the curriculum in some other subjects, including art and geography.
- The lead inspector reviewed the schools' safeguarding documentation, including the safeguarding checks that are carried out on adults working at the school. Inspectors spoke to the designated safeguarding lead to check how well she acts on concerns. Inspectors spoke to staff about their safeguarding training and to pupils about how they keep themselves safe.
- The lead inspector looked at key documentation, including governor minutes, improvement plans and notes of visits from the local authority.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at break and lunchtimes as well as in the lessons. An inspector met with the headteacher to discuss attendance and how they respond to behaviour incidents.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text replies and responses to the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Wendy D'Arcy, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Emma Jelley

Ofsted Inspector

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