

Inspection of a good school: St Mary's C of E Primary School

Kendal Road, Kirkby Lonsdale, Carnforth, Lancashire LA6 2DN

Inspection dates:

24 and 25 January 2023

Outcome

St Mary's C of E Primary School continues to be a good school. There is enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding if we were to carry out a graded (section 5) inspection now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders and staff have very high expectations for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils have a thirst for knowledge. Starting in the early years and throughout key stages 1 and 2, pupils develop very positive attitudes to their learning. This is because teachers provide pupils with a rich and exciting range of experiences. Teachers encourage pupils to talk with each other about their work. This helps pupils remember key information and to achieve well.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of vivid and memorable experiences that enhance their learning and personal development. For instance, pupils relished their lessons with a resident artist, singing in the community and their residential visits to Liverpool and the Lake District. Older pupils diligently carry out their responsibilities as reading ambassadors and as helpers in the Nursery and Reception classes.

Pupils are safe and happy in school. They show care and kindness towards each other. Their exemplary behaviour reflects the high expectations of adults in the school. Pupils enjoy respectful relationships with staff. On the rare occasions on which bullying occurs, it is reported and dealt with effectively. When pupils need help, they feel very comfortable in approaching staff.

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

Leaders and staff are aspirational for all pupils. They have designed an ambitious suite of subject curriculums. Subject leaders have thought in detail about the important knowledge that pupils should learn. Leaders have a strong understanding of how these curriculums prepare pupils for key stage 3.

Leaders ensure that teachers develop strong subject knowledge. This helps teachers to design very effective learning activities so that pupils know and remember more over

time. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes enjoy an inspiring range of activities. In the early years, teachers ensure that the interactions they have with children make a strong contribution to their development. This helps them to build a strong foundation for the next phase of their education.

Teachers are adept at checking what pupils know. Teachers and support staff use this information exceptionally well to address any gaps and misconceptions. As a result, pupils are very well prepared for their next steps.

Leaders have established a vibrant culture of reading. The teaching of phonics starts as soon as children join the school in the Reception class. Staff who teach reading are very well supported so that they develop the expertise that they need. Pupils read books that match the sounds that they have learned. This helps them to practise their phonics knowledge. Staff help any pupils who are struggling to catch up quickly so that they become confident, fluent readers. Pupils read a wide range of high-quality fiction and non-fiction books which make a strong contribution to their understanding of the world. For instance, pupils read books about inspirational female role models and stories with characters with SEND.

Leaders are alert to pupils who need additional support with their learning. Staff are quick to identify pupils with SEND. Leaders put in place the help that these pupils need so that they can access the curriculum and learn alongside their peers. Leaders and teachers review and adapt the support that they put in place to make sure that pupils with SEND achieve very well.

Throughout the school, pupils are calm and purposeful. They embrace every opportunity to learn. Pupils welcome the support that they receive from their teachers and their peers when they find learning difficult.

Leaders ensure that all pupils access many opportunities that support their wider development. Pupils learn about different cultures and religions. They show respect for the differences between themselves and others. They develop a strong sense of community through their visits to the local church, the library and a residential care home. Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of healthy relationships.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They value the time and training that leaders give them so that they can effectively carry out their roles. The governing body has a clear vision for the school. They support and challenge the work of leaders so that pupils achieve well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a strong safeguarding culture at the school. They ensure that staff and governors complete regular safeguarding training. Leaders thoroughly check the safeguarding knowledge of all staff and they routinely review the quality of the school's policies and practices.

Staff are alert to changes in pupils' behaviour and they keep accurate records of concerns. This information is acted on swiftly so that pupils and families get the help that they need. Well-trained staff are on hand to support pupils. Leaders liaise closely with other agencies when necessary.

Pupils feel safe at the school. They know how to stay safe online and how to report concerns.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2012.

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	112323
Local authority	Cumbria
Inspection number	10256158
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	231
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jo Gill
Headteacher	Brian Jones
Website	www.stmarys-kl.cumbria.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	7 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a Church of England school in the Diocese of Carlisle. The most recent section 48 inspection took place in July 2018.
- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector completed deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. He met with subject leaders, visited lessons, including learning activities in the nursery, reviewed pupils' work and spoke with staff and pupils.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and other senior leaders throughout the inspection. The inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The inspector spoke to an adviser from the local authority and a representative from the Diocese of Carlisle.

- The inspector met with leaders to discuss early years, SEND, curriculum and assessment, behaviour and the provision for pupils' wider development.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. He took account of the responses from staff and pupils to Ofsted's online surveys and gathered the views of staff and pupils throughout the inspection.
- To inspect safeguarding, the inspector met with leaders, staff and pupils. The inspector checked a sample of leaders' safeguarding records and reviewed the recruitment checks made on staff.

Inspection team

Andy Cunningham, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023