

# Inspection of a good school: Trinity St Mary's CofE Voluntary Aided Primary School, South Woodham Ferrers

Trinity Square, South Woodham Ferrers, Chelmsford, Essex CM3 5JX

---

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 March 2023

## Outcome

Trinity St Mary's CofE Voluntary Aided Primary School, South Woodham Ferrers continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Trinity St Mary's is a place where pupils and children are happy and looked after. Pupils enjoy their lessons. They like how the school's themed weeks, for example, 'detective week', are fun and help them to remember their learning. Pupils know that their teachers will support them to do their best, even when they find learning tricky. Pupils enjoy reading. Many take part in the school's 'book bingo' initiative. Children in the early years, including the pre-school, are confident, resilient individuals who are enthusiastic about their learning.

Pupils live up to the school's values. This is shown by their dedication to learning and kindness to others. If there is a problem on the playground or in class, it is sorted out by pupils themselves, or by adults if needed. Pupils trust adults to look after them. Bullying is rarely an issue, as most pupils behave well. In class, pupils enjoy the challenge of learning. It is not often that learning is disrupted by poor behaviour.

In every year group, pupils experience a range of different clubs, trips and visits. These include activities such as 'newspaper club', public speaking and archery. Pupils have a range of opportunities to take on responsibilities, such as the school council. There is something for everyone to get involved in.

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

The new headteacher and her team have recently reviewed the school's curriculum. On the whole, this has been successful. Curriculum documents are now organised to ensure

that learning is structured in a way that helps pupils to get better at subjects and grow their knowledge. The curriculum in most areas highlights the important knowledge that pupils need to learn and when. In art, for instance, the documents show how the knowledge of drawing starts in early years and builds as pupils get older so they become confident and fluent in this aspect. Teachers design activities matched closely to the important content pupils need to know to achieve well.

There are some instances, however, where this work is not complete. In these cases, the plans are about activities rather than the detail of the knowledge pupils need to learn. This means that, sometimes, pupils are given tasks that do not support them to learn what they should.

A well-planned early years curriculum links cohesively to the curriculum in other year groups. Early mathematics, for instance, enables children to build the necessary knowledge for Year 1. Adults use talk and play to reinforce learning effectively. Children's early reading fluency is supported to grow through exposure to regular stories, songs and rhymes.

Many staff are new to the school. Leaders ensure that they are well supported to understand the intended curriculum. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and quickly spot misconceptions.

Staff know the academic and emotional needs of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Adults support pupils with SEND well in the classroom. Teachers' checks on learning help to identify any pupils falling behind. Leaders make sure that pupils who need to catch up get the support they need.

The reading curriculum has recently been redesigned. A new phonics scheme is in place and used effectively by well-trained adults. Children in the early years are taught how to read accurately. New systems ensure that pupils who have fallen behind are spotted quickly so that effective catch-up support is put in place. Pupils read a range of books suited to their needs. A renewed focus on the vocabulary of older pupils supports pupils to become more confident to understand and interpret texts.

Behaviour is positive in the school. Staff and pupils have high expectations of how pupils should behave. Effective support helps pupils to manage their emotions. This includes having people to talk to if they have a worry or are finding parts of school life hard.

The personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) curriculum covers the essential knowledge pupils need to be healthy, happy members of the community. The PSHE curriculum is reactive to the needs of pupils. It is adjusted, for instance, to respond to any occasional behaviour concerns so that pupils are equipped with the skills to manage any tricky friendship issues.

Leaders use a range of support, including from governors and the local authority, to help them to improve the school's curriculum, although some curriculum leaders are still getting to grips with how to continue to improve their areas. Leaders have managed the curriculum changes carefully to ensure they do not result in excessive workload for staff.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Effective safeguarding training ensures that all staff, including in the pre-school, know how to spot if a pupil or child is at risk of harm. Staff understand the processes for reporting concerns. Issues are dealt with quickly and appropriately by safeguarding leaders. Safeguarding records show that leaders use a range of agencies and support to give pupils and their families help.

There are appropriate checks on adults who come into contact with pupils in the school. Aspects of the school site are shared with the local primary school, which is next door. Site security is managed well so that pupils are not at risk.

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

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

- In a small number of instances, curriculum documentation focuses on activities rather than well-sequenced subject knowledge. In these cases, it is harder for teachers to support pupils to get better and grow their knowledge consistently over time. Leaders should ensure that all curriculum plans identify the important knowledge that pupils need to know and provide the necessary detail for teachers to plan pupils' learning effectively.
- Some subject leaders are new to their role, and their work has only just started. They are just getting to grips with what works best in their curriculum areas and what needs to improve further. Leaders should ensure that all curriculum leaders access high-quality training and development so that they can evaluate and implement the intended curriculum successfully.

## 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 June 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	115200
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10212455
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	189
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Karen Munro
<b>Headteacher</b>	Janet Hoy
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.trinitystmarys.com">http://www.trinitystmarys.com</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	7 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The headteacher started in her position in September 2022.
- The school runs a pre-school for children who are three-years old.
- The school shares its playground with the primary school next door.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school runs a breakfast and an after-school club.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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 carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, and art. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils about learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.
- The inspector looked at a range of curriculum documentation and pupils' work across other subjects, including science, geography and design technology.
- The inspector held a meeting with representatives from the governing body.
- The inspector spoke to a range of pupils in lessons, on the playground and around the school.
- The inspector visited the breakfast club and the pre-school and spoke with adults, pupils and children.
- The inspector met with a range of leaders across both days of inspection.
- The inspector held telephone calls with representatives from the local authority and the diocese.
- To inspect safeguarding, the inspector met with the school's safeguarding leader. He looked closely at safeguarding systems, processes and records and spoke to pupils, staff and governors about safeguarding.
- The inspector considered the 25 responses made by parents to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including 25 free-text responses. The inspector also considered the 21 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.

## **Inspection team**

Damian Loneragan, 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](mailto: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/](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2023