

# Inspection of St Mary's C of E Primary School

St Mary's Road, Sale, Cheshire M33 6SA

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Inspection dates: 21 and 22 March 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected 16 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection.

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

Pupils told inspectors that 'everyone is welcome at this school'. Warm and friendly relationships underpin this caring learning community. Pupils are happy. They look forward to breaktimes with their friends. Pupils said there is always someone to talk to if they have any worries or concerns. Older pupils nurture younger pupils in their role as 'friendly listeners'. If bullying happens, adults deal with it quickly. This helps pupils to feel safe.

Leaders have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and of their behaviour. These expectations permeate the school. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They show great consideration and politeness towards others. Pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well across a variety of subjects.

Pupils behave exceptionally well. They are polite and respect each other, regardless of any differences that they may have. They follow the school's 'golden choices' diligently. They are keen to earn team points and golden tickets or to be selected as 'star scientists' in their classes.

Pupils value and enjoy the extensive variety of extra-curricular activities, including choir, cookery, Chinese and a range of sports clubs. Pupils' talents are showcased in events such as the eagerly anticipated annual arts festival. Pupils carry out a wide range of roles with pride, for example as members of the school sports and reading councils. By the time pupils leave school in Year 6, they are confident, caring and respectful citizens.

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

Leaders have developed a broad and ambitious curriculum for all pupils. They have constructed the curriculum taking into consideration the mixed-age classes in the school.

In most subjects, leaders have identified the important knowledge that pupils should acquire each year. They have ordered this content carefully. This ensures that pupils can build on previous learning when presented with new ideas. Staff check what pupils know and can do. They address pupils' misconceptions quickly. As a result, the vast majority of pupils achieve well.

In a few subjects, leaders are not as clear about the specific key knowledge that pupils should acquire and the most important concepts that they should learn and understand. Therefore, teachers do not always teach new subject content that builds on what pupils already know. As a result, in these subjects, pupils are not able to apply what they know as confidently and independently as they do in other subjects. This prevents some pupils from achieving as well as they could in these subjects.

Leaders prioritise reading throughout the school, including in the early years. Pupils enjoy using the book areas in their classrooms and the school library. The weekly visit of Conker, the dog that pupils read to, is a highlight for pupils. Older pupils proudly talked to inspectors about being reading buddies for younger children.

Developing a love of reading begins in the early years. Children enjoy songs, rhymes and stories in the Nursery class. The phonics programme is well established and staff teach it with confidence. The books that pupils use to practise their reading match the sounds that they already know. This helps them to become increasingly confident readers by the time they leave key stage 1. By the end of key stage 2, most pupils read with comprehension, fluency and accuracy.

Pupils who struggle to read, including pupils who speak English as an additional language, benefit from additional support from well-trained adults. This builds their confidence and quickly increases their fluency in reading.

Leaders have effective systems to identify the needs of pupils with SEND. Staff support pupils with SEND effectively. They provide additional support where necessary. As a result, pupils with SEND successfully follow the same curriculum as their peers.

Pupils demonstrate respect in the way they behave. They have extremely positive attitudes to their learning. Pupils are very keen learners. When they are learning, they work exceptionally well, including with each other. Everyone can learn without disruption.

Leaders ensure that pupils develop as well-rounded youngsters. Pupils experience an exemplary range of opportunities to enhance their personal development. They benefit from links with a school in Uganda and another school in the United Kingdom. Pupils display a mature understanding of diversity and equality. Teachers encourage pupils to think about people less fortunate than themselves. Pupils act on this and organise fundraising activities for charities. They study major world religions and have a meaningful understanding of British values. Pupils are exceptionally well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Staff feel well supported by leaders with their workload and well-being. They are proud to work at the school. Governors are knowledgeable and committed to the continued success of the school. They support and challenge school leaders effectively. Parents and carers hold the school in high regard. They appreciate the care and opportunities provided for their children.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff know the school community very well. Staff benefit from regular training that helps them to identify pupils at risk of harm. They follow clear procedures to report any concerns they have about pupils. Leaders ensure that any

concerns are followed up swiftly. They work effectively with external agencies when necessary.

Leaders ensure that the curriculum is used to teach pupils about keeping safe. Pupils learn about water and fire safety. They understand how to keep themselves safe when working or playing online.

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

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

- In a few subjects, leaders have not identified the most important concepts and specific key knowledge that pupils should learn. This prevents pupils from acquiring some of the most important knowledge and skills in sufficient depth. Leaders should ensure that they refine their curricular thinking in these subjects so that teachers are clear about what pupils need to know and remember to enable them to build on prior knowledge when they are learning something new.

## **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>	106344
<b>Local authority</b>	Trafford
<b>Inspection number</b>	10211786
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	273
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Jacqueline Galloway
<b>Headteacher</b>	Wayne Hitchcock
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.st-marys.trafford.sch.uk">www.st-marys.trafford.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	11 and 12 July 2007, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The governing body is responsible for a breakfast and after-school club.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Chester. The last section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, took place on 18 January 2018.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors 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 conducted deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, art and design, history and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders and teachers. They visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' and children's work and talked with groups of pupils about their learning. The

lead inspector observed pupils from key stage 1 and key stage 2 read to a familiar adult. Inspectors also spoke with pupils about their learning and evaluated their work in some other subjects.

- Inspectors spoke with members of the governing body, the headteacher and other school leaders. The lead inspector also spoke with a representative of the local authority and a representative of the diocese.
- Inspectors talked with staff about their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors met with the leaders who are responsible for attendance, behaviour, early years, SEND and pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors reviewed leaders' policies and procedures for keeping pupils safe. They discussed safeguarding arrangements with leaders and staff. Inspectors also checked the single central record.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about safeguarding and their wider experience of school. They looked at a range of policies and documents related to pupils' welfare and education. They observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.
- Inspectors met with parents and carers at the start of the school day and took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.

### **Inspection team**

Rebecca Jewitt, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

David Woodhouse

Ofsted Inspector

John Littler

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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