

# Inspection of a good school: St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Hornchurch Road, Hornchurch, Essex RM12 4TL

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Inspection dates:

25 and 26 April 2023

## Outcome

St Mary's Catholic Primary School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

This is a welcoming and nurturing place to learn. The atmosphere around the school is very calm. This is because there are clear and consistent routines and high expectations from staff.

Pupils behave well here. They show positive attitudes to learning and are incredibly respectful towards others. Lessons are not interrupted by poor behaviour. Staff regularly praise pupils and award them certificates for demonstrating positive behaviour and values. Warm relationships between pupils and staff permeate the school. Pupils know who to talk to if they are worried. They know they will be listened to, and as a result feel happy and safe.

Staff encourage pupils to value and celebrate difference. For example, visiting speakers and members of staff share their knowledge of their own faith with pupils. These opportunities help pupils to understand and respect people with differing beliefs and customs.

Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to take on positions of responsibility. For example, pupils vote for their classmates to be members of the school council. Some Year 6 pupils act as 'mini middays' and support younger children during lunchtime.

Pupils enjoy the many wider opportunities offered. Pupils talk with excitement about singing at the O2 arena and competing in sporting tournaments.

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

Reading is at the heart of the school's curriculum. Pupils are taught to read right from the start of Reception. This is because leaders want every pupil to learn to read fluently and without delay. Staff are well trained in the teaching of phonics, so they teach reading well. Staff check the sounds that pupils know regularly and systematically. They identify pupils who may be finding reading difficult and give them help to catch up. Pupils, including

those in the early years, are given books that are carefully matched to the sounds that they know. This means that they read with developing fluency and enthusiasm.

Pupils read widely and often. They have regular opportunities to visit the school library. This develops a love for reading.

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils to achieve well. They have put a well-structured curriculum in place that meets the requirements of the national curriculum. Leaders have identified what they want pupils to learn, and broken this down into logical steps from Reception to Year 6. For example, children in Reception can add two numbers together to make 10. This is because they have previously been taught that numbers are made up of smaller numbers. This supports children's readiness for Year 1.

Leaders make sure that staff have the subject knowledge they need to deliver the curriculum. This includes staff in the early years. As a result, teachers address misconceptions and explain concepts clearly. However, in a few subjects, pupils find it difficult to remember previously taught concepts and vocabulary. When this happens, pupils find it difficult to link new learning to what they have been taught before and they develop gaps in their learning.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified quickly. They are given support to access learning alongside their peers. Leaders work effectively with external professionals, such as therapists and psychologists. These experts provide training for teachers and teaching assistants. Leaders and teachers adapt their teaching and resources effectively so that pupils with SEND learn well.

Pupils behave very well in lessons. This is because expectations and routines are firmly established. Pupils are engaged and show positive attitudes towards their learning. They want to impress their teachers. This means that the curriculum is taught without any interruption. Pupils are taught how to keep safe both online and offline. Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to understand and regulate their feelings. Right from the start in early years, pupils manage their emotions well.

Leaders aim for pupils to become responsible and respectful citizens. Pupils are taught about the importance of diversity and individual liberty. They value and explore others' views. For example, in Year 5, pupils debate and consider whether everyone should be vegan. Lessons across the curriculum help pupils understand how to identify risks, and how to recognise healthy and unhealthy relationships. Pupils are taught about consent in an age-appropriate manner.

Staff are extremely proud to work here. They value the support they are given by leaders to continually improve their practice. Governors are committed to and ambitious for the school. They understand what the school does well and what it needs to do to be even better. Leaders and governors make sure that workload is manageable, and that staff well-being is a priority.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is a priority here. Leaders provide regular and relevant training which helps staff to identify and report concerns quickly. Leaders respond swiftly to concerns raised. Leaders work closely with outside agencies so that pupils and families receive the support they need. Leaders carry out robust checks on staff before they are appointed.

Pupils have a good awareness of staying safe in different ways, including online safety. They know that they should report concerns to an adult and that they should not share personal information with strangers online.

Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to learn about possible risks. This supports pupils' understanding of how to keep safe.

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

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

- In a few subjects, pupils find it difficult to remember key concepts and vocabulary that they have been taught before. This means they find it difficult to link learning to what they have been taught previously, and they develop gaps in their learning. Leaders should make sure that teachers help pupils to retain knowledge, skills and vocabulary over time.

## **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 September 2013.

## 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>	102329
<b>Local authority</b>	Havering
<b>Inspection number</b>	10268804
<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>	420
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Tim Nagle
<b>Headteacher</b>	Garth Tucker
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stmaryscatholicprimaryschool.co.uk">www.stmaryscatholicprimaryschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	18 January 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- This is a Roman Catholic school under the Diocese of Brentwood.
- The school received a section 48 inspection in November 2018.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club.

The school does 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 her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher and members of the senior leadership team to discuss school development.
- The inspector met with members of the governing body. She also met with representatives of the local authority and the diocese.

- The inspector scrutinised a wide range of documents, including those related to safeguarding, pupils' personal development and behaviour.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at pupils' work.
- The inspector also spoke to leaders and looked at samples of pupils' work in Spanish and science.
- The views of parents and staff were also considered, including through Ofsted's surveys.
- The inspector reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding and behaviour by scrutinising records and through discussions with pupils and staff.
- The inspector viewed a wide variety of documentation provided by the school. This included leaders' self-evaluation, curriculum information and school policies.

### **Inspection team**

Deborah Walters, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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