

Inspection of St Margaret's CofE Primary School

Withington Road, Whalley Range, Manchester M16 8FQ

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 June 2023

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils and their parents and carers are proud to be part of this very inclusive school. Pupils are happy in the school. They said that it is a place which celebrates the diversity of pupils' faiths and cultures. Pupils feel safe because they trust adults to resolve any problems they may have. Staff deal with any occasional acts of unkindness or bullying swiftly.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour, and pupils behave well. Pupils said that teachers are fair. Pupils are polite to staff and visitors. At lunchtime, they take part enthusiastically in a wide range of activities provided by sports coaches and other staff.

Leaders aim to give all their pupils the best start in life, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Many pupils who speak English as an additional language join the school at different times of the year. All are made welcome. As a result, they soon catch up with their peers. Staff expect all pupils to work hard and achieve well, and they rise to these expectations. Most pupils achieve well.

Pupils appreciate the great breadth of opportunities they have to enrich their learning through extra-curricular activities. Staff ensure that the after-school activities they offer to pupils are sufficiently varied to interest all pupils. Leaders encourage staff to organise many visits out of school to give pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, a rich diet of cultural experiences.

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

Over recent years, leaders and governors have reviewed their curriculum and made extensive changes so that it is ambitious. They have thought carefully about the main themes of the curriculum so that it meets the needs of their pupils and is relevant to their diverse backgrounds. In the early years, the curriculum provides children with a wide range of valuable opportunities to develop their language, communication and mathematical skills. As a result, despite many children joining the school speaking little or no English, by the end of the Reception year, they are very well prepared for the key stage 1 curriculum.

Subject teachers deliver the curriculum well. They are helped to do so by knowledgeable subject leaders who are keen to offer teachers any guidance they may need if they are unsure about a topic. Teachers use a wide range of teaching strategies to capture the interest of their pupils. In both the Nursery and Reception classes, both indoor and outdoor learning environments are very well designed. These allow teachers to organise an impressive range of activities which excite and enthuse the children and strongly promote learning.

Teachers usually know their pupils well. In many subjects, they make sure that pupils understand and retain what they have been taught. However, in a few

subjects, teachers do not carefully check to see if pupils have understood and remembered the essential subject knowledge and skills that have been shared in lessons. As a result, in these subjects, teachers sometimes do not identify and address gaps in pupils' learning or correct any misconceptions that may have developed.

Reading is a priority across the school. Good reading habits are especially well established in the early years and key stage 1. Pupils said they enjoy reading, and many read frequently. Leaders have ensured that there is a wide range of high-quality fiction and non-fiction for pupils to read. The books have been chosen deliberately to reflect the many varied backgrounds of pupils at the school. In this way, pupils are helped to develop their understanding of the diversity of their school community and the local area. Leaders have developed an effective phonics curriculum so that pupils, including those with SEND and those who speak English as an additional language, learn to read with increasing fluency and accuracy. Staff are quick to spot those pupils who struggle to read. Well-trained staff provide support to help them keep up with their peers.

Leaders promptly and accurately identify the needs of pupils with SEND. Many additional needs are identified in Nursery or Reception. Staff then work closely with parents and carers to quickly find the best possible support for pupils. Leaders provide staff with the information that they require to enable them to help these pupils achieve well.

Children in the early years settle very quickly and rapidly learn to follow the routines and rules of the school day. They demonstrate high levels of tolerance and respect for others. Staff in both Nursery and Reception are alert to any problems and intervene sensitively when required. Across the school, pupils behave well. In almost all lessons they listen carefully and follow the instructions of their teachers. Staff support effectively those pupils who find it more difficult to concentrate in lessons.

The personal development programme developed by leaders is exceptionally well designed. Through this programme, pupils learn about and celebrate cultures, societies and lifestyles which are different from their own. They develop confidence in sharing and discussing their own opinions with others while being receptive to the opinions of those who may disagree. They know and understand fundamental British values very well. They talk confidently and with understanding about healthy and safe relationships. Leaders provide many opportunities for pupils to develop their own leadership skills by taking on positions of responsibility.

Governors have a strong understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the school. Recently, they carried out a review of their roles and responsibilities. As a result, they have strengthened the processes they use to support and challenge school leaders.

Leaders take the workload and well-being of staff into account when making decisions. Staff appreciate the opportunities for professional development which the school offers

them. They like the way that leaders enhance the skills of staff by giving them opportunities to develop their leadership roles.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders take their safeguarding responsibilities very seriously. They have a thorough understanding of the issues that pupils may face. Leaders and staff know pupils and their families very well. Staff are trained to spot the signs that pupils may be at risk of harm. They report any safeguarding concerns quickly so that pupils can get the timely help that they need. Staff work closely with other agencies where needed.

Leaders ensure that pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe. For example, pupils learn about keeping safe online in their computing lessons and assemblies.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, teachers do not check well enough to see if pupils have understood and remembered the essential subject knowledge and skills they have been taught. As a result, teachers sometimes do not identify and address gaps in pupils' learning or correct any misconceptions pupils may have in these subjects. Leaders should ensure that across all subjects teachers check pupils' learning in ways which allows them to recognise and attend to any gaps in pupils' knowledge.

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	105493
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10268817
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	656
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mariam Al-Bayati
Headteacher	David Hunter
Website	www.stmargaretsmanchester.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	23 January 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not use any alternative provision.
- This Church of England school is voluntary controlled. It last received a religious education inspection, carried out under section 48 of the Education Act 2005, in March 2017.

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 met with the headteacher, senior leaders, middle leaders and a range of teaching and support staff. The lead inspector spoke with eight members of the governing body.
- The lead inspector spoke with a representative of the diocese and a

representative of the local education authority.

- As part of this inspection, inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, science, art and geography. They met with subject leaders, visited some lessons, looked at pupils' work and spoke with pupils and teachers. Inspectors observed individual pupils reading to their teachers.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils from Years 2 to 6. They also observed breaktime and lunchtime.
- Inspectors checked the school's safeguarding procedures and the checks made on staff. They met with leaders, staff and pupils to evaluate the culture of safeguarding.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including that relating to the school development plans, self-evaluation documents, curriculum information and behaviour and attendance records.
- The lead inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.
- The lead inspector also considered the views of the parents who responded to Ofsted Parent View. This included the comments received via the free-text facility.

Inspection team

Timothy Gartside, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Alex Farrow	Ofsted Inspector
Wendy Tracey	Ofsted Inspector
John Hanley	Ofsted Inspector

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