

Inspection of St Mary's Church of England Primary School, Hinckley

Station Road, Hinckley, Leicestershire LE10 1AW

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 September 2023

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

What is it like to attend this school?

St Mary's Primary School is much loved by pupils, parents and carers. Pupils are happy and say that the staff look after them well. The school is a welcoming, caring and positive environment.

The majority of parents who expressed a view would recommend the school. One parent echoed the views of many others when they said, 'This school is like a home from home for my child: they are so happy here.'

Pupils learn to respect each other. They behave well, are kind to each other and use their good manners around school. Pupils feel safe at the school and staff know them well. There are very positive relationships between pupils and staff.

The values that underpin its ethos thread through everything the school does. Pupils reflect these values in the way that they respect and celebrate difference. They work hard to improve their learning. They live out the school motto, 'Dream, Believe, Achieve'.

Staff have high ambitions for all pupils. They are passionate about 'developing the whole child' into a 'global citizen'. They provide extensive opportunities for pupils' personal development. However, the curriculum is not well planned in all subjects.

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

Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. They are eager to learn and be stretched by more challenging work. This is evident from the start of their time in school. Children in the early years, for example, are already developing the skills to improve their portrait artwork based on feedback from teachers.

Pupils enjoy their lessons. Teachers present information clearly and are knowledgeable about the subjects they teach. In science, for example, teachers recap on prior learning and use questions at the start of lessons to check pupils' understanding. This helps teachers to identify what pupils know and what they still need to learn. Teachers use this knowledge to ensure that pupils get the level of support and challenge they need. Most teachers assess pupils' learning in lessons to pick up on and address any misconceptions pupils may have. In some lessons, teachers choose activities that do not enable pupils to learn the intended knowledge as quickly as they could. Some pupils are left waiting to take the next steps that will extend their understanding of the subject. They can become frustrated as a result.

The school has effective systems in place to identify and support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers know pupils' needs well. When necessary, teachers adapt what they teach and how they teach it to meet pupils' needs.

There have been further developments to the curriculum so that it is clear what pupils should know and remember in most subjects. However, the important knowledge and skills pupils need are not clearly identified in all subjects. This limits pupils' ability to build their learning securely, step by step. For example, clearly sequenced curriculums are not yet in place for history and mathematics. Currently, these curriculums do not identify exactly what pupils need to learn by the end of each year. Work is underway to resolve this.

There is a clear love of reading across the school. Guided reading sessions take place and all pupils read regularly to an adult. Pupils show very positive attitudes to reading. They are keen to complete their 'five reads' to win the chance of choosing a book from the vending machine. Teachers model an enthusiasm for reading, and children in the early years are captivated during story time.

There is a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics to pupils who are at the early stages of reading. All staff have had the phonics training they need to help pupils become accurate and fluent readers.

Children in early years enjoy learning a well-structured curriculum that meets their needs and prepares them well for their next steps. They quickly begin to thrive in the rich learning environment.

Staff have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils rise to these expectations and behave very well. They help each other and are keen to make sure there are 'no outsiders'.

Pupils' personal development is a strength of the school. Pupils act as members of the school parliament and digital leaders. The many experiences pupils enjoy build their understanding of what it means to be a responsible citizen. Pupils have a good understanding of different religions. Regular assemblies provide rich learning opportunities that enhance pupils' moral and social development.

Staff say that leaders care about their well-being as well as that of the pupils. They value the support they receive. Staff enjoy working at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, the curriculums do not identify exactly what pupils need to have learned by the end of each year. This limits pupils' ability to build their learning steadily and securely. The school needs to ensure that all subject

curriculums are coherently planned and sequenced towards ambitious end points to enable pupils to build their learning over time.

- On occasions, some teachers' choice of activities for pupils to complete limits how well pupils progress through the curriculum. When this is the case, pupils do not always receive opportunities to deepen their knowledge and understanding when they are ready, which can leave them frustrated. The school should ensure that all teachers know how best to teach knowledge in the subjects they teach, so that all pupils have the opportunity to progress well through the curriculum.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	120134
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10288312
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	248
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Judith Williams
Headteacher	Rachel Ayres
Website	www.stmarys.leics.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	15 June 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- St Mary's Church of England Primary School, Hinckley is a voluntary controlled school with a Christian ethos. The school's last section 48 inspection was on 15 November 2019. The next section 48 inspection is due before November 2024.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other senior leaders, curriculum leaders, the special educational needs coordinator and a range of staff.

- The lead inspector met with members of the governing body including the chair of governors. The lead inspector also met with the school's improvement partner and spoke on the telephone to a local authority representative.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, history, art and science. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also discussed other areas of the curriculum with leaders and visited additional lessons. The lead inspector observed pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at other times around the school.
- Inspectors considered a wide variety of school documents, including the school self-evaluation and learning improvement plan.
- Inspectors took note of the responses received on Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and considered the results of the staff and pupil surveys. Inspectors met with pupils and parents to gather their views.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

Inspection team

Dave Gilkerson, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Nadeem Shah	Ofsted Inspector
Andrew Monaghan	Ofsted Inspector

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