

Inspection of St. Margaret's CofE Junior School

Coppice Road, Whitnash, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire CV31 2JF

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 October 2023

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive at St. Margaret's CofE Junior School. Staff look after them exceptionally well. They show particular concern for the most disadvantaged. Leaders skilfully plan how to develop pupils' character. Pupils become thoughtful, caring and independent minded, and are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

The school sets high expectations for pupils' learning and conduct. Pupils meet these expectations well. The school is a calm and orderly place. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. At social times, they play happily or read a book. Pupils take care over their work and are proud of their school.

Pupils follow a broad, well-planned curriculum. They benefit from trips and special events that enrich their learning, including in geography or science. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), learn well.

Pupils learn about different cultures and traditions. They treat each other and adults with evident respect. Pupils are safe and feel confident that staff can resolve any disagreements. They have the opportunity to take up leadership roles, such as school counsellors or worship leaders. Pupils make very good use of extra-curricular clubs. These range from computing to gardening and include both sports and musical activities.

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

The school has planned an ambitious, broad curriculum, with reading and writing at its core. Pupils read a wide variety of fiction, non-fiction and poetry. They write in a range of styles and for different purposes. Pupils follow all the subjects in the national curriculum. In each subject, leaders ensure that pupils give due attention to all its aspects, such as fieldwork in geography or speaking and listening in English. They have set out clearly how learning should build on what pupils already know.

Teachers have secure knowledge of the subjects they teach. In general, they plan the day-to-day learning for pupils so that they meet the long-term learning aims. However, sometimes the tasks that teachers set or the resources they use do not help pupils build their knowledge quite as well as they might. Teachers check on what pupils know and remember. They typically make good use of these checks to adjust their teaching. In mathematics, however, some pupils cannot complete their work because of gaps in their previous learning.

Leaders accurately identify the additional needs of pupils with SEND. Staff draw effectively on guidance to ensure that they meet all their needs. As a result, these pupils are able to study and make good progress through the full curriculum. Staff help pupils who enter the school as less fluent readers to improve their skills. They make sure that the books pupils read match their reading ability.

The school has established a consistent approach to managing pupils' behaviour. Staff understand it and apply it consistently. The focus on helping those who sometimes struggle with the school's expectations is effective. Pupils concentrate well in lessons and collaborate effectively when asked to do so. Attendance is high.

Pupils follow a planned programme of personal development that teaches them about healthy relationships and how to stay safe. Staff use their detailed training to provide very high-quality pastoral care.

Pupils benefit from an exceptional range of opportunities to broaden their social understanding, from leading bingo in a local care home to meeting teachers from Sierra Leone. They serve others, both inside and outside the school. As 'courageous advocates', pupils argue for a just cause, such as a charity or ecological project. They learn how to act in support of the cause chosen by their peers. In developing pupils' knowledge, staff develop their character.

Staff work very closely with their colleagues in the federated infant school. Most importantly, they ensure that pupils' learning moves smoothly into Year 3. Leaders have provided effective training for staff, including those new to the profession. Staff work very well with parents, for example, to show them how to support their children's learning. Staff believe that leaders are considerate of their workload. Governors are insightful and have a considered view of 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)

- On occasion, teachers are unaware that pupils have gaps in their previous learning. As a result, pupils struggle to complete the work they have been set. The school should ensure that teachers check carefully that pupils have the prior knowledge they require in every subject before they are moved on to new work.
- In a few subjects, the school has not ensured that resources used to support pupils' learning are precisely linked to the intended curriculum. As a result, pupils are not helped to build and deepen their learning as well as they might be. The school needs to ensure that resources are used most effectively to extend and challenge pupils' learning.

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	125667
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	10256856
Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	360
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Debbie Morgan
Headteacher	Sukie Owers (Executive headteacher) Ruth Anstee (Head of school)
Website	www.briarhillstmargarets.co.uk/topic/st-margarets-c-of-e-junior-school
Dates of previous inspection	16 and 17 March 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- St Margaret's Junior School is a Church of England faith school within the Diocese of Coventry. The religious character of the school was last inspected in June 2023. The next section 48 inspection will take place before June 2031.
- The school and Briar Hill Infant School form a federation with a single governing body. The schools share the same site.
- A pre-school and an after-school club are run on the school site by another provider.
- The school does not make use of 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.
- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher, the head of school and other senior leaders. Meetings were also held with the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator and curriculum leaders.
- The chair of governors and five other governors met with the lead inspector. The lead inspector spoke by telephone with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors spoke with pupils at social times and with groups of pupils more formally.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including evaluations and improvement plans and minutes of the governing body. They also reviewed the school's attendance and behaviour records.
- The inspectors took account of responses to Ofsted Parent View. Two inspectors met with parents at the start and the end of the school day. The inspectors also considered responses to Ofsted's survey for staff and pupils.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, English, mathematics, geography and science. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to staff, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work.
- The lead inspector listened to a sample of pupils reading to a familiar adult.

Inspection team

Martin Spoor, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Sara Arkle	Ofsted Inspector
Clair McNeill	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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