

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

Church Road, Yate, Bristol BS37 5BG

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 October 2023

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at St Mary's Church of England Primary School. Pupils talk positively about how their teachers make learning engaging and fun. They are proud of their school and enjoy their roles as 'brave change makers' or house captains. Parents feel the school cares about the children's well-being.

Staff have high expectations of all pupils, especially those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). As a result, pupils settle down to learning quickly. Pupils display good manners and are always courteous to staff. Pupils have, for the most part, positive attitudes to their learning and therefore succeed with it.

Pupils feel safe at school. Adults ensure they are kind and fair to everyone. This means that relationships between pupils and staff are a strength in the school. Pupils use their school values of truth, responsibility and compassion so that their friendships are supportive. Pupils say that if they have any worries or concerns, they can talk to a trusted adult who will support them.

Pupils access extra-curricular clubs, such as football, choir and embroidery. They have opportunities to develop their leadership skills in school. Pupils enjoy being buddies for younger children, teaching them to read and play games at lunchtime.

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

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils. They have developed a curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND. In most areas, leaders have ensured that teachers teach what pupils need to know.

Leaders prioritise reading at St Mary's and are keen for pupils to develop a love of reading. Pupils talk about the different types of books they read by a wide range of authors. This means they develop a deeper understanding of the books they read. Pupils read with accuracy. They particularly enjoy it when the teacher reads the class novel to them.

Phonics begins in the early years. The school ensures that staff are well trained so that phonics teaching is effective. Teachers use assessment information to identify pupils who are at risk of falling behind. The school's vision of 'keep up' not 'catch up' means pupils who struggle to read get the support they need. Pupils read fluently and with confidence. Children in the early years foundation stage use their knowledge of blending sounds to help them to read unfamiliar words. Older pupils can read more complex texts and explain their understanding about what they have read.

Teachers ensure that pupils learn the curriculum well. Pupils build on their previous learning. For example, pupils can talk about number relationships in Year 3, which supports them to solve more complex mathematical problems in Year 6. Pupils

explore key content in music and can perform basic music compositions. Pupils use accurate vocabulary, such as tempo and ostinato, to describe a beat when playing musical instruments. However, in some subjects, where the curriculum is new, teachers are not building on pupils' knowledge to support future learning. This means that there are gaps in what pupils know and remember.

The school prioritises pupils with SEND. They ensure they are well supported through precise support plans. This means they can access the same learning as their peers. The school works with experts to ensure that pupils with SEND get the right help. Parents appreciate this and state that the school does all it can to support pupils with SEND.

The vast majority of pupils show positive attitudes to their learning. This is evident in Reception Year, where pupils demonstrate resilience and focus. This means that low-level disruption is rare. Classroom environments are a safe place for pupils. As a result, pupils collaborate well with one another and share their ideas sensibly.

The school ensures that pupils' personal development is well supported. Through an ambitious curriculum, pupils learn how to look after their physical and mental health. They know that exercise helps the body to be fit and healthy. Pupils know how to be a good friend and respect that some people share different types of relationships. Pupils say that everyone in school is treated equally. In assemblies, pupils learn to promote equality and diversity.

Teachers are proud to work at St Mary's. Staff feel that the school considers their well-being and does all it can to support their career development. The school, including governors, is proud of its achievements and states that the staff are the strength 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)

- The curriculum design, in some wider curriculum subjects, is new. This means that some pupils have gaps in their knowledge. The school needs to ensure that the curriculum supports all pupils to build knowledge over time, so that they know and remember more.

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

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| Unique reference number | 109264 |
| Local authority | South Gloucestershire |
| Inspection number | 10297880 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 315 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Charlie De Nobriga |
| Head of school | Bethan Scriven |
| Website | www.stmarysyate.org.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 20 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school has recently federated with a partner school.
- Since the last inspection, there is a newly appointed executive headteacher.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school offers a breakfast club for pupils who attend the school.
- The school provides a community space for its pupils and families.

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.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The lead inspector met with the head of school, the deputy headteacher, the executive headteacher, the special educational needs leader, subject leaders, a group of staff, representatives of the governing board and the school's challenge partner.
- A wide range of documents were scrutinised, including those relating to behaviour, the school's self-evaluation and curriculum documentation.
- 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.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and geography. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with leaders and subject leaders; visited lessons across the school and spoke to teachers; and spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector reviewed responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. The lead inspector also considered the responses to the staff and pupil surveys. Inspectors also spoke to some parents and carers.

Inspection team

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|-------------------------------|------------------|
| Darren Preece, lead inspector | Ofsted Inspector |
| Lorna Buchanan | Ofsted Inspector |
| Faye Heming | Ofsted Inspector |

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