

Inspection of St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Durants Road, Ponders End, Enfield EN3 7DE

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 November 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Early years provision	Good
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Previous inspection grade	Good
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What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are eager to come to school each morning because their teachers do their best to help them learn and because they have kind friends to play with.

Pupils learn in a calm environment. This is because the school has high expectations for pupils which start in the nursery. Pupils conduct themselves well because they know what is right and have been taught how to behave well. Pupils achieve well across a range of subjects. They are proud to talk about their work, which is presented with pride.

Warm, caring relationships permeate the school. Pupils are taught to speak to an adult if they have a concern. Pupils are confident that adults will listen to their worries and help them. This means they feel happy and are safe. Year 6 pupils support younger pupils in the dining hall and during social times. Pupils have been taught the importance of helping others.

There are several opportunities for pupils to take on positions of responsibility. For example, eco-warriors make sure the lights are turned off when not in use to save energy. Leaders provide a range of clubs including homework, football and netball club. These activities help pupils to develop their talents and pursue their interests.

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

The curriculum is ambitious and well structured. Leaders have set out the most important knowledge and skills that they expect pupils to learn, which starts from the early years. The curriculum is set out in a logical order, and this means pupils can apply their learning to more complex tasks. For example, pupils in Year 3 confidently explain the outcome of an investigation involving placing a plant in coloured water. This is because they have previously been taught about the functions of a stem. In Reception, pupils know how to make numbers up to five. This is because they have been taught what each number represents and what 'five' looks like.

Adults have secure subject knowledge. This is because they have been trained well. Adults explain concepts clearly and correct misconceptions quickly. This means that pupils understand new content securely. The teaching of new vocabulary is given priority here. In Year 5 pupils use vocabulary such as 'viscosity', 'malleable' and 'transparent' with understanding. However, sometimes in the early years adults do not model and extend children's language effectively. This means that some pupils miss out on opportunities to hear and practise new words while they are learning.

Leaders have prioritised reading. Pupils have opportunities to visit the school library and staff read aloud to them daily. Children in Reception listen attentively to stories and use actions to show their understanding, which they perform with enthusiasm. These experiences develop a love for reading.

Children are taught to read straight away in Reception. This is because leaders want children to read fluently and without delay. The school has made sure that adults know how to teach reading effectively, so the teaching of reading is consistent. Pupils are given books that match the letters and the sounds that they know. This means that they develop fluency and enjoy reading. Most staff check the sounds and letters that pupils know regularly. Staff then identify any pupils who need support, and they are given help to catch up. Leaders have clear actions in place to raise outcomes in reading at the end of Year 1 and Year 6, which were below national outcomes in 2023.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported effectively so that they can access learning alongside their peers. The school makes sure that pupils' specific needs are identified early on in their school careers. Staff are trained well to provide support which is targeted to pupils' needs. Consequently, these pupils can access the curriculum and achieve well.

Pupils behave well in lessons because routines and high expectations are well established. In the early years children are taught to share, take turns and work together well. As a result, the curriculum is taught without interruption. Generally, pupils attend well, but the school is continuing work to improve attendance even further.

The personal, social, health and economic education curriculum is well structured. Pupils are taught about consent in an age-appropriate manner. Pupils learn about risks within and beyond the school. Pupils are taught the importance of respect and practise democracy by voting for their friends to be members of the school council. Children in the early years are taught how to understand and regulate their feelings.

Leaders have high expectations and are ambitious for pupils. Staff are very proud to work at this kind, caring school. Staff value the support they get from leaders to support their well-being and to develop their teaching practice.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is a priority here. Staff have received effective training and know the signs to look out for that could indicate a pupil needs help. As a result, staff report concerns quickly. However, sometimes safeguarding records lack detail and do not set out what is agreed in meetings, what actions are taken and the outcome of these actions. The school should also make sure that it works more quickly with external agencies when following up on concerns.

Pupils have an awareness of staying safe in different ways. For example, the fire service visited children in Reception and taught them how to call for help. The police led a workshop for Year 6 pupils about the risks of gangs. Pupils know they should report any concerns to an adult and not to share personal information online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes in the early years, adults do not model and extend children's language effectively. This means that some pupils miss out on opportunities to hear and practise a wide vocabulary and sentence structure. The school needs to ensure that adults model language effectively across all areas of learning.
- Sometimes safeguarding records are not detailed enough and the school does not alert external agencies quickly when a pupil may need support. This means that on occasion key information is missing from records and help for a pupil may be delayed. The school needs to ensure that safeguarding records are accurate and that all concerns are brought swiftly to the attention of other agencies where needed.

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	102036
Local authority	Enfield
Inspection number	10287193
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	352
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Wendy Allen
Headteacher	Maeve Creed
Website	www.stmarysenfield.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	19 June 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school makes use of one registered alternative provider.
- This is a Roman Catholic school under the Archdiocese of Westminster. The school's most recent Section 48 inspection took place in September 2019.

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.
- Inspectors held meetings with the senior leadership team to discuss school development.

- Inspectors met with representatives of the local governing body. They also met with a representative from the local authority.
- 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 scrutinised a wide range of documents, including those related to pupils' personal development and behaviour and attendance. They also met with groups of staff and pupils to discuss these aspects of the school's work.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, art and design and French. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The views of parents and staff were also considered, including through Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Deborah Walters, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Andy Turnock

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