

Inspection of an outstanding school: St Mary's CofE Primary School, Deane

Edale Road, Deane, St Mary's CE Primary School, Bolton, Lancashire BL3 4QP

Inspection dates:

31 January and 1 February 2024

Outcome

St Mary's CofE Primary School, Deane continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

The quality of education that this school provides is exemplary. Pupils, including children in the provision for two-year-olds, blossom socially and academically at this warm and nurturing school. A very warm welcome awaits all pupils who attend, including the high number of pupils who join the school in different year groups or part way through the year.

The school is highly ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils rise to this challenge and, typically, achieve exceptionally well across the curriculum.

The school expects the highest standard of behaviour from all pupils, including children in the early years. Pupils do not disappoint and live up to these very high expectations. They are kind hearted and well mannered. Pupils know that adults are there to help them if they have any worries or concerns. This helps pupils to feel happy, safe and secure.

The school supports pupils' wider development extremely well to ensure that they become well-rounded and conscientious young people. Pupils access an extensive range of clubs, trips and residential to broaden their awareness of the world around them. Additional opportunities, such as acting as a well-being ambassador, e-safety cadet or member of the school council promote pupils' leadership skills and sense of responsibility. For example, pupils are included on the interview panel when governors are appointing senior leaders and other members of staff.

Pupils are quite rightly proud of the money that they raise for charitable causes and the close links that they have established with the local community.

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

Governors, leaders at all levels and staff want to give pupils, including pupils with SEND, the very best start in life. To this end, the school has designed a well-thought-out and

highly ambitious curriculum that meets the needs of pupils, including children in the early years and those in the provision for two-year-olds. Across subjects, the knowledge, skills and vocabulary that pupils should know and remember is very well thought out. Teachers know exactly what should be taught and the order in which this content should be delivered.

The school has invested heavily in subject-specific training for teachers. This ensures that they are exceptionally well prepared to deliver all of the subjects in the national curriculum. Subject leaders are trained to the same very high standard. They monitor their areas of responsibility judiciously to ensure that the curriculums are being delivered as they intended.

In lessons, teachers present new learning clearly. They are highly skilled in using assessment techniques, such as questioning, to check pupils' understanding and deal with any misconceptions quickly. New learning builds securely on what pupils already know and can do. Across subjects, pupils, typically, have a deep knowledge of their current learning and of the topics that they have studied in the past.

Teaching pupils to be confident and fluent readers is at the heart of the school's work. In the early years, children are introduced to the joys of stories, rhymes and poems. Staff are experts in the teaching of phonics. They make excellent use of their voices and body language to ensure that learning in phonics is active and fun. Pupils, including those with SEND, read books that are well matched to the sounds that they know. When pupils struggle to read, highly skilled staff provide pupils with the support that they need to catch up with their peers.

Pupils are very keen to learn. They work hard in lessons to ensure that they achieve their very best. Pupils work well with their peers, sharing their thoughts and ideas. Classrooms are very calm and orderly.

As a result of the school's concerted efforts, more pupils are now attending school on a regular basis. The proportion of pupils who are absent from school for extended periods of time has reduce significantly.

Pupils with SEND, including those in the early years, have their needs identified quickly. Carefully considered adaptations are made to teaching so that pupils with SEND can learn the same curriculum as their classmates. Those with particularly complex needs access a bespoke curriculum that is carefully planned to meet their specific requirements.

Pupils are aspirational for the future. They talked about becoming doctors, vets or teachers. Through the curriculum, pupils learn about money management and the dangers of drug and alcohol misuse. They understand the importance of keeping themselves healthy, both mentally and physically.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including when online. The school ensures that vulnerable families, including those new to the country, get the support that they need in a timely manner.

Staff feel very appreciated and thoroughly enjoy working at the school. They know the school will provide the support they need to ensure that they carry out their roles effectively.

Governors use their excellent knowledge of the school to support and challenge the school in all aspects of its work.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in May 2017.

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	105203
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	10283657
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	505
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Phil Orth
Headteacher	Ross Powell
Website	www.st-marys-deane.bolton.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 November 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new headteacher was appointed in January 2024. He was previously the deputy headteacher at the school.
- The school has provision for two-year-old children.
- The school does not use any alternative provision for pupils.
- The last section 48 inspection was carried out in February 2023. The school is awaiting confirmation from the diocese about its next section 48 inspection.

Information about this inspection

- 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 inspector held meetings with the governors, the headteacher and the staff.
- The inspector held a telephone call with a representative from the local authority.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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 inspector observed behaviour as pupils moved around the school, in class and in the outdoor play area.
- The inspector considered the views expressed by parents in their responses to Ofsted Parent View. This included free-texts comments. She also took account of the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire by staff. There were no responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for pupils.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, she discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons and spoke to teachers and some pupils about their learning. She looked at a sample of pupils' work. The inspector listened to pupils read with a familiar adult.
- The inspector also talked with pupils about their learning in other areas of the curriculum and looked at samples of their work.

Inspection team

Sheila Iwaskow, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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