

Inspection of a good school: St Mary Abbots C of E Primary School

2 Kensington Church Court, Kensington, London W8 4SP

Inspection dates:

7 and 8 February 2024

Outcome

St Mary Abbots C of E Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils achieve highly in this small, friendly school. The school serves many international families, and parents and carers say that they value the care and support provided by this close-knit community. New pupils receive a warm welcome and settle in quickly. Pupils are kept safe and know that there are adults they can speak to if they have any worries. Bullying is rare and adults deal with it swiftly if it occurs.

Staff have high expectations for pupils' learning and behaviour. Pupils look forward to their lessons and behave well. There is a new, ambitious curriculum in place and pupils develop a depth of knowledge within each project, which spans science, history, geography and art.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of enrichment activities, including regular visits to cultural sites in this central London location. They experience a range of musical performances, and many pupils learn musical instruments and take part in recitals. Younger pupils look forward to their outdoor learning sessions. Some pupils take on leadership roles, such as 'eco-ambassadors', and there is an active pupil council. Older pupils take on leadership roles to help prepare them for secondary school.

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

The school has recently introduced a well-sequenced, rich and ambitious curriculum in many subjects. This curriculum clearly sets out the key knowledge and vocabulary that pupils need to learn. This means that teachers know exactly what the important knowledge is and how this supports future learning. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities follow the same curriculum as their peers wherever possible. Their needs are accurately identified. Teachers consider what adaptations are needed to enable these pupils to access the learning. Some subjects are in the early stages of being introduced and leaders and staff are working collaboratively to review and refine the new content.

Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning and understand why it is important. Teachers help pupils to make links between subjects and to see how their learning can be used to approach practical problems in real life. For example, pupils use their knowledge of scatter graphs in mathematics to present the results of experiments in science. In geography, pupils build on their geographical knowledge of agriculture in different seasons and climate zones to make a 'seasonal soup' as part of food technology.

Pupils get off to a prompt start to learning phonics at the start of Reception. They look forward to these lessons and achieve well. Staff receive ongoing support from leaders and follow a consistent approach to teaching phonics. Parents value the tools, resources and workshops available to help support their child's reading at home. Pupils read a wide range of books linked to their topic, including stories, poetry and non-fiction. They look forward to the tales of adventure from the author-in-residence.

The environment around the school is calm and purposeful. Pupils are clear about the behaviour system and strive to 'Stay on Green'. Typically, pupils are focused and engaged in lessons and behave well. At times, some younger pupils are not as focused as they could be. This is because adults are not consistently clear about their expectations for pupils' behaviour.

Pupils have many enriching experiences at St Mary Abbots. Their learning is supported by carefully planned trips to local museums and cultural sites of interest. Pupils learn about the Parliamentary system and take part in mock elections as part of 'Democracy Week'. British values are woven through the programme of personal, social, health and economic education where pupils learn about equality, tolerance and respect. This is supported by the school's strong Christian ethos. In some cases, pupils are not clear how to respond to views and experiences that are different to their own. This can mean that pupils do not show as much consideration and courtesy towards their peers as they should.

The school has supported a number of new staff joining the school this year. Staff take on many roles in this small school, and new staff say that they feel well supported, including by an experienced and active governing body. Staff are proud to work here and say that leaders take their well-being into consideration when making any changes.

There have been significant improvements in attendance. This is a result of the actions and determination of leaders. The school is committed to continuing to improve the already strong attendance this academic year.

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 do not apply the behaviour system as consistently as they should. This means that sometimes younger pupils are unclear about what is expected

of them. This can lead some pupils to lose focus, or distract others, leading to lost learning time. The school should ensure that teachers apply the behaviour system consistently so that pupils are clear about what good learning behaviours look like.

- Some pupils struggle to respond appropriately to opinions and experiences that are different to their own. They understand the values of empathy and respect, but they do not consistently demonstrate these in their behaviour towards their peers. The school should increase opportunities to teach the conventions of discussion and debate so that pupils learn how to listen attentively and respond with courtesy and respect.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2014.

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	100497
Local authority	Kensington and Chelsea
Inspection number	10296690
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	174
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Kate Greenwood
Headteacher	John Primrose
Website	www.sma.rbkc.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 September 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher has been in post since September 2019.
- Leaders do not make use of any alternative providers.

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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher and other senior leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator. The inspector also met with members of the

support staff team and governing body and held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority and a representative of the diocese.

- 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 considered the responses of parents, staff and pupils to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Polly Haste, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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