

Inspection of Rothwell St Mary's RC Primary School

Royds Lane, Rothwell, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS26 0BJ

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 March 2024

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since April 2013.

What is it like to attend this school?

Rothwell St Mary's is an exceptional school. All members of the school community consistently live out the school's prized values of reverence, resilience and respect. The school has very high expectations of its pupils, and pupils try their best to meet these. Pupils achieve very well both academically and in all aspects of their personal development.

Pupils enjoy taking on roles such as being a buddy for other pupils in their class, being an office assistant or a junior journalist. Individual responsibilities like these help develop pupils' leadership skills. They provide opportunities for pupils to demonstrate care and support for others. These roles help prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

The school plans a wide variety of experiences to enhance pupils' learning. These include outings to museums and places of worship. For example, pupils learn about the coast through a visit to Whitby. This allows pupils to make links between their learning in the classroom and real-life experiences. This deepens their understanding of important knowledge.

Pupils are exceptionally well behaved and consistently show kindness towards their fellow pupils and school staff. Pupils say they are happy and safe in school and that bullying does not happen. Inspection activities support this view.

Pupils are rightly proud of their school and their learning. Their positive attitudes to school life and learning are exceptional.

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

The school has created a well-planned and carefully sequenced curriculum. Leaders have identified the precise knowledge and skills pupils should learn and remember. Leaders are ambitious and frequently review the curriculum as part of their school improvement work. Pupils can talk about their learning in great detail. They enjoy their lessons and recognise how they are getting better over time. Leaders and teachers use assessment well to ensure that pupils make excellent progress and achieve strong outcomes.

Children flourish in the early years. They respond positively to the clear routines and high expectations of adults. Staff expertly develop children's language and communication skills through a variety of stimulating activities. Adults value the role of play and enthusiastically join in, much to the delight of the children. They skilfully create opportunities for children to practise turn-taking, cooperating and developing independence. Children leave the early years fully equipped for Year 1.

The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is a strength of the school. Staff ensure that pupils with SEND can access all learning

on offer, through careful adaptation of tasks or by providing extra support when it is needed. Pupils with SEND achieve extremely well.

The reading curriculum is highly effective. Staff have been trained and teach the phonics programme consistently well. Pupils who need extra help receive it promptly. Books match the sounds that pupils know. Pupils achieve well and develop a love of reading. Older pupils embrace the challenge of reading complex texts. They talk with enthusiasm about the wide variety of authors and genres for pupils to choose from.

Relationships between staff and pupils are mutually kind and caring. Staff take time to get to know pupils well. They demonstrate the school values to support them in teaching pupils how to behave towards others. Pupils are keen to practise these values. Pupils are proud of their classmates and relish the opportunity to recognise the success of others.

The school's curriculum to support pupils' personal development is exemplary. The carefully planned curriculum teaches pupils how to keep themselves healthy and safe. Pupils' understanding of tolerance and respect for others is embedded. They know that it is important to challenge stereotypes and to treat people equally. Pupils talk maturely about puberty and can demonstrate their understanding of healthy relationships.

There is a wide range of extra-curricular clubs. Leaders ensure that everyone has the chance to take part. Staff seek out additional opportunities to develop the talents of pupils, such as piano lessons and BMX biking. All pupils have the opportunity to complete the Three Peaks Challenge. This is an opportunity for pupils to demonstrate their developing resilience.

The school has strong relationships with parents and carers. Leaders have developed and implemented effective attendance strategies. Attendance is significantly above national levels. The vast majority of pupils attend school on time, every day.

Staff are proud to work at this school. They say leaders are mindful of their workload and care for their well-being. The professional development of all staff is prioritised. Governors are knowledgeable and experienced. They know their school well and understand the importance of playing an active role in the school's work. Governors carry out their statutory duties effectively.

Parents appreciate the work of the school. One parent said: 'I could not wish for a better school for my child. Rothwell St Mary's is a family with children and families at its heart.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	108018
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	10322949
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	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Claudette Farias-Fagg
Headteacher	Siobhan Leonard
Website	www.rothwellstmarys.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	16 and 17 April 2013

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Catholic Diocese of Leeds and has a Christian character.
- The school offers a breakfast and after-school club.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school's last inspection under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 took place in June 2018. The next inspection will be within eight years of this date.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of education the school provides.
- 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.

- Prior to the inspection, the lead inspector reviewed documents on the school's website, as well as published information about the school's performance and previous Ofsted inspections.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. Inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons and spoke to teachers and teaching assistants. They spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors listened to pupils at the early stages of reading with a familiar adult.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils and looked at samples of work in geography and science.
- 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 gathered views of parents informally in person and formally through responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. The views of staff were considered through the staff survey and through meetings with them. Pupils' views were considered through a pupil survey and through pupil meetings.
- Inspectors spoke with representatives from the governing body, the diocese and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in classes, at breakfast club and during breaks.

Inspection team

Tracy Duffy, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Nicola Witham

Ofsted Inspector

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