

Inspection of St Mary's and St John's C of E School

Bennett House, Sunningfields Road, Hendon, London NW4 4QR

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 February 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Sixth-form provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

The school encourages pupils to abide by its values of wisdom, service and hope. Leaders have high expectations for all pupils' academic outcomes. In addition, the school extends pupils' education beyond the academic.

Pupils here are eager to learn. They behave well and show respect to staff and their peers. In the early years, children are kind towards each other. In the primary phase, pupils behave extremely well. In the secondary phase, pupils work hard and focus in class. All pupils are kept safe.

The school organises many clubs and educational visits for pupils. Leaders have recently introduced a programme that ensures every pupil in Years 7 to 11 experiences a different extra-curricular activity each term.

Pupils can also take up leadership opportunities, enabling them to teach their peers, learn new skills and serve others. For example, in the primary phase, pupils can be sports and faith leaders. Pupils also raise money for food banks, and sixth-form students mentor Year 6 pupils to help them to improve their mathematical skills. Many students in the sixth form recently attended an enrichment visit to Rome. The school also organises many outings, including to the opera and to women's professional football matches, and visits to museums in central London.

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

The school has designed a balanced curriculum from the early years to the sixth form. Leaders have recently broadened the curriculum in the secondary phase so that pupils study a full range of subjects throughout Years 7 to 9 with appropriate breadth and depth. As part of the school's performing arts specialism, pupils in the secondary phase can study subjects, including drama, dance and music, individually.

Senior leaders have accurately identified where areas across school could be strengthened. They have quickly implemented appropriate measures to secure sustained improvement. There has been a particular focus in the primary phase. Here, leaders have swiftly addressed the weaknesses that led to low progress outcomes for Year 6 pupils in national assessments in reading in 2023. As a result, the curriculum and teaching have been strengthened in this area. Alongside this, the school is mindful of teachers' workload and ensures that the well-being of staff is prioritised. Leaders are suitably supported by the governing body, which holds leaders accountable for the decisions that they make.

Subject leaders' curriculum thinking is typically strong. Across the school, including in early years and sixth form, specialist subject experts ensure that pupils build key knowledge over time. This is especially the case in subjects where curriculum thinking is well established. For example, in English, pupils learn effectively over time how language is used to communicate meaning. They learn about figurative language, vocabulary choice and text structure. In the Nursery, all children,

whatever their starting point, are well supported to develop new language and communication skills. Where possible, teaching across the primary and secondary phases is coherently connected. For example, specialist teachers from the secondary phase deliver classes for pupils in Years 5 and 6 in physical education, music, Spanish and French.

The early reading curriculum is securely embedded in the school. All children learn to read quickly and effectively from the beginning of Reception. Staff have been appropriately trained to support pupils to read unfamiliar words and to build their reading fluency. Any pupils who require help to catch up in reading receive it promptly and regularly.

Typically, teaching makes sure that pupils understand and remember what they have been taught. Occasionally, particularly where curriculum improvements are more recent, teaching is not as effective in delivering the planned curriculum and helping pupils to remember the key knowledge that they have been taught already and need for future learning. Where this is the case, a few pupils do not build their curriculum knowledge as securely over time.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are regularly well supported. Teaching and resources are routinely adapted for pupils with SEND so that they can access a curriculum as ambitious as their peers. They achieve well, as the school's published academic outcomes in national assessments show.

The school ensures that pupils' behaviour is calm and orderly across all year groups. In the primary phase, pupils' attitudes to learning are particularly positive and they are excited to learn. In the secondary phase, the curriculum usually proceeds without disturbance to learning. On the rare occasions when disruption does occur, in class or between lessons, teachers apply the behaviour policy fairly and consistently. Improving attendance rates is treated as a priority by leaders. They have implemented a range of strategies to increase overall attendance and punctuality successfully.

The personal development curriculum starts from the beginning of the Reception Year, where children learn about themselves and others. Throughout their time at the school, pupils are taught how to maintain their physical and mental health. The school places a particular emphasis on encouraging pupils to be active citizens.

The school organises many extra-curricular opportunities for pupils. In the primary phase, pupils attend clubs, including football, musical theatre and chess. In the secondary phase, all pupils in Years 7 to 11 take part in a range of enrichment opportunities, including journalism, dance and basketball.

Leaders expand pupils' experiences of the world of work. All pupils, including pupils with SEND, are encouraged to take part in work experience. In the sixth form, the school organises a programme of visiting speakers from a wide range of different backgrounds and professions to talk to students, including from the armed forces, banks and universities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, especially where curriculum improvements are new, teaching does not routinely reflect leaders' intentions, and the ambition of the curriculum is not fully realised. As a result, a few pupils develop gaps in their knowledge and do not then build subject content as cumulatively and securely. Leaders should ensure that teaching in all subjects delivers the planned curriculum and helps pupils to remember the key knowledge that they have been taught already and need for future learning.

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	103119
Local authority	Barnet
Inspection number	10293254
Type of school	All-through
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,671
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	126
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Roy Hutchinson
Headteacher	Gavin Smith (executive headteacher)
Website	www.smsj.barnet.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4 July 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- New senior leaders started in January 2023.
- The school uses two alternative providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The school is situated across three sites. Children in the early years and Years 1 to 4 attend the Neale House campus at Prothero Gardens, Hendon NW4 3SL. Pupils in Years 5 to 8 attend the Bennett House campus at Sunningfields Road, Hendon NW4 4QR. Pupils in Years 9 to 13 attend the Stamford Raffles campus at Downage, Hendon NW4 1AB. Staff travel between sites during the school day in order to teach lessons.

- The school's most recent section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character was carried out in February 2017. It is due for its next section 48 inspection by the end of 2024.

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.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, inspectors met with the executive headteachers, the headteachers of the primary and secondary phases and other senior leaders. Inspectors met with leaders with responsibility for pupils with SEND, behaviour and attendance, early reading and pupils' wider development, early years and sixth form.
- Inspectors met with representatives from the governing body, including the chair of governors, and had a discussion with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, history, English, and design and technology. 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.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- 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 considered the respective responses to Ofsted's online surveys for parents, staff and pupils.

Inspection team

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