

Inspection of a good school: St Mary's CofE Primary School

School Lane, Washington, Pulborough, West Sussex RH20 4AP

Inspection date: 8 May 2024

Outcome

St Mary's CofE Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel extremely happy and safe in this inclusive school. They have strong relationships with staff. Pupils know that adults will listen and help them. Pupils behave well. They are polite and respectful to adults and each other. Pupil play leaders are proud to support the younger children.

The school has high expectations for all pupils. It wants pupils to do their best and be successful. Pupils understand the school's values of service, teamwork, ambition, resilience and self-control (STARS). This is the foundation that underpins all aspects of school life. Pupils talk about how the STARS help them with learning by encouraging them to keep trying.

The school is at the heart of the local community and staff make use of the locality to support learning. The pupil faith team recently helped a local food bank to box up food for local families. Pupils enjoy a wide range of visitors and trips. The trips link to the curriculum, including the visits to Amberley Museum and RSPB Pulborough. Year 5 and Year 6 talk with enthusiasm about the different residentials they have been on. They relish different experiences such as the dry ski slope and the outdoor water activities.

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

The school has recently strengthened the curriculum so that it is ambitious, broad and engaging. This is following changes to year group organisation. Staff have thought carefully about the precise knowledge they want pupils to learn and remember. They have made sure that learning in each subject starts with the youngest children in Reception and builds gradually as they move up the school. In some subjects, the school recognises that the sequence of learning is not as clear as it needs to be.

Across the curriculum, teachers deliver lessons clearly. They check what pupils know and remember before they move on to new learning. Teachers encourage pupils to explain their learning to ensure that any misconceptions are quickly addressed. Teachers make

sure that pupils know and understand subject-specific vocabulary. Teachers skilfully adapt activities to help pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), build learning over time. The school is ambitious for pupils with SEND. It quickly identifies individual needs and barriers to learning. The school tracks pupils with SEND to ensure that any interventions are having a positive impact. Staff provide strong support. They select resources to meet individual needs so that pupils with SEND can work independently.

The teaching of reading is strong. Children in the early years are supported to use the sounds they know to confidently read words. Staff carefully match reading books to pupils' stages of reading. Pupils who need extra support are given effective extra help to enable them to keep up. Staff foster a love of books and pupils enjoy reading. Across the school, pupils read a variety of rich texts. Older pupils enjoy the opportunity to take part in the 'battle of the books', which involves pupils sharing different books with their class.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They know the school rules and the subsequent consequences. Pupils, including those in Reception, value the opportunity to talk about their behaviour choices. Pupils are eager to learn. However, the school acknowledges that pupils need to take more care when recording in their books. The school has high expectations for pupil attendance. There are strong procedures in place to ensure that pupils attend regularly.

Pupils' personal development is a high priority with the school. The school uses the wider curriculum to develop pupils to be future citizens. Using the STARS values alongside the fundamental British values, pupils are able to recognise the differences between other faiths and cultures. They can accurately discuss different religions and the places of worship they have visited. Pupils can talk confidently about the changes to their bodies over time and how to recognise what makes a good relationship. They are taught to know the risks they may face as they grow older, for example getting involved in county lines. Pupils know the importance of being physically and mentally healthy.

Governors know the school well. They routinely visit the school, which enables them to gather information to support and challenge leaders effectively. Staff appreciate that leaders are sensitive to staff workload with the many roles they have in this small school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school has made recent changes to the curriculum, but this needs further refinement. As a result, pupils are not building their knowledge and understanding as well as they should in some subjects. The school needs to ensure that all teachers have a secure understanding of the sequence of learning across all subjects so that pupils are supported to build their knowledge gradually over time.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in February 2019.

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	125999
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10321903
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	91
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Ralph Beard
Headteacher	Keeley Houston
Website	www.stmarywashington.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	13 and 14 February 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school underwent a restructure of year groups in September 2023. There is now a Reception and Year 1 class.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school is a Church of England school in the diocese of Chichester.
- This school's Church of England character was last inspected in July 2023.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point in time judgement about the quality of the school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Deep dives were carried out in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and religious education. For each deep dive, the inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, looked at samples of work and spoke to pupils about

their learning. The lead inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult. Inspectors reviewed history and geography books with the headteacher.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, subject leaders and the inclusion lead.
- The lead inspector spoke to governors and representatives from the local authority and the diocese of Chichester.
- 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.
- Responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and free-text comments were considered by the lead inspector, as were responses to Ofsted's online staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Becky Greenhalgh, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Vickie Farrow

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024