

Inspection of St Martin's CofE Primary School

Hartington Road, Brighton, East Sussex BN2 3LJ

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 June 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to meet the high expectations in this highly nurturing school in the heart of Brighton. Parents say, 'St Martin's is a wonderful school with a great community feel'. The ethos is welcoming, inclusive and ambitious. The school values are modelled and promoted by everyone, contributing to a happy and successful school environment. Pupils are joyful, enthusiastic and thriving. There are consistently high ambitions for all, and pupils achieve well across the curriculum.

Behaviour is impeccable. Relationships are supportive, caring and compassionate. Pastoral care for families is exceptional. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are strongly supported. The school nurtures pupils' talents and interests through music lessons, choir, theatre, and extensive involvement in local sports opportunities. The high proportions of disadvantaged pupils particularly benefit from this rich offer of wider development opportunities. Leaders make sure that nobody misses out.

The school promotes multiculturalism through the curriculum and an impressive range of trips, visitors and experiences. Pupils don't just tolerate, they celebrate difference. They have a highly developed understanding of equality and diversity. British values are enriched through the democratic election of school councillors. This was enhanced impressively when pupils took the train to London to experience the Houses of Parliament and Lords.

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

Children make a strong start in early years, joyfully meeting high ambitions in the caring Nursery and Reception classes. Early language is highly prioritised. Staff constantly model sounds and words to help children acquire vocabulary. Early mathematics skills are blossoming well, and children's writing is particularly impressive in Reception. Expertise across the school ensures that the high numbers of pupils with SEND receive effective help. Needs are identified swiftly from early years onwards, and plans are frequently reviewed to adapt support for disadvantaged pupils. As they move up through the school, all pupils access the whole curriculum with helpful adaptations and consistent support.

Every subject is planned and sequenced clearly with essential knowledge and skills. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure. Professional development has equipped staff to understand and embed a consistent whole school approach for teaching and learning. Small steps of learning are well defined, and frequent recall activities capture how well pupils can remember key content. Pupils are enthusiastic, engaged and achieving well. In some foundation subjects, staff checks of pupils' understanding is not fully embedded. The school is prioritising this, to avoid the risk of pupils having gaps in their knowledge.

Reading is central to the school's impressive improvement work since the last inspection. Phonics is taught consistently well, and catch up support is now a

strength. Books are precisely matched to give pupils the practice they need. Staff use consistent language and modelling to give struggling readers crucial support. As a result, pupils learn to read with fluency, comprehension and enthusiasm. This effective work particularly benefits disadvantaged pupils including those with SEND. The school provides a diverse book offer, prioritising multicultural awareness. From early years onwards, the school keeps families well-informed about their children's progress, routinely offering guidance to support learning at home.

Behaviour is exemplary as a result of well-established routines, warm relationships and high expectations. The school environment is an oasis of calm. Pupils show excellent self-regulation, using the school's nurturing approach to help them manage their feelings and make positive choices. Conduct in lessons is excellent. Learning time is never lost because pupils listen well and try their best. Pupils show respect for each other and feel special, because staff care about them and their unique qualities and needs. Leaders' work to ensure strong school attendance has proved effective. Persistent absence is significantly lower than elsewhere in the country.

The personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) curriculum equips pupils superbly for modern Britain. Pupils learn about online safety, healthy relationships and how to stay safe in the local community. The school enriches pupils' lives with high-quality cultural experiences. For example, fully funded cinema trips are used to enhance pupils' historical learning opportunities. Pupils learn to be charitable by actively making a positive difference to society. The school collects vital donations for a local food bank and charity. Pupils are proud to fundraise for a local hospice and sing at a residential care home.

Leaders are reflective, inspirational and determined to help all pupils succeed. Governors use their breadth of expertise to give strong support. Their strategic questioning holds the school to account, driving secure improvements since the last inspection. The school has engaged well with support from the local authority, collaborating with a local partner school and external consultants. This work has proved effective. Staff are dedicated, proud, happy and well-supported. This ensures a joyous school community, where learning flourishes and pupils always have a chance to shine.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Assessment is not fully embedded in some foundation subjects. In these areas of the curriculum, teachers do not always precisely identify and address gaps in pupils' knowledge. The school must ensure that assessment is used effectively

across the whole curriculum to help pupils securely learn key content across every subject.

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	114539
Local authority	Brighton and Hove
Inspection number	10296194
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	201
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Janet Wilde
Headteacher	Jane Joshi
Website	www.stmartins.brighton-hove.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	7 and 8 February 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school is a Church of England school in the Diocese of Chichester. The school was rated outstanding in its most recent section 48 inspection in March 2018.
- The school currently uses one registered alternative provider.
- The school offers a before- and after- school club, overseen by the governing body.
- There is a Nursery for three-year-old children.

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 school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, inclusion manager, subject leaders, teachers and support staff.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of governors and four members of the governing body.
- The lead inspector met with two representatives from the local authority, and spoke by telephone with a representative from the Diocese of Chichester.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: geography, science, early reading and mathematics. 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.
- The lead inspector listened to a range of pupils read. He observed catch-up interventions to evaluate how staff provide extra support to pupils.
- 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 responses to the staff survey and spoke to a range of staff about their views of the school.
- Inspectors evaluated responses to the pupil survey and spoke with a range of pupils in meetings, lessons and break times.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of parents and took account of responses to Ofsted Parent View questionnaire and the free-text responses.

Inspection team

Scott Reece, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Paul Bateman

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