

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

Webbs Wood Road, Bradley Stoke, Bristol BS32 8EJ

---

Inspection dates:

25 and 26 June 2024

## **Outcome**

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

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

St Mary's Catholic Primary School is friendly and inclusive. The school's values underpin all aspects of school life. Pupils show respect for people's differences and celebrate each other as unique individuals.

Adults know the pupils and families well. Parents appreciate the warm and supportive atmosphere that allows pupils to grow. Relationships are respectful. Pupils are confident to share any worries because they know that adults will help them.

The school has high expectations of all pupils. Most pupils respond well to this and strive to meet these expectations. Pupils work hard during lesson time and are keen to contribute their ideas. This begins in Reception Year where children are curious about the world around them. Older pupils listen carefully and cooperate with their peers. This creates a positive learning environment where pupils succeed.

Pupils enjoy the opportunities the school provides to develop leadership responsibilities. They are proud to be representatives of the school council and chaplaincy team. Visitors to the school talk to pupils about topical issues. They know they can make a difference to those who are less fortunate, for example through links with the church community and the 'Mini Vinnies' charity.

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

Since the last inspection, there have been many changes in leadership. However, the school is now in a period of stability and has taken swift and significant steps to strengthen the curriculum.

Reading is at the centre of the curriculum. The school promotes a love of reading at every opportunity. Teachers wear 'ask me what I am reading' badges which instigate

conversations about books. Older pupils read a wide range of books by different authors. The school has designed the reading curriculum to ensure pupils learn about diversity. From the very first day of school, children learn to read. Adults have received training to ensure they are experts in the delivery of the phonics programme. As a result, there is a consistent approach to how pupils learn phonics. The school's mantra to 'keep up not catch up' means that pupils at risk of falling behind receive the support they need. Pupils in the early stages of reading have books that match the sounds they know. This supports them to develop as confident readers. All of this enriches pupils' reading experience and develops a love of reading.

The well-designed curriculum sets out the important knowledge pupils need to know and remember in most subjects. Teachers adapt learning effectively for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The additional prompts and use of physical tools help pupils progress well through the curriculum. However, some subjects are less well developed. Where this is the case, pupils do not build their knowledge well and struggle to remember what they have learned. In geography, the key knowledge pupils need to know is not precisely considered. As a result, some pupils struggle to name and locate some cities in the UK and explain the significance and position of the hemispheres.

In mathematics, the school's emphasis on number begins in Reception Year. The relentless focus on rapid recall of multiplication and number facts supports pupils to be able to reason and explain mathematical concepts. For example, pupils use their knowledge of decimal numbers to calculate a 'term by term rule' for a sequence of numbers.

Teachers assess what pupils know and understand through 'flashback 4'. They revisit important knowledge at the start of lessons. However, assessment in some wider curriculum subjects is not effective. The school does not have an accurate understanding of pupils' misconceptions or gaps they have.

Pupils are polite and kind. They listen to each other with respect and respond appropriately. Pupils move around the school in a safe and calm manner. During social times, pupils enjoy the range of different activities. Older pupils enjoy playing with their buddies. This makes playtimes and lunchtimes pleasant and enjoyable.

The school's wider offer supports pupils to develop their interests and talents. Extra-curricular clubs, including multi-sport events, gymnastics, cooking and sewing, enrich pupils' experience at school. The school monitors this closely to ensure they cater for all pupils. Trips to museums and the city of Bristol help pupils to understand their local history and how it influences life today.

Through the personal, social and health education curriculum, pupils learn about the importance of consent. They understand boundaries and can explain the attributes that make a good friend. Pupils learn about the difference between prescription and non-prescription medicines and the dangers of alcohol. They learn how to keep safe online and when in the local area.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects in the wider curriculum, the school has not made clear the precise content they want pupils to know and remember. As a result, pupils do not build their knowledge securely. The school should identify the important knowledge and concepts that pupils need to learn and remember so they build knowledge well over time.
- Assessment in some foundation subjects is not used well enough to check that pupils have remembered what they have been taught. As a result, some pupils have gaps in their knowledge. The school needs to ensure that assessment is used effectively across all subjects and informs future curriculum design.

## 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 October 2013.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	131410
<b>Local authority</b>	South Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10334691
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	209
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Paul Thompson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Robert Cockle (Executive Headteacher) Charlotte Dunt (Head of School)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stmarysbradleystoke.org.uk">www.stmarysbradleystoke.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	6 November 2018 under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school runs a breakfast club for pupils that attend the school.
- The school does not use any alternative provisions.
- The executive headteacher and head of school took up their post in September 2023.
- St Mary's is a Roman Catholic school in the Diocese of Clifton. At the most recent section 48 inspection, carried out in January 2019, the school was judged to be good.

## 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 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 inspector also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects, including science and physical education.
- 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 observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. In addition, she met with pupils informally and formally to hear their views.
- The inspector listened to pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector met with the executive headteacher, the head of school, subject leaders and representatives from the board of governors, local authority and diocese.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. The inspector also took into consideration responses to the pupil and staff surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Wendy D'Arcy, lead inspector

His Majesty's 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](mailto: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/](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2024