

Inspection of a good school: St Mary's Church of England Primary School, Woodbridge

Burkitt Road, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP12 4JJ

Inspection dates:

9 and 10 July 2024

The headteacher of this school is Karen Read. This school is part of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich Diocesan Multi-Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Jane Sheat, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Andrew Blit.

Outcome

St Mary's Church of England Primary School, Woodbridge continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending this school and are proud to do so. The school has high expectations of all pupils. Pupils work hard to meet them. They achieve well.

Pupils feel part of a family. They know that if they need support, caring staff will help them deal with their concerns. Pupils look out for each other. Older pupils 'buddy' younger pupils and lead play time activities. All Year 6 pupils take on a leadership role. This ensures that pupils both grow in confidence and develop a strong sense of community.

The school is an exciting place to be. It provides pupils with a carefully planned and rich range of extra-curricular clubs, visits and visitors. Pupils learn about the world of work when they meet adults from a wide variety of careers. They visit museums, attend residential trips, and participate in sporting competitions. These enhance the curriculum and light a fire for learning. The school checks pupils' participation in these activities so that all pupils take up the many opportunities open to them.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. They learn, in an age-appropriate way, about consent and personal space. They learn how to keep themselves safe on the railway and around water.

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

The school has thought carefully about the curriculum to ensure it meets the needs of all pupils, including those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

On the whole, the curriculum is planned to provide a clear, logical structure for learning. This enables pupils to gain the knowledge they need to be able to securely learn more. In many subjects, such as mathematics, key knowledge is clearly identified and taught rigorously. Pupils learn and practise using key vocabulary from the Reception Year onwards. As a result, they become increasingly able to use these words correctly. In these subjects, teachers model new knowledge clearly. They revisit previous learning to help it stick in pupils' memories. Teachers regularly check what pupils know. If pupils have not securely grasped new content, teachers adjust their lessons to close any gaps and correct misconceptions.

In some subjects, however, the curriculum is new. Teachers' subject knowledge in these subjects varies. Consequently, teachers do not always precisely identify the knowledge that they intend for pupils to learn. Checks on learning are not always precise enough. They do not consistently identify gaps in learning. As a result, in these subjects, pupils do not yet gain the necessary depth of knowledge.

Pupils enjoy reading widely and often. They listen enthusiastically to and discuss the well-chosen stories that their teachers read to them. From the Reception Year, children effectively learn how to blend sounds into words. They build their knowledge of how to read. Throughout the school, pupils read books that are carefully matched to their ability so that they become confident readers. The school swiftly identifies readers who need additional help. These pupils are given the support they need. This helps them become accurate and fluent readers who can access the full curriculum.

The school is ambitious for all pupils, including those pupils with SEND. Staff know their specific needs well. Teachers adapt the curriculum effectively so that pupils with SEND achieve well.

Children in the Reception Year have a secure understanding of number and learn about the world around them. Staff model language carefully so that children broaden their vocabulary. Children make good use of the many stimulating activities available to them. They learn how to play and work co-operatively with each other. This enables children to build their confidence and to gain a solid foundation for future learning. They are well-prepared for Year 1.

The school has high expectations of behaviour. Pupils understand these and seek to do their best to meet them. Pupils treat each other and adults, with kindness and respect. If pupils find it hard to manage their behaviour, staff use a range of approaches that help them focus on their work and enjoy school. Pupils increasingly attend very well here.

The school's faith ethos is an important part of its work. Pupils learn the importance of contributing to the community by raising money for charity and visiting local residential care homes. The school chooses books and topics carefully so that pupils learn about people who are different to them. This ensures pupils are well-prepared for life in modern Britain.

The well-being of pupils and staff is a priority. Staff make effective use of resources from other schools in the trust. They plan and share ideas with colleagues in other schools.

This helps staff manage their workload and develops their knowledge and skills. Staff enjoy working here. Consequently, staff turnover is very low.

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 foundation subjects, teachers do not precisely identify what they want pupils to know. As a result, pupils do not always develop the depth of knowledge that they need to achieve highly. The school should ensure that teachers are trained to identify, teach, and check key knowledge as effectively in these subjects as they do in others.

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 St Mary's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Woodbridge to be good in September 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

Unique reference number	142598
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10323761
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	201
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Andrew Blit
CEO of the trust	Jane Sheat
Headteacher	Karen Read
Website	www.st-maryscofe.suffolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	2 October 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school currently uses one registered alternative provision.
- The school offers before- and after-school provision for pupils in key stage 2.
- St Mary's Church of England Primary School, Woodbridge is part of the St Edmundsbury and Ipswich Diocesan Multi-Academy Trust. The school received its most recent Section 48 inspection in March 2018, and it will receive its next inspection within eight years of that date.

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 his evaluation of the school.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects and visited a range of lessons.
- The inspector met with the special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator, members of the governing body, the chief executive officer and head of school improvement from St Edmundsbury and Ipswich Diocesan Multi-Academy Trust.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at other times around school. He met with groups of pupils to discuss behaviour in the school.
- 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 scrutinised a range of records relating to behaviour and attendance.
- The inspector considered the 75 responses and 48 free-text responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. He also considered the 20 responses to Ofsted's staff survey. The inspector spoke to parents at the gate to gather their views of the school.

Inspection team

Steve Woodley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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