

Inspection of St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Ann's Hill Road, Gosport, Hampshire PO12 3NB

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 June 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are eager to come to this welcoming and inclusive school where they can learn each day. Leaders place the school values of 'pride, community and joy' at the heart of everything they do. They have high ambitions for all pupils including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Gaps in pupils' knowledge, caused by the pandemic and previous poor teaching, are being filled. More pupils are now achieving as well as they should.

Pupils treat each other, staff and visitors with respect. Expectations of behaviour are consistent. Children in the early years learn rules and routines from the start. As they grow in this nurturing and caring environment, pupils develop confidence and self-esteem. Pupils feel safe and trust adults to sort out any worries or disagreements. If bullying or discrimination occurs, leaders deal with it effectively.

Pupils benefit from a range of opportunities that enrich their learning and ignite their interests. Leaders listen and act upon what pupils tell them about the school. Pupils like the many leadership roles and make a positive contribution to school and community life. The 'Achievement Passports' help pupils to experience activities that are enjoyable and help grow their personal, social and cultural understanding.

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

The senior leadership team expect the best from everyone, including themselves. They successfully combine this with kindness and understanding. Subject leaders are knowledgeable and enthusiastic. Overall, the curriculum is well sequenced and broken down into small steps that build towards the important knowledge leaders want pupils to learn. Teachers explain things well. They focus on building vocabulary across all subjects, making links when appropriate. Teachers work together well. They engage in professional development to build their subject knowledge and expertise. Leaders make sure that pupils with SEND have access to the full curriculum offer. Leaders identify additional needs early and work closely with other professionals to provide adaptations and extra support when necessary.

This careful curriculum thinking is not as secure in the early years. Here, leaders have considered each area of learning, but their curriculum thinking lacks the required detail. They have not precisely identified the knowledge and skills that children need to build from their starting points. Additionally, while children are happy and benefit from creative activities and positive relationships, staff do not routinely help them to develop their knowledge and vocabulary. Staff are skilled when helping children to regulate their emotions, take turns with equipment and settle into school routines. However, children are not as prepared as they should be for their next stage in Year 1.

Leaders understand that being a good reader allows pupils to access the whole curriculum. Staff receive training and have the resources they need to teach early reading. From the start of Reception, children follow the school's phonics

programme. Teachers check pupils' progress regularly. However, some pupils struggling to learn to read do not always get the help they need to catch up quickly. This is particularly the case for children in Reception Year. Staff read aloud carefully selected high-quality books from a range of authors. This develops pupils' love of reading and exposes them to texts they might not read themselves.

Pupils are polite and courteous. In lessons, staff help pupils to focus on their work. Pupils follow the established school routines well. Leaders ensure that pupils with the most complex social and emotional needs get the support needed to be successful. On the whole, pupils listen carefully in lessons. Older pupils work well on their own, showing determination and resilience, but also work equally well together. Pupils value the individual care they receive.

Leaders plan for pupils to succeed in their personal as well as academic development. Personal, social, health and economic education is well sequenced. It helps get pupils ready for their move to secondary school and life in modern Britain. Pupils understand the importance of healthy relationships and how to treat themselves and others with respect. Leaders ensure that pupils learn about the wider world. Pupils think about the views and experiences of others and reflect upon what this means. Many pupils enjoy the wide range of clubs. They appreciate the opportunity for school sleepovers and residential activities.

Those responsible for governance fulfil their responsibilities well. They provide appropriate support and challenge to leaders. Staff are very proud to work at this school. They appreciate the help they receive to improve professionally and maintain their well-being. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school and are deeply grateful for the care shown to their children.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a strong safeguarding culture. Pupils' safety is of the utmost importance. Staff are well trained to spot and raise concerns. Leaders ensure that pupils who are at risk of harm receive the help that they need quickly. They seek support from outside agencies when required. Record-keeping is comprehensive. It shows leaders' actions to bring about positive change for pupils and families. Leaders know the community well and teach pupils how to keep themselves safe within it, including staying safe online. Leaders carry out the necessary pre-employment checks on adults working with pupils in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders lack the urgency required to make sure the youngest pupils struggling to learn to read receive the help they need. This means a small group of pupils have not gained the knowledge and skills they need to become confident, fluent

readers. Leaders must make sure staff are experts in using the agreed phonics programme effectively to ensure this group of pupils catch up quickly.

- Not enough children in the early years are reaching good levels of development. As a result, some children are not as prepared as they should be for key stage 1. Leaders must ensure that the curriculum, for all areas of learning, takes into account the children's starting points and then assure themselves that all staff implement the curriculum with precision.

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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	116394
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10268380
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	202
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Carmen Tweed
Headteacher	Lauren O'Connor
Website	www.stmarysgosport.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	8 June 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- St Mary's Catholic Primary School is in the Diocese of Portsmouth. Its last section 48 inspection took place in June 2022.
- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club for pupils who attend the school.
- The school currently uses a one-to-one tutor as an alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the fourth routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other senior leaders. The lead inspector met with a group of governors, including the chair of governors. He had a telephone call with a representative from Hampshire local authority and a

telephone conversation with the diocesan director of education.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, design technology and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and teaching assistants, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work. The lead inspector also heard pupils read. On day two, inspectors widened the quality of education evidence base looking at a sample of pupils' writing and talking to leaders and key stage 2 pupils about the reading curriculum.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors reviewed a wide range of safeguarding documentation, including the school's record of recruitment checks. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead. Inspectors also spoke with pupils and staff.
- Inspectors took account of parents' responses to Ofsted's survey, Ofsted Parent View, and parents' written comments. An inspector also spoke to groups of parents on the morning of the second day of inspection.
- Inspectors gathered pupils' views throughout the day, including during lesson visits and at breaktimes. They also took into account responses to the pupil survey.
- Inspectors met with a range of staff to gather their views about the school and took account of staff's responses to Ofsted's confidential staff survey.

Inspection team

Alan Derry, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lucy English

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.

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 2023