

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

East Row, North Kensington, London W10 5AW

Inspection dates: 23 to 24 February 2022

Outcome

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders, staff and pupils are proud to be part of this school. Pupils are happy and safe. Leaders and staff put pupils' best interests at the heart of everything they do. Pupils treat one another kindly. Staff are quick to resolve any bullying issues that arise. Pupils said that staff notice quickly if anyone is feeling sad or upset and will always help them.

Leaders have high expectations for every pupil's academic achievement and behaviour. They meet the needs of all pupils well. Pupils behave sensibly and work hard in lessons. They like having the chance to earn rewards such as 'golden tickets' for positive behaviour.

Pupils try their best to live up to the school's values, which include honesty and cooperation. They enjoy taking on responsibility by taking on roles such as faith ambassadors, prefects and reading buddies. The school council plays an active part in whole-school decisions, for example by helping to design the school's new crest.

Leaders organise a range of outings and special events to support pupils' learning. For example, pupils in Year 5 recently enjoyed a visit to the Science Museum. In Year 6, pupils took part in a local reading competition with other schools. Pupils can also attend school clubs such as street dance and football.

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

Leaders have worked effectively to develop a curriculum that suits the needs of their pupils. This has evolved over time. In each year group, pupils study a wide range of subjects. In each subject, leaders have considered carefully what pupils need to learn and in what order. However, in a few subjects, leaders have not specified the knowledge that pupils need to acquire in each unit of work or topic. This makes it difficult for teachers to work out what pupils should know and remember over time in these subjects. Leaders are sorting this out. They have plans for this work to be completed by the end of the academic year.

Leaders ensure that learning is logically sequenced so that pupils can build up their knowledge and skills. This starts in the early years where staff provide children with the foundations for future learning. For example, by thinking about past and present events in their lives, children begin to build knowledge of the order in which things happen, ready for future learning in history when they move up to Year 1.

Teachers break down subject content into small steps. They give pupils opportunities to practise what they have been taught and check that pupils are ready to move on to new learning. Teachers help to embed important knowledge in pupils' long-term memory. For example, pupils in Year 3 like recalling number bonds in mathematics.

Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to recap what they learned in previous lessons. They help pupils to make links between topics and themes. For instance, in Year 5 history, pupils compared early civilisations with the Chinese Shang dynasty. This prompted them to think back to what they had learned about the Indus Valley civilisation in South Asia. Pupils in Year 6 used their knowledge of near multiples to help them with their work on long division.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported. Leaders and staff work together to identify pupils' needs quickly. Teachers know the individual needs of pupils well and work closely with support staff so that all pupils can access the curriculum.

Reading is promoted well across the school. In the Nursery, staff read a range of stories, rhymes and books with children and introduce them to phonics. This focus on learning to read continues into Reception and beyond. Leaders have successfully implemented a new phonics scheme this year. All staff are trained in teaching phonics and follow the scheme consistently well. Pupils who struggle with reading have intensive support to help them catch up. Pupils love their weekly library lessons and daily story time. They regularly take part in events such as 'Book Week' and National Poetry Day. 'Reader of the week' is a highly prized award for pupils who have excelled in their reading.

Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning. They enjoy working together in lessons and on activities such as art projects with the school's artist in residence. Pupils are keen to help their teachers and each other. Lessons proceed uninterrupted. Pupils are taught about the importance of respecting everyone and their differences, such as faith, race and gender. They find ways to look after the environment, including their local area. Pupils in Year 6 are currently working on a project to protect a nearby canal.

Staff morale is high. Staff feel well supported by leaders. Governors and leaders monitor staff workload and well-being and ensure that staff are not overburdened.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have had up-to-date safeguarding training and report any concerns about pupils. Leaders use the information they have about pupils' behaviour and attendance to check for any patterns or concerns. They identify where pupils and their families may need help and work with external agencies to put the right support in place.

Leaders have put in place a wealth of support, including a range of therapies, to promote pupils' emotional well-being and mental health. Pupils learn in an age-appropriate way about keeping themselves safe. They are well versed in e-safety and know why it is important to tell staff if they have any worries.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's curriculum is not yet sufficiently well planned and sequenced in some subjects. However, it is clear from leaders' actions that they are in the process of bringing this about. Leaders need to continue with their work to improve the curriculum in some subjects. For this reason, the transitional arrangements have been applied. Leaders should ensure that they have identified the most important subject content that pupils need to know and remember in each unit of work or topic, in order to build pupils' knowledge securely over time in each subject.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 16 and 17 November 2016.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	100499
Local authority	Kensington and Chelsea
Inspection number	10200378
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	225
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Co-chairs of governing body	Marie Costigan and Simon Enright
Headteacher	Ann Slavin (Executive headteacher)
Website	www.st-marys.rbkc.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	16–17 November 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- In January 2021, the school joined a hard federation with another local primary school. The school is now part of the St Charles and St Mary's Catholic Primary Schools Federation.
- The executive headteacher was appointed in April 2020 and leads both schools in the federation.
- The governing body was restructured following the federation. Both schools in the federation share a joint governing body.
- The school has a Catholic ethos. The last section 48 inspection took place in November 2016.
- The school runs a breakfast club and joint after-school club with the federated school.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- The inspector met with the executive headteacher, the head of school and the assistant headteachers. The inspector also met with four governors and had a telephone discussion with a representative from the local authority. Discussions were held with various groups of staff and pupils, both formally and informally.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, history and mathematics. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited lessons, spoke to pupils about their learning, spoke to teachers and looked at samples of pupils' work. Other subjects were also considered. In these subjects, the inspector reviewed curriculum plans, talked to pupils and visited lessons.
- The inspector spoke with leaders, staff and pupils about the safeguarding arrangements at the school and reviewed safeguarding records and documentation. The single central record of staff suitability checks was also scrutinised.
- The inspector considered the survey responses from parents, staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Jude Wilson, lead inspector

Her 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 2022