

Inspection of St Mary's RC Primary School

Kynder Street, Denton, Manchester M34 2AR

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 October 2024

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

The school has established a mission built around the love of God, the school community and learning. Pupils understand that what they learn now will help them to achieve their aspirations for the future. There is a real sense of family at St Mary's RC Primary School. Leaders have established a culture that helps pupils to feel happy and safe. One parent summed up the views of many by saying, 'My child skips into school every day.'

The school has high expectations for pupils' achievement. The new leadership team has established an ambitious curriculum. In early years, children quickly learn the skills that they need for future learning. This prepares children well for the demands of Year 1. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well. Across the school, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Adults help pupils to manage their feelings and behaviour well by applying expectations consistently. Pupils readily rise to these expectations. They treat each other courteously and with respect. Pupils behave well most of the time. If pupils struggle to manage their emotions, staff provide caring support that helps them to get back on track quickly.

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

The school's recently revised curriculum is in the early stages of implementation. In the main, the curriculum is taught consistently well. In early years, staff help children to develop very positive attitudes to their learning. Children cooperate consistently well with each other. They sustain their concentration in order to complete the activities that they are given. Across the school, pupils follow established routines that help them to focus on their learning. In mathematics, children in early years quickly develop their understanding of number. This helps them to become confident in making different amounts. Older pupils have lots of opportunities to rehearse and repeat their learning. Pupils use their knowledge to help them to solve increasingly complex mathematical problems.

In most subjects, the knowledge that pupils need is clearly identified. Pupils explained their impressive knowledge about how to introduce variables to conduct science experiments. In early years, children develop their scientific understanding by exploring their senses and making observations. However, in some subjects, the important knowledge that pupils need has not been clearly defined or taught. Some pupils have gaps in their prior knowledge. In these areas, pupils struggle to connect their new learning to the things that they already know.

Reading is a priority across all year groups. Staff are skilled in helping pupils to become fluent readers. In early years, children confidently master new sounds quickly. Adults introduce ambitious new language. Children use this language to enthusiastically explain their learning. Throughout the school, pupils who struggle with reading receive exemplary support to help them to become fluent readers. Adults invest in carefully chosen literature and regularly bring stories to life for pupils. Pupils become confident readers.

The school quickly identifies the additional needs of pupils with SEND and provides exceptional support for them. This is helping pupils to develop academically and socially. The school makes sure that pupils are supported to learn the curriculum from their different starting points. Pupils with SEND thrive.

Pupils have very positive attitudes to their learning. They sustain their concentration to complete the tasks that they are given. Pupils told inspectors that they love school. They want to attend every day. Attendance is high.

The school promotes pupils' wider personal development. Pupils learn about enterprise in each year group. For example, they participate in a 'Dragon's Den' enterprise activity to help raise money for the school. Across the school, pupils have opportunities to debate issues. Pupils shared their debate about building a new dam and the different arguments against and in favour.

The curriculum for personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education helps pupils to understand the different ways that people live. Pupils know that everyone deserves to be treated with respect. They spoke with maturity about issues such as staying safe online. However, some aspects of the PSHE curriculum are less well developed. For example, older pupils struggle to remember important information about healthy relationships and consent.

Those responsible for governance are knowledgeable about the school. They use their experience well to challenge and support leaders. The school delivers effective professional development for staff. This helps to ensure that changes and improvements are sustained. The workload and well-being of all staff are carefully considered. Staff are proud to be part of this school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The important knowledge that pupils require is not identified and taught clearly enough in some curriculum subjects, including some aspects of PSHE. In these areas, pupils sometimes struggle to acquire and remember the important knowledge that they need. The school should make sure that this important knowledge is clearly identified and that teachers are clear about the order in which this content should be taught.

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	106252
Local authority	Tameside
Inspection number	10337639
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	228
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Claire Cull
Headteacher	Neil Price
Website	www.stmarysdenton.com
Dates of previous inspection	3 and 4 July 2013, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not currently use alternative provision.
- The school runs a breakfast club and after-school clubs for pupils in the school.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with senior leaders, subject leaders and teachers.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with the governing body, including the chair of governors. The lead inspector also held a meeting with a representative of the diocese.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, 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 also listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 scrutinised a range of other documentation, including governor meeting minutes and leaders' evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors also spoke informally to pupils to gather their views on school life.
- To gather parents' views, inspectors took account of the responses from Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. Inspectors also met with parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors took account of the staff survey and met formally with staff to gather their views.

Inspection team

Jen Sloan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Gaynor Rennie

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