

Inspection of St Mary's Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior School

Belle Vue Road, Old Basing, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG24 7DE

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 November 2021

| Overall effectiveness | Outstanding |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| The quality of education | Outstanding |
| Behaviour and attitudes | Outstanding |
| Personal development | Outstanding |
| Leadership and management | Outstanding |
| Previous inspection grade | Good |

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to be part of the 'one family' in this school. They enjoy the strong friendships they form and the considerate ways that pupils treat each other. Pupils feel safe in this school. They know how to keep healthy and safe, including when they are online.

Staff help pupils to understand the high behaviour expectations. This helps them to behave very well. As a result, pupils have extremely positive attitudes to learning and work really hard. Pupils told inspectors that bullying is rare at the school. When it does happen, they are confident that adults will always listen and act to resolve problems.

Pupils relish the wide range of opportunities offered by the school. Pupils from all years enjoy the chances to take on leadership roles on the school council, as prefects or on the eco stewardship team.

Staff are passionate about preparing pupils for the next stage in their learning. They are supported effectively so they achieve well. One pupil told an inspector that the school 'helps them to grow as people'. Pupils are proud of their 'best bit' books. They use these to record the moments they most enjoy in school.

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

Leaders have high expectations of every pupil. Staff are sharply focused on pupils' learning and their personal development. This supports pupils to leave the school fully equipped to thrive in the next stage of their lives.

Leaders have developed a broad and ambitious curriculum. It is well planned and carefully sequenced. Expert subject leaders make sure that new learning builds on what pupils already know. Teachers use careful questioning to check their understanding. This helps pupils to remember what they have learned and to achieve well.

The teaching of reading is a priority across the school. Staff help pupils develop a strong love of reading. Teachers keenly talk about books with pupils and share recommendations. Pupils routinely read to themselves and enjoy their teacher reading to them. Staff use carefully planned lessons to develop pupils' understanding, for example of characters. Teachers closely track pupils' progress and reading choices. When pupils need extra support, it is quickly put into place. As a result, pupils learn to read fluently and confidently.

This is an exceptionally inclusive school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are nurtured and celebrated. Well-planned interventions and pre-teaching give pupils the support they need. This helps them to fully integrate into the classroom with their friends. Where needed, external support is quickly put in place. As a result,

these pupils thrive and achieve well.

There are consistently high standards of behaviour across the school. In class, pupils are highly engaged and focused on their learning. Around the school, pupils are polite and kind to each other and to adults. The positive behaviour system is known and understood by all pupils and staff. Where pupils need extra support, it is quickly put in place and behaviour improves rapidly. Attendance is high and any absence is followed up and tracked carefully.

Provision for pupils' personal development is exemplary. Staff make use of a range of carefully chosen resources to support reflection and well-being. This supports the school's carefully planned assembly programme. Leaders help pupils explore the school's values and a wide range of other issues through acts of worship and reflection. Staff then systematically develop pupils' understanding of topics like trust or democracy through the week. This provides seamless support to help pupils think deeply about life in modern Britain, respecting others and celebrating cultural diversity.

Staff know that leaders consider their well-being and professional development as a priority. Parents are highly positive about the school. One parent described it being like an 'extended family'. High-quality training has helped governors clearly understand their roles and responsibilities. They have high expectations of themselves and know the school very well. They check how well the curriculum is helping pupils to learn.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school has strong procedures to help keep pupils safe and to monitor their well-being. The school makes exemplary use of an electronic system that ensures that any concerns are raised quickly and acted on promptly. There is close monitoring of the support provided to check that pupils remain safe.

Leaders ensure that staff receive high-quality training. The headteacher gives staff and governors 'no notice' safeguarding quizzes to check their understanding. Leaders have carefully planned how pupils will learn about different aspects of safeguarding. They closely check how well pupils are developing their understanding. Governors routinely check to make sure safeguarding is effective.

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

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| Unique reference number | 116350 |
| Local authority | Hampshire |
| Inspection number | 10200908 |
| Type of school | Junior |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 7 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 356 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Michael White |
| Headteacher | Caroline Welch |
| Website | www.st-marys-jun.hants.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 11 December 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. |

Information about this school

- St Mary's Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior School is a voluntary aided Church of England school in the Diocese of Winchester. Its last section 48 inspection took place in October 2019.
- The school does not currently use alternative provision

Information about this inspection

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

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

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, art, history and music. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke

to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work and listened to children read.

- Inspectors looked at curriculum plans for science and computing, spoke to pupils and looked at samples of their work from these subjects.
- Inspectors met with representatives of the governing body.
- Inspectors met with an early career teacher and some support staff.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors reviewed the school's website and policies and spoke to staff, pupils, parents and governors. The inspectors spoke to the designated safeguarding lead and reviewed the records of safeguarding checks carried out on staff working at the school.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils about their views of the school and took account of the 171 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey. As well as speaking to parents at the school gate, inspectors considered 122 responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and 67 free-text responses. Inspectors also took account of 36 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

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|-------------------------------|------------------|
| Kevin Burrell, lead inspector | Ofsted Inspector |
| Alison Ashcroft | Ofsted Inspector |
| Deirdre Crutchley | Ofsted Inspector |

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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