

Inspection of St Mary's Church of England Primary School, Stoke Newington

Barn Street, Stoke Newington, London N16 0JT

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 April 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

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|---------------------------|--------------------|
| The quality of education | Good |
| Behaviour and attitudes | Outstanding |
| Personal development | Good |
| Leadership and management | Good |
| Early years provision | Good |
| Previous inspection grade | Good |

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders inspire values of kindness, truth, courage, hope and love in pupils here. Pupils spoke about how teachers encourage these values in the day-to-day life of the school. Leaders support pupils to carry out random acts of kindness, including giving flowers to members of the local community. Staff acknowledge pupils who demonstrate these values through weekly rewards and in school assemblies. Pupils are kind and polite to each other and to staff. They show empathy and respect.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and attitudes, and pupils strive to meet these. Pupils are very focused in lessons and work hard. They are safe. One parent/carer, typical of many, said: 'My children are happy and thriving here.'

Leaders also have high expectations of pupils' academic achievements. Leaders have matched these with an ambitious curriculum for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Leaders organise many educational visits and activities to encourage pupils' personal development. Leaders have constructed spiritual spaces in the playground, where pupils can reflect quietly by themselves or with others. As part of the school's Spanish curriculum, all Year 6 pupils visited the island of Gran Canaria.

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

Leaders continually build and refine their curriculum. It is broad and balanced. For example, pupils participate in singing lessons with a specialist teacher each week, in addition to their weekly music classes.

Leaders support subject leaders to think clearly about the curriculum. The curriculum in each subject is designed so that pupils' learning builds logically on what they have already learned. They are provided with time to practise their learning before they move on to new content. For example, in a physical education lesson taught by a specialist coach, pupils in Years 5 and 6 practised dribbling a basketball. First, they practised dribbling the ball while walking. They then practised dribbling with their weaker hand, before progressing to running while dribbling the ball. Throughout this exercise, they received live feedback on how to improve from their teacher.

In the early years, leaders have outlined what they want children to learn and when, in preparation for Year 1. Leaders are working carefully with the recently combined Nursery and Reception class to make sure that children at different stages in their learning build on what they know. Leaders have designed the curriculum so that children in the early years receive separate teaching in areas such as English, mathematics and reading. Children could demonstrate their expanding vocabulary and knowledge. For example, they explained that plants need soil and water in order to grow.

Teachers usually check that pupils know and understand what they have been taught. However, in some subjects, teaching does not identify and rectify pupils' misconceptions routinely. When this occurs, pupils do not build their curriculum knowledge as securely as they could.

Leaders have invested significant time, provided staff training and resources, and enhanced the reading curriculum. This is reflected in strong academic outcomes for pupils in 2022. Leaders assess pupils regularly to find out whether any pupils are behind in their reading. Teachers then provide help to pupils who need it through short, daily catch-up sessions.

Leaders have ensured that pupils with SEND get the support they need so that they can follow the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. This includes children with SEND in early years. Where necessary, leaders identify early and support pupils with SEND.

Pupils are highly focused in lessons. Leaders provide intensive, effective support for pupils who need help to improve their behaviour. This means that lessons are not disrupted and that teachers can focus all their efforts on teaching. Pupils are particularly respectful of those who are different from themselves. They talk about this with maturity and thoughtfulness. Pupils develop strong routines from the beginning of the Nursery Year. For example, children in the Nursery enthusiastically formed a neat line to walk inside for snack time.

In personal development classes, pupils are taught how to budget, keep safe online and maintain healthy relationships with friends. Pupils also discuss and consider their well-being, self-esteem and mental health. Children in the early years have their own programme of outings, including an annual visit to the local fire station.

Many staff take on additional responsibilities at this small school. Leaders provide appropriate professional development for staff and subject leaders, including those who take on new responsibilities. Staff comment that leaders do everything they can in order to ensure that staff feel supported. The new chair of the governing body is working closely with leaders and provides appropriate challenge and support where necessary.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. All staff have the required knowledge and understanding to identify pupils who may be at risk of harm. Staff raise any concerns swiftly, however small, with leaders. Those who may need help receive it. This includes support from external agencies, where appropriate. Leaders also take account of local safeguarding risks and ensure that pupils are taught to keep themselves safe within this context.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, delivery of the planned curriculum is variable. Sometimes, teachers miss opportunities to identify and address pupils' misconceptions. In these subjects, pupils do not know and remember all that they could. Leaders should ensure that teaching more accurately reflects their intentions and that teaching more consistently identifies and addresses pupils' misconceptions.

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

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| Unique reference number | 100271 |
| Local authority | Hackney |
| Inspection number | 10242217 |
| 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 | 128 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Dilly Baker |
| Headteacher | Jane O' Brien |
| Website | st-marys.hackney.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 3 October 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school uses no alternative providers.
- The school's most recent section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character was carried out in November 2016. It is due for its next section 48 inspection by the end of 2023.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other senior leaders. Inspectors met with leaders with responsibility for pupils with SEND, personal, social and health education, behaviour, early reading and pupils' wider development.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, history 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.
- Inspectors considered the school's policies and procedures for safeguarding. Inspectors looked at documentation related to safeguarding, including the school's record of pre-employment checks.
- Inspectors met with representatives from the governing body, the local authority and the diocese.
- Inspectors considered the respective responses to Ofsted's online surveys for parents, staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Guy Forbat, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jonathan Newby

Ofsted Inspector

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