

Inspection of St Mary & All Saints Church of England Primary School

Wensley Road, Coley Park, Reading RG1 6DU

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 April 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5
of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel safe and happy in this improving school. The secret to this improvement is the fact that kindness is spread throughout the school like confetti. Everyone is living up to the motto of 'be kind, be curious and be ready'. A corner has been turned, and behaviour has improved so that it is now good.

Over the last year, leaders have taken significant strides to raise the aspirations and broaden the experiences of pupils. They have made positive decisions to improve the experiences of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Leaders are keen for pupils to have opportunities that they might not normally experience, for example trips to the Royal Opera House or helping out in the local hospital. Pupils are keen to be voted onto the pupil leadership team, where they get to debate and make suggestions about how to improve the school.

Over time, pupils have not achieved as well as they could. However, improvements in the curriculum for reading, writing and mathematics are starting to bear fruit. Leaders, governors and the trust know there is much more to do to improve the curriculum, but they are determined to do their best for the children and families who attend the school.

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

The trust and school leaders have an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Since it became an academy, improvements to the school were slowed by necessary changes in leadership and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the pace of improvement has accelerated since the appointment of the current headteacher. He has led his dedicated team well to focus on the most important things first: the quality of behaviour and the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics. Staff enjoy working at this school. They feel well supported and are playing their part in improving the provision for pupils.

Children enter the early years with lower starting points than may be expected. The school is pleased that more children are joining the Nursery provision before entering the Reception classes as this will give them a positive grounding in school life. Despite dedicated and focused leadership, improvements to early years provision have been hampered this year by huge fluctuations in class sizes and changes in staffing.

Teachers and leaders are quick to identify any additional needs that pupils may have. Leaders have funded and opened an innovative provision known as the Hive to support pupils with the most complex SEND. The pupils who attend the Hive are receiving more suitable opportunities in a smaller group, while also attending mainstream classes where appropriate.

Reading is given great importance at this school. Leaders prioritise helping all pupils learn to read as they know it is the golden ticket to future learning. The focus on reading starts in Nursery and builds steadily. Teachers and teaching assistants are very well trained, and this allows them to teach the phonics scheme with accuracy and consistency. Pupils make great gains learning to read, and anyone who falls behind is helped to catch up. Pupils enjoy reading simple books that match the sounds they are learning and then progressing to read graphic novels and chapter books like the ones their teachers share with them when promoting a real love of reading. For some children in early years, their reading is progressing faster than their writing skills and they are unable to form the letters that represent the sounds they are reading.

Teachers' subject knowledge is equally strong in mathematics, and they guide pupils through a well-sequenced and thought-out curriculum. There is a similar picture in writing. Although pupils are now making progress, learning and remembering more of the well-planned curriculum in reading, writing and mathematics, they are still working below the expectations for their age in many cases. Leaders know the pace of progress through the curriculum needs to improve.

The curriculums in science, the foundation subjects and non-prime areas of the early years are at a much earlier stage of development. Leaders have not yet finalised what will be taught, when and how. How the curriculum in these areas will be adapted for pupils with SEND and how assessment will be used effectively also still need to be considered. Notable exceptions are computing, where pupils are well prepared for the next stages of their education due to strong teaching and great progress through the curriculum, and music, where expert teaching brings joy and enthusiasm to learning and performing.

Leaders have been highly successful in improving behaviour around the school and especially in lessons. Pupils have very few concerns about bullying and know that adults will help them if they are upset. Dysregulated behaviour in the Hive is managed well. Leaders use suspension appropriately to tackle any serious lapses in behaviour. Pupils' attendance is improving, and fewer pupils are absent frequently because of the highly effective work of the family support worker.

There are a good range of clubs, for example football, table tennis, cricket and choir, breakfast club and after school club, which pupils join. Local sports teams, such as the Reading Rockets basketball team, engage with the school to enhance the offer. Pupils enjoy the many and varied school trips, both in the locality and to destinations further afield. Leaders know that they need to help pupils to link these highly memorable visits to their learning in the curriculum to help them learn and remember more.

Leaders purposely promote pupils' understanding of diversity and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This includes the use of poignant pictures in assembly that are then discussed across the school as the week unfolds.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school takes a proactive approach to safeguarding. Leaders responsible for safeguarding and all staff are well trained. Leaders understand the context of the community and serve it with a real moral purpose. When pupils are identified as needing help, the school works well with other agencies to do all that they can to keep pupils safe from harm. Record-keeping is detailed and presents clear chronologies for each pupil at risk of harm. Leaders challenge partners in other agencies appropriately when they are not doing the right things for pupils.

There are extensive processes in place to support pupils' mental health. The trust has a strong overview of safeguarding procedures.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics have been too low for too long. As a result, not all pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education. Leaders should ensure that pupils are helped to make faster progress through the well-designed curriculum in these subjects so that pupils achieve in line with national expectations for their age.
- The curriculum in science and the majority of the foundation subjects is not yet fully planned and implemented. As a result, pupils are not learning and remembering key knowledge and skills in these subjects. Similarly, children in the early years are not embedding their knowledge in all areas of learning. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is well planned and sequenced in these subjects and that teachers have the subject knowledge and teaching awareness to adapt the newly designed curriculum to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND.
- The school's work to give pupils a range of vivid experiences to develop their cultural capital is progressing well. However, pupils are not linking these episodic memories to the key knowledge and skills they are learning in the curriculum. Leaders should ensure that the positive cultural experiences pupils enjoy are linked closely to helping them learn and remember more over time. Furthermore, teachers should ensure that assessment helps them to know how well pupils have learned and remembered the curriculum.

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	146275
Local authority	Reading
Inspection number	10256244
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	323
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Ninna Gibson
Principal	Matt Parting
Website	www.stmaryandallsaints.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- St Mary and All Saints Church of England Primary School converted to become an academy school in November 2018. When its predecessor school, St Mary and All Saints Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate.
- The school is part of the White Horse Federation.
- The headteacher took up his post in April 2022.
- The school makes use of one alternative provision.

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.
- The inspection team completed deep dives in the following subjects: early

reading, mathematics, science and computing. To do this, they met with subject leaders, had discussions with staff and pupils, visited lessons and looked at pupils' work. The lead inspector also visited a music lesson and talked to pupils about their learning.

- Inspectors met with senior leaders, a selection of subject leaders, teachers, including early career teachers, and support staff.
- The lead inspector spoke with a representative from the trust board and members of the local governing body, including the chair. The lead inspector also met separately with the chief executive officer and primary director of the trust.
- The inspection team reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding by scrutinising records and through discussions with those responsible for governance, leaders, staff and pupils.
- The views of pupils, parents and staff were considered through discussions and outcomes of Ofsted's surveys.

Inspection team

Lee Selby, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Linda Culling	His Majesty's Inspector
Laura James	His Majesty's Inspector

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