

Inspection of St Mary and St John Junior and Infant School

Beaufort Road, Erdington, Birmingham B23 7NB

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 March 2023

| Overall effectiveness | Good |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| The quality of education | Good |
| Behaviour and attitudes | Good |
| Personal development | Good |
| Leadership and management | Good |
| Early years provision | Good |
| Previous inspection grade | Not previously inspected |

What is it like to attend this school?

There is a warm, calm and welcoming atmosphere at St Mary and St John School. Pupils said, 'Our school is a sanctuary.' This is a very distinctive feature of its inclusive and community-minded spirit. Pupils live the school's ethos of 'Working together with God to achieve a better future for everyone'. They are proud of the contributions they make to school life, for example as sports councillors and 'mini-Vinnies', who organise events for people from the local community.

Teachers prioritise pupils' personal and academic development. They have high expectations of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils know what is expected of them. They become confident, resilient learners. Pupils said, 'Our teachers teach us well, they know our limits, but they push us.'

Pupils behave well and demonstrate positive attitudes. They are polite and courteous and show respect towards one another and visitors. Bullying is not tolerated and staff quickly sort out any problems. Pupils have a healthy understanding of diversity and equality.

Pupils value the wide range of opportunities they have to develop their interests through extra-curricular activities such as gardening, guitar and sport. They talk excitedly about school trips that enhance the curriculum.

Parents and carers are positive about the school. They feel welcomed by staff and appreciate the support that their children receive.

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

Reading is a key priority in the school. Leaders focus on ensuring that all pupils learn to become fluent and enthusiastic readers. They have established a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics and early reading. Children in the early years learn phonics as soon as they start school. Pupils read books specifically chosen to support them to practise the sounds that they have learned. They use their phonics knowledge to read words and texts fluently. Teachers regularly check how well pupils learn new sounds. If pupils fall behind, they provide them with extra phonics sessions. Pupils enjoy reading and being read to.

Leaders have put a broad, ambitious and well-considered curriculum in place. It is designed to support all pupils to achieve well. The curriculum is generally well sequenced and detailed. However, in a few subjects, leaders have not provided teachers with sufficient detail as to what pupils should learn. This means that, in these subjects, pupils do not achieve as well as they might.

Leaders have a detailed understanding of how the curriculum is being taught in most subjects. However, in a small number of subjects, subject leaders are not so

well informed about the quality of pupils' learning. This means they are not sure what is working well and where further adjustments may be needed.

Pupils with SEND flourish. Leaders are quick to identify pupils' needs and set them ambitious, achievable targets. Teachers carefully adapt the support they offer each pupil in lessons. This helps pupils with SEND to get the best out of their learning experiences.

Teachers use assessment well to address any misunderstandings or gaps in pupils' knowledge.

Leaders and teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Behaviour in lessons is focused on learning. Low-level disruption is unusual, and pupils typically settle quickly. All pupils know what it means to 'Be ready, be respectful, be kind'. Pupils follow these simple school rules and know why they are important.

Teachers make sure that pupils' efforts and achievements are regularly praised and rewarded. As a result, pupils are eager to learn and the atmosphere around the school is pleasant and orderly. Pupils are polite and work cooperatively with one another. In the early years, children respond well to the established routines and structures.

Leaders' actions to promote school attendance have been successful for most pupils. However, some pupils still do not attend school regularly enough. This means that they miss important learning. Leaders work closely with families to ensure they understand the importance of pupils attending school regularly. However, there is still work to do to ensure that some pupils attend more often.

Leaders support pupils' personal development well. They provide a wealth of carefully considered opportunities that help pupils to flourish. Pupils talk confidently about fundamental British values, such as respect and democracy. They understand that people are different and why respect and tolerance are important. This supports pupils to be well prepared for life in modern Britain. They know how to eat healthily and keep fit.

Governors and trustees know the school well. They provide effective support and challenge to leaders. Staff are proud to work at the school. Leaders take the workload of staff, and their well-being, into account when making decisions.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure there is a positive culture of safeguarding across the school. They ensure that all staff receive regular safeguarding training and updates. Staff know how to identify any signs of concern and how to report them quickly. When concerns arise, leaders act promptly. They work closely with other agencies to ensure that vulnerable children and families can access the support they need.

All the necessary checks are carried out before staff are appointed to work at the school.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves and others safe, including when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some subject leaders do not have a clear picture of the strengths and development areas in their subjects. This means leaders are not sure what is working well, and where further improvements may be necessary. Leaders should ensure that subject leaders are better informed about how well the curriculum is being implemented and its impact on outcomes for pupils.
- In a small number of subjects, teachers are not clear enough about the important knowledge that pupils should learn. As a result, pupils do not build up their knowledge as well as they might. Leaders should ensure that the important knowledge that pupils should learn is identified clearly in all subjects.
- Some pupils do not attend school regularly. They miss important learning and school experiences. Leaders should continue to develop effective strategies to improve pupils' attendance.

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 | 146268 |
| Local authority | Birmingham |
| Inspection number | 10256816 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy converter |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 416 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Maria Stirrop |
| Headteacher | Mary Lynch |
| Website | www.stmryjon.net |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, St Mary and St John School has become part of the St John Paul II Multi Academy of nine schools. It became an academy school in November 2018.
- The most recent section 48 inspection took place in April 2017.
- No pupils attend 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 school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors completed deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, English, physical education and languages. In these subjects, they met with

subject leaders, visited lessons, including in the early years, reviewed pupils' work and spoke with staff and pupils.

- Inspectors reviewed information about other curriculum subjects and considered a range of information about pupils' personal, social, health and economic education.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders and the Catholic senior executive leader of the St John Paul II Multi Academy.
- Inspectors listened to some pupils read to staff.
- Inspectors met with some parents and reviewed responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.
- Inspectors spoke by telephone with an external consultant about the work of the school.
- The lead inspector spoke with the chair of the multi academy, the chair of governors, other governors and members of the trust board.
- Inspectors reviewed leaders' records of incidents of behaviour, including bullying. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and during playtimes.
- Throughout the inspection, inspectors spoke with several groups of pupils, including pupils with SEND, to hear their views about their education, behaviour and safety.
- Inspectors evaluated safeguarding by speaking with leaders, staff, pupils and parents. They reviewed a sample of leaders' records. Inspectors reviewed the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding policies and procedures.

Inspection team

| | |
|--------------------------------|------------------|
| Lynda Townsend, lead inspector | Ofsted Inspector |
| Roulla Gabriel | Ofsted Inspector |
| Darren Bishop | Ofsted Inspector |

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