

Inspection of St Margaret Mary's RC Primary School Manchester

St Margaret's Road, New Moston, Manchester M40 0JE

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 April 2024

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	Outstanding

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 11 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils told inspectors how happy and proud they are to attend this harmonious and welcoming school. Pupils respect and value diversity. They are quick to help and support each other. Older pupils relish opportunities to contribute to the smooth running of the school in their roles as leaders, monitors or ambassadors.

Pupils value the support that they receive to enhance their personal development. They were particularly keen to share their impressive knowledge about physical and mental well-being with inspectors. Pupils also benefit from participating in activities in the school's wider community, such as singing at local events, or providing an eco-friendly recycling service for parents and carers.

The school has high expectations for the academic achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils strive to meet these aspirations. The school provides effective support to help pupils to overcome any barriers to learning that they face. Pupils achieve well. Their strong performance in national assessments in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 is testament to this.

Pupils behave well. Learning is rarely disturbed during lessons. Pupils are considerate of others. They enjoy playing or chatting sociably with each other at breaktimes.

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

In recent years, the school has redesigned its curriculum to better meet the needs of its pupils. The new curriculum sets out a logical order in which learning should occur from the Nursery Year to Year 6. This enables pupils to build up secure knowledge as they progress through the school. Pupils are benefiting considerably from the revised curriculum. In most subjects, they recall key information from recent learning accurately and with ease.

The school ensures that, for the most part, teachers use effective strategies to support pupils' learning. As a result, the curriculum is delivered consistently well across the school. Teachers make frequent checks that pupils have fully grasped their learning before introducing something new. In most subjects, teachers identify and address any misconceptions or gaps in pupils' knowledge quickly and well.

In a few subjects, the curriculum is relatively new and is still being embedded. In these areas, some teachers, and other staff who support pupils' learning, are still developing their expertise in making sure that pupils remember and practise what they have already learned. At times, this means that pupils' recall of prior learning is not as secure as it could be. As a result, pupils sometimes find it harder to learn new information or achieve as well as they could in these subjects.

Reading is at the heart of the school's curriculum. Pupils enjoy times when their teacher reads to them. They benefit from the high-quality literature that the school provides. In the early years, children become familiar with well-loved stories, songs and rhymes. Older pupils relish the opportunities that their teachers provide to revel in a book of their own choice. They become avid readers. This supports their learning across the curriculum, including their understanding and appreciation of a range of cultures.

Children make a flying start with their reading in the early years. They quickly grasp how to use phonics to read words. Skilled staff across the school adhere to the school's phonics programme with fidelity. Pupils practise their reading knowledge diligently and with enthusiasm. By the time that they reach the end of key stage 1, almost all pupils can read with accuracy and fluency. The small number of pupils who continue to struggle with reading typically benefit from well-targeted and effective support.

Pupils with SEND benefit from the expertise of staff in identifying and meeting their varying needs. Pupils with SEND achieve well as a result.

Pupils' attendance at school is well above that in other schools nationally. Pupils make the most of the opportunities on offer at school. They recognise that having positive attitudes to school contributes to both their personal development and their academic success.

The school places a high priority on pupils' personal development. It provides a rich and diverse range of experiences to broaden pupils' understanding of the wider world. Pupils flourish at school. They grow in confidence and independence. Pupils in Year 6 told inspectors how well prepared they feel for moving on to their chosen secondary schools. They are well equipped to embrace the new challenges that they will face there and in later life.

The school ensures that there are strong and positive relationships across its community. For example, the school makes sure that staff receive the support that they need to manage their workload while maintaining a high-quality education for all pupils. Governors are well informed about the work of the school. They provide effective support and challenge.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, the school does not ensure that pupils are able to recall key information well. This sometimes makes it more difficult for pupils to understand and learn new information. The school should ensure that, in these subjects, staff

are fully equipped to check that pupils' knowledge is secure before introducing new learning.

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	105533
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10313967
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	342
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Angela Ager
Headteacher	Matthew Sutton
Website	www.st-margaretmarys.manchester.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	5 and 6 February 2013, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection. There have also been appointments to other leadership roles.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision for pupils.
- The school operates a breakfast club for pupils.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Salford. It was last inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in March 2020. The school is awaiting confirmation from the diocese about its next section 48 inspection.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's educational provision.

- This was the first routine inspection that 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 spoke with the headteacher and other leaders in the school. An inspector also spoke with the chair of governors.
- An inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority. She also spoke with a representative of the diocese.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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.
- An inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, art and design, computing, mathematics and modern foreign languages. They spoke with the leaders of these areas of the curriculum. They also visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work, held discussions with teachers and talked with pupils.
- Inspectors also spoke with pupils about their learning in other subjects.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They observed pupils' behaviour as they moved around the school. An inspector also scrutinised leaders' records of pupils' behaviour.
- An inspector visited the school's breakfast club.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school.
- An inspector spoke with parents as they brought their children to school.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. They also considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and for pupils.

Inspection team

Claire Cropper, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Sarah Gower-Jones	Ofsted Inspector
Nicola Howard	Ofsted Inspector

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