

# Inspection of St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Coronation Crescent, Madeley, Telford, Shropshire TF7 5EJ

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Inspection dates:	5 and 6 November 2024
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

This school gives pupils and their families a lot of support. Whether this be swift action to keep children safe or extra help with early language and reading, the school sets clear expectations for pupils, staff, parents and carers. Because of this, pupils feel safe and valued in school. They behave well and have positive attitudes to learning and one another. Adults promote the school's values and treat pupils kindly. They teach them to be truthful, respectful and resilient.

The school teaches pupils about how to stay safe, both in school and at home. Staff listen to what pupils say and remind them what to do if anything is worrying them. Pupil 'play leaders' are also quick to help anyone who feels left out or upset. But this rarely happens because there is lots to do on the playground to keep children happy and occupied.

Since the previous inspection, pupils' achievement has been up and down. However, recent improvements are supporting pupils to make better progress through the curriculum over time. Reading is now stronger than ever. This makes it easier for pupils to access the rest of the curriculum. Pupils' current work is typically of a good standard.

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

The school is a warm, caring and friendly place in which to work and learn. From the start in early years, the school introduces children to orderly routines. This helps them to settle in, feel safe and to develop helpful learning habits.

When they begin school, many children benefit from the school's extra help with speech and communication. The school provides an effective approach to learning about letter sounds. This, together with a deliberate focus on learning rhymes and songs, helps children to make quick progress with their language and strengthens their memories. Formal phonics teaching builds securely on this early work, and staff keep a close eye on whether pupils are learning what they should be. This means they know who needs extra help in order to keep up or catch up. The school's focused attention to teaching pupils to read has lifted standards. In recent times, pupils achieve well in reading.

The school is now working to boost achievement in mathematics. Leaders have introduced a new and systematic approach to building children's number fluency. This has had a positive impact on learning. The younger children are now doing better than they used to. Further up the school, the picture is more mixed. Staff have helpful guidance to follow, although classroom activities and resources are not consistently well matched to pupils' learning needs. This means pupils get confused or do not get enough meaningful practice. Standards have risen, but are still not in line with those seen in other subjects.

Other subjects are organised and taught well. The computing and physical education curriculums, for example, provide high-quality guidance and materials. These support teachers' subject knowledge and help them anticipate the types of mistakes pupils might make. In many other subjects, pupils progress well in their learning. Indeed, the school's work in computing has been recognised by a quality mark award. Learning in different

subjects is also enriched by educational trips. Recent visits include to a space centre, museums and heritage sites. In addition, after-school clubs, such as coding, choir, gardening and sports, extend pupils' interests and support their wider personal development.

After the COVID-19 pandemic, pupils' attendance dropped significantly. In response, the school has done much to challenge unnecessary absence and reward punctual habits. Leaders find out why pupils have not turned up and check they are safe. They are quick to alert parents and professional services about any concerns. They provide support to families and take decisive action when appropriate. As a result, attendance figures have improved. Even so, some pupils still miss too much school without good reason.

The leadership of support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is informed and efficient. Pupils' needs are identified early on and support is put in place. This, coupled with the school's inclusive and nurturing ethos, enables pupils with SEND to benefit from all aspects of school life. Teachers make suitable adjustments in lessons so that pupils can learn alongside their peers and achieve.

The school has recruited governors with relevant expertise and ensured they understand their role. Governors access and use a range of information to challenge and support the school's work effectively. This allows them to maintain informed oversight of the school's performance.

Teachers feel valued at work. They report a strong team spirit and say that leaders care about them. There is a healthy workplace culture that enables everyone to reflect on and improve what they do.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Despite a strong start, the delivery of the mathematics curriculum varies in quality. This is because activities in lessons do not necessarily give pupils enough guidance or practice. This hinders learning for some. The school should make sure the mathematics curriculum provides pupils with clear guidance and sufficient practice so they learn as well as possible.
- A few pupils are absent from school without good reason. This means they miss learning and have an increased risk of falling behind. The school should further strengthen its work with families and professional services to challenge and support parents to improve their children's school 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' 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	123556
<b>Local authority</b>	Telford & Wrekin
<b>Inspection number</b>	10343861
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	192
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Joyce Monaghan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Samantha Griffiths
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.stmaryscatholicprimarytelford.co.uk">www.stmaryscatholicprimarytelford.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	21 and 22 May 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- St Mary's is a catholic primary school in the Diocese of Shrewsbury. The most recent diocesan section 48 inspection of the school took place in June 2019. The next section 48 diocesan inspection will be in the 2026 to 2027 academic year.
- The school provides childcare at a before-school breakfast club.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors considered published performance data about the school. Inspectors also looked at a range of school documents. These included information about pupils' behaviour, attendance, the curriculum, extra-curricular activities, school improvement planning, governance and documents published on the school's website.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other leaders, school staff, pupils, governors, a local authority officer and the school's education adviser.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, science and history. In these subjects, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and considered pupils' work. They also considered the curriculum in other subjects to check how they were organised, taught and assessed. An inspector observed some pupils reading to staff.
- 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.
- Inspectors talked with pupils, parents and staff to gather general information about school life. They took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View and to Ofsted's survey for staff.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms, at lunchtime, on the playground, at clubs and at other times during the school day.

### **Inspection team**

Martin Pye, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Mary Maybank

Ofsted Inspector

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