

Inspection of St Martin's CofE Primary School

Lower Church Lane, Tipton, West Midlands DY4 7PG

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 October 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Early years provision	Good
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Previous inspection grade	Good
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What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at St Martin's Church of England Primary School are rightly proud of their 'FRESH' values. They believe in friendship, respect, empathy, sharing and humility. They talk passionately about these. The Christian ethos of the school underpins all aspects of school life. This is a school that celebrates diversity and welcomes all, no matter what their race or belief.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour around the school and in class. Pupils conduct themselves well. They walk quietly and sensibly around corridors and the hall. Pupils who attend the resource base are also well supported to adhere to these expectations.

Pupils enjoy educational visits, including a trip to the Black Country Museum, or visitors into school, such as the police. Pupils believe that such events help them to engage and remember more of their learning.

Pupils say they feel safe because staff care for them and act on any issues quickly. They understand different types of bullying, but say that bullying is rare.

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

Leaders, including governors, have an ambitious vision for what pupils should achieve. A number of staffing changes mean that some subject leaders are new to their role. Leaders have worked hard with these staff to establish a suitable curriculum. Subject leaders have set out the key content that pupils need to learn. They have organised this carefully so that pupils can build on what they already know. Teachers use assessment information to find out what pupils know. They use this to plan next steps in learning. Subject leaders have not evaluated the impact of the changes made to the curriculum. This means they have not identified where further improvements might be needed.

Children get off to a good start to school life. Staff quickly form positive and productive relationships with them. Staff know the children well and understand their individual needs. This is because they make very good use of information from parents, carers and other pre-school settings. This helps children to make good progress in their learning.

Leaders have prioritised reading. Children in Nursery practise their listening skills so they can hear and recognise early sounds and letters. Pupils build on this because of effective phonics teaching in Reception and key stage 1. Further support is given to pupils in key stage 2 if they need to catch up with their peers. The books that pupils read are well matched to the sounds that they have learned. This helps them to learn and remember more. Pupils enjoy daily story time at the end of the day and listen to a range of texts, including the Bible.

Staff expect all children to behave well. Staff are implementing the school's new behaviour policy effectively. There are clear school rules and routines that support this, which means that pupils understand and behave.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) typically receive good support and are fully included in all aspects of school life. This includes pupils who attend the school's resource base. Staff receive regular and effective guidance about how to support pupils with SEND. This means that the needs of pupils with education, health and care plans, in particular, are well catered for. Occasionally, for other pupils with SEND, support is not always matched closely to their needs. For example, in mathematics lessons, pupils do not always have access to resources that would help to make the learning more accessible.

Pupils' personal development is well catered for. Leaders encourage resilience to help pupils prepare for their next steps and later lives. Leaders use trips and visitors into school to enhance the curriculum. Pupils enjoy these opportunities. Learning across various subjects promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are very respectful of difference and make everyone who joins the school feel welcome.

Parents believe that leaders have the safety and education of the pupils at heart, and that they will sort out any issues that arise.

Governors know the school well. They provide effective challenge and support. Staff enjoy working at the school. They appreciate leaders' efforts to reduce their workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding. Effective systems are in place to keep pupils safe. Leaders carry out robust checks to ensure that staff appointed are suitable to work with children. Staff are well trained in safeguarding procedures. School records show that leaders respond immediately to concerns raised.

Staff know the pupils well. They report any concerns they might have about pupils' safety and well-being. Leaders monitor these reports to ensure that any trends are picked up quickly. They work closely with parents and external agencies where necessary to make sure that pupils and families receive the support they need.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Due to staffing changes, some subject leaders are still relatively new to their post. As a result, they are in the earlier stages of developing their role and have not identified where the curriculum can be improved further. Leaders should ensure that subject leaders have the time and expertise to be able to effectively measure the impact of their work. They should ensure that the implementation of the curriculum supports pupils well to know and remember more.
- Occasionally, support for some pupils with SEND is not as closely matched to the pupils' needs as it could be. As a result, these pupils may not make as much progress as they could. Leaders should ensure that support for pupils with SEND is closely matched to fully meet their needs, to help them to learn more.

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	103987
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	10242171
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	239
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Vicki Kavanagh
Headteacher	Matthew Seex
Website	www.st-martins.sandwell.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 July 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative providers.
- The school is within the Diocese of Lichfield. Its most recent section 48 inspection took place on 7 July 2016. Section 48 inspections were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They restarted in September 2021. The next inspection will be within eight years of the last section 48 inspection.
- The school has a resource base that caters for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs.

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 leaders.

- Inspectors met with representatives from the governing body and the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, science, mathematics and history. Inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders and undertook joint visits to lessons. They also talked to pupils and teachers and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents, including those related to safeguarding arrangements, behaviour and attendance. Inspectors also reviewed the school's evaluation of its own performance and the school's development plans.
- Inspectors talked to staff about their role in keeping pupils safe.
- Inspectors held informal and formal discussions with pupils and observed lunchtime and playtime.
- Inspectors reviewed responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including additional free-text comments. They also took account of responses to Ofsted's online staff and pupil questionnaires.

Inspection team

Barry Yeadsley, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

John Rowe

Ofsted Inspector

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