

Inspection of St Mary’s Community Primary School, Beetley

Elmham Road, Beetley, Dereham, Norfolk NR20 4BW

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 October 2023

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Requires improvement
Personal development	Requires improvement
Leadership and management	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Many pupils enjoy their time at St Mary's. They have a good understanding of how others are different from themselves. Unkind language is rare and is not tolerated by pupils or staff. Some pupils do not have a clear knowledge of how to keep themselves healthy. Other pupils also struggle to share their views on democracy and British values.

Pupils attend school regularly and are on time in the morning. Pupils feel safe. They trust adults to act if they are worried about something.

In lessons, pupils do not always behave well. Teachers do not always address this. Some pupils distract others. They do not try hard to complete the work set by their teachers. Most pupils follow routines, such as lining up, but they sometimes take time to respond to instructions. At break and lunchtime, pupils' behaviour is better. They play well together.

Generally, pupils at St Mary's can take part in a range of activities outside the school day and during lunchtime. They enjoy these opportunities. Pupils take on a range of responsibilities including roles on the school council.

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

The quality of education is not yet good because there is inconsistency in how the curriculum is delivered. Teaching staff have not had sufficient subject training to be able to implement the content of the curriculum. Pupils do not always understand what they are learning or know how to improve. While pupils' understanding is assessed, this information is not used effectively to support their progress. In a small number of curriculum areas, planning is less rigorous, and the intent of this work has not yet been realised. However, in the early years, pupils' experience is much stronger. There are clear targets set for the pupils and the curriculum meets their needs well. There have been improvements in adaptations and support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. These include working effectively with external partners including educational psychologists.

Younger pupils benefit from a focus on reading. In Reception and key stage 1, there is a clear and well-monitored programme of phonics. Pupils make good progress. Where pupils fall behind in reading, there is a clear programme to support them to catch up. While pupils continue to read regularly at key stage 2, this is not monitored effectively. The numbers of children that read at home regularly is low.

Pupils do not always behave well as expectations are not high enough. In too many lessons, pupils disrupt learning. The school's behaviour policy is clear, but this is not always followed closely by staff. As a result, pupils continue to misbehave. Systems for monitoring behaviour incidents are not as robust as they need to be. Pupils' behaviour during social times is more positive. Pupils' attendance has improved significantly. It is similar to other primary schools nationally.

The personal, social and health education curriculum at St Mary's has had limited attention from leaders. Pupils do not always have an appropriate understanding in areas such as mental health or the importance of democracy. Pupils do have access to clubs and activities, but leaders do not know the extent to which pupils engage in lunchtime clubs. As a result, the wider benefit of these activities on pupils' development is not as strong as leaders now want. Pupils comment positively about their role on the school council.

The school has experienced a sustained period of turbulence because of staffing challenges. The school now has a stable leadership structure and the capacity to make further improvement. Governors are committed to supporting this improvement. In order to challenge the school more effectively, governors need more accurate school effectiveness information. Leaders are working at pace to ensure that governors are provided with this information. Staff are typically proud to work at the school and recognise that positive change is happening. The school is engaging more with the local community, and most parents feel their children are happy and safe at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Staff do not consistently apply the school's behaviour policy. Expectations of pupils' behaviour are not high enough. As a result, some pupils distract others or do not engage with their work. Leaders should ensure that the school policy is rigorously applied in all classes.
- The curriculum is not yet delivered effectively across the school. As a result, in some subjects, pupils do not know more and remember more. Some staff have not had subject training to enable them to make the improvements required. Leaders must provide appropriate and sufficient professional development opportunities to address this.
- Assessment of pupils' progress is not sufficiently robust or accurate. Subject leaders do not always have accurate information on pupil progress in their subject areas. The assessment systems in some subjects have limited impact. Pupils do not always know how to improve. Leaders must ensure that a consistent and rigorous approach to assessment is implemented.
- School systems for self-evaluation and improvement planning are not sufficiently robust. This reduces leaders' and governors' capacity to understand whether pupils are benefiting from a high-quality education. Leaders should ensure that existing processes are reviewed so that they are fit for purpose. Where systems require updating, this should be done as quickly as is practicable.

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	121011
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10268066
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	181
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Andy Tovell
Headteacher	Tanya Treavett
Website	www.beetleyschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	27 and 28 April 2022

Information about this school

- The school has appointed a new headteacher since the last inspection.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

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 education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, design technology, geography and mathematics. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- 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.

- The inspection team met with pupils from different year groups to talk about their learning and experiences at school.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents provided by the school. These included the school improvement plan, curriculum documentation and school policies.
- Inspectors considered 31 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View. This included 23 comments from parents and carers in the free-text facility. Inspectors also considered the 17 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Jonathan Rockey, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Imran Khan

Ofsted Inspector

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