

Inspection of St Mary's CofE Primary School

Lansdown View, Timsbury, Bath, Somerset BA2 0JR

Inspection dates:	15 and 16 October 2024
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The executive headteacher of this school is Michelle Parsons. The head of school is Jamie Thomson. This school is part of the Midsomer Norton Partnership Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Alun Williams, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Tony Webb. The executive headteacher is responsible for this school and one other.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school wants pupils to live the motto: 'I can do all things.' It is successful in achieving this aim. The school has turned this vision into reality for its pupils.

Every adult in the school wants the very best for every single pupil. They leave no stone unturned in trying to make that happen. Adults in the school care deeply about the pupils. Pupils grow into happy, confident, independent and successful learners. The school provides an exceptionally inclusive environment. Everybody, regardless of their background or individual needs, can thrive.

Pupils know that this degree of care and ambition is exceptional. Many told us that they feel lucky to attend this school. In return, pupils behave extremely well and work very hard. As a result, pupils learn the ambitious curriculum successfully and achieve well.

Pupils make a significant contribution to the smooth running of the school. For example, there are nine pupil leadership groups. These groups help manage the playground, the library, collective worship and much more besides. Pupils' involvement in school life goes beyond this. Pupils help each other to behave well, to follow school rules and treat each other with respect.

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

The school provides a high quality of education to all its pupils. This includes those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The curriculum sets out in intricate detail every bit of knowledge pupils will learn in every subject. It does this from the start of Nursery all the way through to the end of Year 6. It also shows where knowledge learned in one subject will help pupils learn something else in a different subject. Pupils learn what the curriculum intends. They develop a deep understanding of the subjects they learn.

Teachers are skilled at making sure that pupils remember the things they are taught. They check carefully that pupils understand what they are learning. If needed, teachers break down learning into smaller steps. Over time, teachers check and re-check that pupils have learned what they need to move on to the next stage of the curriculum journey. They quickly adapt their teaching where needed to make sure gaps in pupils' knowledge are quickly closed.

The school has a sharp focus on making sure every pupil learns to read. As soon as children join the Nursery, they start to learn about hearing sounds in words. Over the course of the Reception Year and Year 1, pupils learn to read and write letters accurately. They practise reading the sounds they are learning until they can decode words fluently. This almost always happens by the end of Year 2. The few who need more time, get high-quality help and they catch up during Year 3.

Pupils dive into the world of books willingly and with excitement. They read daily in class, at home or in the calm space of the 'Book Burrow'.

The school also makes sure that pupils secure the basics of mathematics as early as possible. This ensures that pupils recall and apply number knowledge quickly. Pupils use this to tackle complex mathematical challenges. This is something they do every day, from the early years through to Year 6. Pupils do this confidently and accurately. For example, pupils can explain why an answer might or might not be correct, using their knowledge of related mathematical concepts to test out and justify their response.

Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, achieve equally well in all subjects. They produce high-quality work that shows they are learning what the curriculum sets out for them to know. The school helps pupils to build their knowledge securely over time from their starting points. The longer a pupil has been at the school, the better their end of key stage attainment becomes.

The school provides exceptionally well for pupils' personal development. The personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum gives pupils essential knowledge and skills to support their well-being. For example, it helps them to be resilient, tolerant and respectful. As a result, pupils have an exceptionally well-developed understanding of what it means to belong to the school family and their social and moral responsibility to the community beyond.

The extra-curricular offer is exceptionally strong. The school seeks out any opportunity to broaden pupils' horizons, help them pursue an interest or develop a talent. Leaders keep a close check on who is making the most of these opportunities. If a pupil seems reluctant or has difficulty taking part, leaders do all they can to help. As a result, pupils from all backgrounds benefit from the broad range of opportunities. This includes pupils with SEND.

Since the school joined the trust in April 2020, it has improved substantially. Trust leaders provide effective support where necessary. Leaders monitor the impact of their work carefully. As a result, pupils make substantial progress in learning the ambitious curriculum and are socially and emotionally very well prepared to move on from primary school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	147890
Local authority	Bath and North East Somerset Council
Inspection number	10344839
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	154
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Tony Webb
CEO of the trust	Alun Williams
Headteacher	Michelle Parsons
Website	www.stmarystimsbury.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership.
- The school includes provision for two-year-olds.
- The school uses no alternative provision.
- The school is a Church of England School within the Diocese of Bath and Wells. The next section 48 inspection is due by November 2026. The last inspection took place in November 2021.

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. Inspectors discussed the 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: reading, mathematics and geography. 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.
- Inspectors also looked at curriculum planning and examined pupils' work in other subjects: science, history, Latin, religious education, art, and design technology.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at breaktimes and scrutinised documentation related to behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors met with representatives from pupil leadership teams, spoke to other groups of pupils, and discussed the PSHE curriculum with leaders to inspect the provision for personal development.

Inspection team

Sandy Hayes, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Helen Springett

Ofsted Inspector

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