

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: St Matthew's Primary School

19 Norfolk Street, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire CB1 2LD

Inspection dates:

1 and 2 April 2025

Outcome

St Matthew's Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and well cared for. They are all fully integrated into the life of this school.

The curriculum is broad, balanced and enriched by different trips and visitors to school. Pupils talk positively about the subjects they enjoy and the experiences they benefit from. Pupils achieve well, especially in English and mathematics. They are well prepared for their next stage of education.

Relationships around school are warm and friendly. Pupils are safe and know that staff care. Pupils have trusted adults they can speak to if they ever feel worried. This makes the school an environment where pupils feel secure and typically meet the school's expectations around behaviour. Learning in class proceeds without disruption.

Playtime is an active and happy time. A range of games and activities proceed positively. Ball games in 'the cage' are particularly popular. Young sports leaders are on hand to help pupils in their play and to engage those who need a little support.

Pupils perform and compete on the sports field, giving them the chance to demonstrate their wider talents and interests. Club are varied and include the opportunity for pupils to learn different languages. This broadens pupils' horizons and helps them to learn about the many different cultures in their school. Pupils benefit from a well-considered extra-curricular offer.

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

Children make a strong start in early years. They learn the routines and expectations set by staff, straight away. Early language and number are threaded throughout the Nursery and Reception curriculum. The use of songs and rhymes supports early language development effectively. Staff give children carefully considered opportunities to start writing using a variety of resources. As a result of this focus, children in early years secure the key knowledge they need to learn more. Children are well prepared for Year 1.

Reading is a priority at the school. Well-trained staff teach the school's chosen phonics programme well. This helps pupils to learn the sounds and apply them when they read. The school puts in extra help for any pupil who falls behind. This means pupils become fluent readers. As pupils move through the school, they access a carefully structured reading curriculum, which means they become accomplished, confident readers. This supports pupils to successfully access the rest of the curriculum and achieve well.

Teachers show strong subject knowledge and typically deliver the curriculum well. They introduce new learning clearly to pupils. Teachers question pupils skilfully and provide exciting and carefully considered activities to involve and engage pupils in their learning. This is generally successful. On occasion, though, teachers do not check what pupils can and cannot do effectively enough. Sometimes, pupils are ready to move on in their learning and they do not get the chance to do this as quickly as they might. On other occasions, pupils are not supported to revisit something they are unsure about more quickly.

The school's wider curriculum is not as developed as it is in English and mathematics. While pupils access a broad and ambitious curriculum, in some subjects the core knowledge pupils are intended to learn and remember is not as clear as it might be. This means that what pupils learn is not always built on as they move through the school. As a result, some pupils do not always secure a depth of knowledge in these subjects.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully integrated in school life. Pupils' individual plans identify barriers that exist to their learning. Staff provide support and adaptations to make learning accessible for all. Some pupils access the same curriculum as their peers with little support, while others are provided with a more individual approach which is right for them and meets their needs so they can successfully access the same curriculum as others.

Behaviour is managed well. The school sets high expectations and works hard to ensure these are understood across the school. Pupils generally rise to them and behave well. On occasion, when behaviour falls below expectation, staff support pupils to return to their learning quickly.

The school's work to improve attendance is strong. Leaders monitor attendance rigorously and identify any pupil at risk of falling below their expectations. They offer the necessary support and challenge to ensure that pupils attend whenever they can. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, attend well as a result of this work.

The school prioritises pupils' wider development. All pupils learn about diversity and equality throughout the curriculum. Extra-curricular opportunities are given to all pupils to allow them to develop their individual interests and talents. Visits to places of worship support pupils to understand and respect different cultures and beliefs. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe online. Pupils are well prepared for life beyond school.

Governors are heavily invested in the school. They know the school's strengths and what needs to develop further. Staff are proud to work at the school. The vast majority feel valued and supported with their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some subject curriculum thinking is not fully embedded. In these subjects, pupils do not develop a depth of knowledge over time. The school should continue to consider and refine its curriculum content so that pupils consistently learn and remember clearly defined core knowledge across all curriculum subjects.
- On occasion, teachers do not check pupils' progress in lessons as effectively as they might. This means pupils are not fully supported to correct mistakes or extend their learning in a timely manner. The school should support teachers to develop their strategies to assess and respond to the needs of pupils in lessons in the most effective way.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding,

behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in March 2020.

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	110750
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10378444
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	636
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Joint chairs of governing body	Christopher Jagger and Aditi Vedi
Headteacher	Tony Davies
Website	www.stmatthews.cambs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11 March 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school makes use of three unregistered providers of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- 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.
- During the inspection, inspectors met with the headteacher, other members of the school leadership team and subject leaders. They also met with a group of governors and spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors visited a sample of lessons in a range of subjects, spoke with 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 inspectors considered the views of parents through responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View.
- The inspectors gathered the views of pupils and staff through meetings and discussions conducted throughout the inspection.

Inspection team

Jonny Wallace, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Vicki Webber

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2025