

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School

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St Mary's Catholic
Primary School

28.11.22

Dear Parents and Carers,

Further to our ungraded inspection report in October 2022, the first under the new framework, I am pleased to share our Ofsted report on the school website. Although aspects were disappointing there was a lot to celebrate. I would like to take this opportunity to explain the report and share our plans to ensure that All children have access to the best possible curriculum offer.

The school has been graded as remaining Good with areas to improve due to school challenges. Please take the time to read the report which is helpful for parents and carers to give you an independent view of the quality of provision in school.

We are pleased that the process highlighted the following:

- **Safeguarding is effective. Pupils are taught to be safe in and outside of school. Leaders follow up concerns swiftly and work with external agencies. All staff are trained.** St Mary's puts safeguarding as a top priority.
- **The pupils enjoy belonging to this small and friendly community. Pupils feel safe.**
- **The children are happy in school and know that staff care about them.**
- **Leaders have high expectations of behaviour resulting in children behaving exceptionally well in lessons and at playtimes.**
- **Leaders carefully consider pupils' wider development. Pupils are keen to play a part in their school community.** Children access rich and diverse books which are woven throughout the curriculum. St Mary's offers a range of clubs which it continues to expand on as well as varied trips and visitors. The children at St Mary's have a voice and are listened too. We have woodland warriors, mindfulness monitors, eco and student council. The children raise money for many charities. St Mary's instils in the children that doing something small here can mean something big somewhere else.
- **Pupils leave school as confident readers and able mathematicians.** The unpublished KS2 school results (due to be published in Dec 22) were above the national average and were exceptional in reading.
- **Our pupils with SEND are effectively supported and leaders are adept at identifying needs.** Children at St Mary's have positive outcomes in their day-to-day experiences due to effective delivery from the SENDCO and teachers. The pupils are well supported by support staff who ensure children can access the curriculum.
- **The new head teacher has dealt with staffing instability well and staff understand leaders' expectations.** Since 2020 school has faced many different challenges which have been unprecedented. School has adapted to many changes that have been unavoidable. Throughout the children and staff have amazed me with their resilience and community spirit.
- **Some subject leaders have carefully considered how pupils build knowledge over time.** There strength across some subject areas.
- **There is a well-established phonics curriculum.** School uses the government approved ELS programme which is consistent across the school. All staff are trained and there is extra training throughout the year. A thank you to all the parents that help this programme by listening to your child/ren read at home. It makes a huge difference. This was noted by Ofsted when they looked at reading diaries.
- **Governors are supportive of leaders and plans.** I would like to thank the governors for their continued commitment to our school.

Main areas for improvement:

It is reassuring that the areas identified as improvement points were part of our self-evaluation and development plan for this year and we will continue to work to improve and address these along with staff, parents, Archdiocese and the LA.

- **Improve the delivery of the phonic programme.** School will deliver additional staff training for all. School will purchase the new resources to compliment the programme. Ofsted commented on the percentage of children reading at home. School will encourage more reading at home.
- **Improve aspects of the curriculum subjects.** School will purchase a new English and Maths curriculum which will come with training. This will embrace a reading to writing process and embed a maths mastery process.
- **Improve the stability of staffing.** School will look at staffing in classrooms and ensure that all children's needs are met. The Local Authority will support the school through this.
- **Update the website.** A new website will help to showcase all the extra- curricular things the school offers. It will link to our Instagram. There will be a children's page which will have access to additional learning and games.
- **Improve healthy eating.** Ofsted were highly critical of unhealthy snacks. A new policy has been introduced and has been sent home and put on the website. School will monitor snacks over the next few weeks to see if more adaptations need to be made.
- **Improve attendance.** Ofsted were critical of the amount of unauthorised holidays. School as you know are not permitted to grant term time holidays. We will continue to encourage children to be in school as much as possible. Time out of school is difficult to catch up on. We know that you understand how important it is for your child to be in school each day.

What has the new framework meant for schools?

Ofsted brought in a new framework in 2019. This framework is rigorous in its expectations and, except in rare cases, every single aspect of the framework must be met fully across the good and outstanding criteria to secure the outstanding judgement. As a result of this, there is a decrease in the number of schools receiving the good or outstanding judgement and there are many examples of schools which had previously been graded as outstanding now being graded as requires improvement or good. This is part of Ofsted's approach to drive up the quality of education. As a school, we use the Ofsted framework to self-evaluate and continue to improve, we were able to identify our strengths and areas for development as part of our routine processes in school. This led to fruitful discussion with the inspection team and enabled us to develop a shared approach to moving forward.

Most importantly, as parents and carers, you can be **confident** that your child is happy, safe and cared for at St Mary's. Children behave well and have so many opportunities to get involved both in and out of the classroom. We are always on a constant journey of improvement and will continue to build on the feedback and our own self-evaluation.

Next steps

Under the current Ofsted arrangements and framework, schools judged to be Good with aspects to improve will have a full graded inspection between 12 – 24 months which we fully welcome.

How can parents support their child further?

The priorities highlighted which parents can have a huge impact on are reading and attendance. Taking 10 minutes a few nights a week to hear your child read will make a massive impact on their progress. Ensuring that your child is always in school, unless medically unfit, is the most important thing. Your child can keep up with learning, form meaningful connections and understand the importance of regular attendance in school and for their future. This also means that holidays should not be taken in term time.

Finally, a huge thank you to pupils, parents, and staff who all contributed to the inspection. I am excited in directing the school on this exciting journey of change and development.

Kind regards
Mrs Scott

Headteacher