

St Mary's CofE Primary School

Address: Brooke Road, Walthamstow, London, E17 9HJ

Unique reference number (URN): 144238

Inspection report: 16 June 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Exceptional ●

Achievement

Exceptional ●

Pupils achieve remarkably well. They develop detailed knowledge and skills and produce work of a very high standard across the curriculum. Pupils' outcomes in national tests are consistently among the very highest nationally, reflecting the ambitious expectations that staff have for every pupil.

From the earliest stages, pupils build strong foundations for future success. Children quickly secure their phonics knowledge and use this confidently as they move through the school. Staff identify gaps in understanding swiftly and skilfully provide precise support so that pupils keep up with their learning.

Pupils remember prior learning and apply this knowledge with confidence. They explain their thinking clearly and routinely make thoughtful connections across the curriculum. Pupils take great pride in their work, which shows depth of understanding, accuracy and care.

All groups of pupils achieve exceptionally well, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff provide highly effective support while maintaining the very highest expectations. As a result, pupils develop as confident, successful learners and leave the school extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Attendance and behaviour

Exceptional ●

The school has secured the very highest attendance for its pupils. Very few pupils are persistently absent. They want to come to school because they feel happy, included and excited about learning. Pupils arrive positively and settle quickly into purposeful activities. Staff know pupils and families extremely well. They notice quickly when circumstances may affect attendance and provide thoughtful support to remove barriers. This includes pupils who may need additional help because of personal circumstances or challenges outside school. As a result, pupils, including pupils with additional needs and disadvantaged pupils, benefit fully from the rich learning and wider opportunities available to them.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They show consistently positive attitudes in lessons and around the school. Pupils understand that their behaviour affects others and they take responsibility for making the school a respectful and welcoming place. Classrooms are calm, focused and highly productive because pupils are motivated to learn. They listen carefully, contribute enthusiastically and support each other.

Pupils respond extremely well to adults' high expectations because relationships are warm and built on mutual respect. Staff help pupils understand the reasons behind positive choices, rather than simply expecting them to follow rules. Pupils show kindness, maturity and consideration towards others. They are proud of their school community and demonstrate its values through their actions every day.

Pupils help to shape and benefit from an exceptionally ambitious and carefully designed curriculum. Staff have thought deeply about the knowledge that pupils need to learn and how this builds from the early years onwards. Pupils develop a rich understanding of different curriculum subjects because important ideas are introduced, revisited and strengthened over time.

Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and use this deftly to make learning clear, interesting and challenging. They habitually ask carefully chosen questions that encourage pupils to think deeply and explain their ideas. Staff quickly identify when pupils need more help or greater challenge and respond with skill and precision. This means that all pupils, including those with additional needs, learn content that is tightly matched to their starting points.

Classrooms are places where pupils love to learn. Routines are fully embedded so no time is wasted. Pupils listen carefully, discuss their ideas confidently and show enormous pride in their work. They use ambitious vocabulary with accuracy and make thoughtful links between current and previous learning.

Reading is central to the curriculum. Staff carefully select books to introduce pupils to new ideas, language and experiences. Pupils develop the raft of skills that they need to become confident, successful readers. They speak enthusiastically about books that they have recently enjoyed.

Teachers are driven to continually develop and improve their practice. They work together to share expertise and ensure that pupils receive consistently high-quality teaching. The result is a curriculum that inspires pupils, develops their curiosity and enables them to learn exceptionally well.

Early years

Exceptional ●

Children make an excellent start in the early years. They quickly become confident, independent and enthusiastic learners. Staff know children extremely well and create warm, caring relationships. This helps children feel safe, valued and ready to explore new learning. The early years environment is carefully designed to inspire curiosity and develop children's knowledge. Every area, including the extensive outdoor learning space, has been thoughtfully planned. Children choose from a wide range of purposeful activities that encourage them to investigate, solve problems and develop their individual ideas.

Staff have high expectations of what children can achieve. They skilfully introduce new vocabulary and encourage children to explain their thinking. Children learn to communicate confidently and use increasingly ambitious language. When children need extra help, staff identify this quickly and provide effective support.

Children develop excellent attitudes to learning. They concentrate well, work together and show pride in what they achieve. Carefully established routines help children become increasingly independent and prepare them for future success. Leaders have made sure that all children experience an ambitious curriculum. Children, including children with

additional needs, receive the support and encouragement they need to flourish. They develop strong foundations across all areas of learning. As a result, children leave the early years exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Inclusion

Exceptional 

Leaders and staff place inclusion at the heart of the school's work. This is rooted in the belief that every pupil can succeed regardless of their starting points or the barriers they may face. Staff know pupils and their families exceptionally well and make sure that every pupil receives the support they need to achieve their best.

The school quickly identifies when pupils may need extra help. They carefully consider each pupil's strengths, interests and barriers to learning. They work closely with families and, when needed, other professionals to make sure that support is effective. This helps pupils to grow in confidence and take a full part in school life.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve extremely well. Staff have high expectations and make thoughtful adaptations to help pupils learn successfully alongside their classmates. Pupils receive expert help without limiting what they can achieve. Staff understand pupils' individual circumstances and respond with care and sensitivity. This helps pupils feel valued, included and ready to learn.

The school's embedded culture of belonging benefits all pupils. Every pupil has opportunities to contribute, develop confidence and experience success. As a result, pupils at this school do not just take part in school life, but they thrive as important members of the school community.

Leadership and governance

Exceptional 

Leaders have embedded and sustained a culture, where pupils and staff are inspired to achieve their very best. They have a clear and ambitious vision that is understood by the whole school community. This vision shapes everyday decisions and ensures that pupils' learning, wellbeing and personal development remain at the centre of everything the school does.

Leaders know the school extremely well. They have an accurate understanding of what works well and what can be even better. They continually refine practice because they want every pupil to succeed. Staff share this ambition and believe that every moment of learning matters.

The culture of professional learning is a significant strength of the school. Leaders provide expert support, coaching and training that help staff continually improve. Teachers value the high-quality resources and guidance they receive. This enables them to focus on adapting learning and meeting pupils' needs. Staff, including those new to teaching, feel trusted, valued and extremely well supported.

The trust plays an important role in sustaining excellence. Leaders and staff work closely with colleagues across the trust to share expertise and develop the very best practice. This collaboration strengthens provision while supporting staff workload and wellbeing.

Those responsible for governance have a detailed understanding of the school. They provide highly effective support and challenge. They check that leaders' decisions have a positive impact on pupils and maintain careful oversight of important areas, including safeguarding.

Leaders at all levels are highly ambitious for the future. They have created a reflective culture, where everyone continues to learn. As a result, pupils flourish and staff are proud to contribute to the school's continued success.

Personal development and wellbeing

Exceptional ●

Pupils develop an exceptional understanding of themselves, their community and the wider world. They learn that they have a responsibility to help others and that their actions can make a positive difference. The school's values are not simply taught. Pupils demonstrate these values through the way that they think, behave and support those around them every day.

Pupils are encouraged to become confident advocates for themselves and others. Through 'courageous advocacy', they learn to identify issues that they care about and consider how they can bring about meaningful change. Initiatives such as 'Seeds of Change' help pupils understand fairness, responsibility and the importance of contributing to society. Pupils learn that even small actions can have an impact on the school, local area and the wider community.

Pupils develop impressive leadership and communication skills. The 'Young Transformers' programme gives pupils valuable opportunities to lead projects that benefit others, such as supporting older people in the local community. These experiences help pupils develop excellent empathy, teamwork and a strong sense of service. Pupils develop confidence from an early age through engaging opportunities, where they learn to present their ideas clearly, speak to an audience and express their views with confidence.

Pupils are extremely well prepared for life in modern Britain. They learn about different cultures, faiths and beliefs. They understand the importance of equality and treating everyone with respect. Pupils learn how to discuss challenging topics thoughtfully, listen to different opinions and to 'disagree well'. They show curiosity about the world and respect for people whose lives may be different from their own.

Staff provide a remarkable level of pastoral care. They recognise when pupils need additional emotional or practical support. This helps pupils feel safe, valued and confident to seek help when they need it. The wide range of opportunities available helps pupils discover new interests and develop their talents. Pupils learn to be ambitious, resilient and independent. They leave with a strong sense of who they are, what they can achieve and how they can make a positive contribution to the world around them.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils are proud to belong to this school. The school's values are seen in the way pupils care for each other and contribute to their community. Pupils describe their school as a place where they feel happy, safe and listened to.

Pupils love learning. They talk with excitement about their lessons, the books they read and the knowledge they gain. They are proud to earn tangible rewards, such as reading badges, house points and 'stars of the week'. Many pupils have also received recognition for sharing their contribution to social action outside of the school.

Pupils achieve exceptionally well. They develop confidence because teachers expect a great deal from them and give them the help they need to succeed. Pupils work hard and show consistent pride in their work. They explain their ideas clearly and build on what they have learned before. From the early years onwards, children develop independence, curiosity and a love of learning.

Relationships between pupils and staff are warm and respectful. Pupils know that staff understand them as individuals. Pupils who need extra help receive support that enables them to take a full part in school life. Everyone is encouraged to contribute and achieve their best.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They are polite, focused and considerate. Pupils understand the importance of kindness and respect. They know what to do if they have a worry and trust staff to help them.

Pupils benefit from many opportunities to develop their confidence and character. They make a difference through projects, such as the school's 'Young Transformers' programme and a huge variety of outreach and charity work. These experiences help pupils to understand the wider world and the positive role that they can play within it.

The school prepares pupils to be thoughtful, ambitious and responsible young people. Pupils leave the school with confidence in themselves and a profound sense of care for others.

About this inspection

This school is part of Genesis Education Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Beverley Hall, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Graham Moss.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with school leaders, staff and pupils during the inspection. They also held discussions with representatives from the multi-academy trust and the local governing body.

Inspectors considered the responses of parents to Ofsted's survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

St Mary's CofE Primary School has a Church of England religious character and is part of the Diocese of Chelmsford. The school had its most recent section 48 inspection in April 2024. The next section 48 inspection is due to take place in 2029.

The school is in a hard federation with another primary school. Both schools are members of the same academy trust.

The school does not use any alternative provision.

Headteacher: Joe Pitchford

Lead inspector:

Robert Grice, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Jeff Cole, Ofsted Inspector

Matt Dineen, His Majesty's Inspector

Aimee Jones, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

This was the data available at the time of the full inspection, taken from [different sources](#). More recent data may have been published since the full inspection took place.

 The inspector(s) used this data during the full inspection on 16 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

578

Well above average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

630

Well above average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

12.63%

Below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last 6 years.

National average: 26.3%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

2.60%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

9.86%

Below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational needs support at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Below average

What does this mean?

Based on the English indices of deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	93%	61%	Above
2024/25 (final)	96%	62%	Above
2023/24 (final)	94%	61%	Above
2022/23 (final)	89%	60%	Above

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	93%	74%	Above
2024/25 (final)	96%	75%	Above
2023/24 (final)	94%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	89%	73%	Above

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	97%	72%	Above
2024/25 (final)	96%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	96%	72%	Above
2022/23 (final)	99%	71%	Above

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	98%	73%	Above
2024/25 (final)	96%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	99%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	99%	73%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	78%	46%	Above
2024/25 (final)	80%	47%	Above
2023/24 (final)	85%	46%	Above
2022/23 (final)	72%	44%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	78%	62%	Above
2024/25 (final)	80%	63%	Above
2023/24 (final)	85%	62%	Above
2022/23 (final)	72%	60%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	89%	59%	Above
2024/25 (final)	80%	59%	Above
2023/24 (final)	85%	58%	Above
2022/23 (final)	100%	58%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	91%	60%	Above
2024/25 (final)	80%	61%	Above
2023/24 (final)	92%	59%	Above
2022/23 (final)	100%	59%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	78%	68%	11 pp
2024/25 (final)	80%	69%	11 pp
2023/24 (final)	85%	67%	17 pp
2022/23 (final)	72%	66%	6 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	78%	80%	-1 pp
2024/25 (final)	80%	81%	-1 pp
2023/24 (final)	85%	80%	5 pp
2022/23 (final)	72%	78%	-6 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	89%	78%	11 pp
2024/25 (final)	80%	78%	2 pp
2023/24 (final)	85%	78%	7 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	100%	77%	23 pp

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	91%	80%	12 pp
2024/25 (final)	80%	81%	-1 pp
2023/24 (final)	92%	79%	13 pp
2022/23 (final)	100%	79%	21 pp

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	3.8%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	4.0%	5.5%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	4.9%	5.9%	Below

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	4.7%	13.0%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	4.9%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	9.5%	16.2%	Below

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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