

Inspection of St Mark's Catholic School

106 Bath Road, Hounslow TW3 3EJ

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 September 2022

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Sixth-form provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Ofsted has not previously inspected St Mark's Catholic School under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged St Mark's Catholic School to be outstanding, before it opened as an academy.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive at this school. Leaders are determined that all pupils will be given the opportunities they need to succeed. This includes a very carefully considered curriculum which is broad and balanced. In lessons, pupils benefit from the very strong subject knowledge of their teachers. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported in their learning. Pupils achieve very well and are well prepared for the next steps in their education or employment.

There is a strong emphasis on developing pupils beyond the academic. This is exemplified by the huge range of additional opportunities and activities that are provided, including the orchestra, rock band, a variety of sports clubs, the Duke of Edinburgh's Awards Scheme, and the Faith in Action programme.

Behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary. Bullying is very rare and when it does happen, it is quickly dealt with. Pupils feel safe in school. They are proud of the school's diversity, and they are very respectful of pupils from different backgrounds and with different abilities. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school and are keen to praise staff for the care shown to their children.

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

Leaders want all pupils to realise their potential. This vision underpins all aspects of the school's work. Pupils consistently benefit from a highly effective curriculum which is delivered with expertise by committed and well-trained teachers. Leaders are ambitious for all pupils, including those with SEND who access the same curriculum as their peers. The sixth-form curriculum demonstrates similar ambition, sometimes using university level resources to expand pupils' understanding.

Staff know pupils and their individual needs well and they make sure that lessons and activities are tailored to meet these needs. Complex and challenging content is routinely broken down into smaller chunks. Teachers regularly check pupils' understanding. This means that they know quickly when there are gaps in knowledge that need to be addressed, and pupils know how well they are doing and what to do to improve.

Reading is promoted widely across the whole school. This includes targeted help for those pupils who need additional help, including those who are in the early stages of learning English. Leaders have also put a comprehensive programme of additional tuition in place and make sure that opportunities for success are open to all.

Pupils routinely display a very positive attitude to their learning. Pupils attend regularly. They take pride in their work and in the school. Lessons are not disrupted by negative behaviour, and pupils say that bullying is extremely rare. Pupils show high levels of respect to each other, to staff and to visitors. Well-established routines

and high expectations mean that excellent behaviour extends beyond the classroom. Behaviour in corridors and at social times is calm, friendly and safe.

Pupils' wider development is not an addition to the school's curriculum. Instead, this runs through all aspects of school life. A very well-planned personal, social and health education programme is in place for all year groups. This helps pupils learn how to stay safe and healthy and has a strong emphasis on promoting equality and tackling discriminatory behaviour. Leaders ensure that pupils receive appropriate careers education. This becomes more tailored as pupils move through the school. Leaders provide an ambitious package of support and advice to sixth-form students, including university visits, 1:1 careers meetings and work experience opportunities.

Leaders provide a wealth of enrichment opportunities and take-up by pupils is high. As well as the wide variety of clubs, sports and trips on offer, pupils have the chance to develop their own leadership skills. This includes the school council, prefect system, peer mentors, a paired reading programme and the Faith in Action charity work.

Staff are proud to work at the school. Their professional development is prioritised by leaders. The work of the school is held in high regard by others, and leaders share their practice with other schools in the trust and in the diocese. Governors are well equipped to fulfil their statutory duties and to hold leaders to account. They know the school well and are appropriately trained. They share the vision of leaders to develop the potential of all learners in a safe and supportive environment.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that safeguarding is prioritised across the school. All members of staff and governors are regularly trained and know what to do if they have any concerns, no matter how small, about a pupil. Leaders have put effective reporting and recording systems in place. Leaders work with a range of agencies to secure the most appropriate support for vulnerable pupils. Where pupils need additional support, leaders are persistent and tenacious in securing this.

Pupils feel safe in school and know how to report any concerns. They have been taught how to stay safe, including how to stay safe online.

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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	137995
Local authority	Hounslow
Inspection number	10242399
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1201
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	273
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Patrick Leeson
Headteacher	Andrea Waugh-Lucas
Website	www.st-marks.hounslow.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- St Mark's Catholic School converted to become an academy school in August 2012. When its predecessor school, also called St Mark's Catholic School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Westminster Academy Trust.
- The school has a Christian ethos of the Roman Catholic denomination. It is in the Diocese of Westminster. The last section 48 inspection was in December 2018. The school's next section 48 inspection will be within eight years of its previous section 48 inspection.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Year 8 and above with information about approved education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in mathematics, English, geography, music, and design and technology. For each deep dive, they discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and talked to teachers and pupils. Inspectors also visited a range of lessons in other subjects and looked at pupils' work and curriculum documents.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, and with members of staff, as well as a range of pupils.
- Inspectors looked at the school's policies and procedures for safeguarding and supporting pupils' welfare and well-being. This included looking at case studies and reviewing the school's single central record of pre-employment checks.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for SEND, careers education, reading, behaviour and attendance, the sixth form, tuition and intervention programmes, and pupils' wider development.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the governing body, the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, and spoke with a representative of the Diocese of Westminster.

Inspection team

Bob Hamlyn, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Gary Phillips	His Majesty's Inspector
Eliot Wong	Ofsted Inspector
Alison Moore	Ofsted Inspector
Philippa Nunn	Ofsted Inspector

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