

St Martin's Catholic Primary School

Address: Pendennis Avenue, Caversham Park Village, Reading, Berkshire, RG4 6SS

Unique reference number (URN): 110038

Inspection report: 13 January 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.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

Overall, pupils achieve well. They are prepared for the next stages in their education. This is reflected in the above-average outcomes in the key stage 2 statutory tests. Disadvantaged pupils achieve in line with their peers. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) progress well from their starting points.

Typically, pupils have the knowledge that they need to successfully tackle more complex tasks. Pupils are confident in using both their reading and mathematical knowledge in a variety of ways across the curriculum. However, some pupils do not develop key writing skills, such as handwriting and spelling, as well as they could. As a result, some pupils are not supported to produce high-quality writing across the curriculum.

Across the school, most pupils develop key knowledge across a broad range of subjects. Pupils, including those with SEND and those who are disadvantaged, typically remember and use the knowledge they are taught across the curriculum. Pupils' knowledge is particularly detailed in subjects such as music, French and history.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders analyse and track absence patterns carefully. Where needed, they work closely with parents and carers to help pupils to attend school frequently. Leaders know the barriers faced by pupils well and take appropriate action to tackle them. In the last year, pupils' attendance has dipped below national averages. However, leaders' decisive actions have led to attendance now being back in line with national averages for all groups of pupils.

From the beginning of the Reception Year, children learn the school's routines and expectations. Staff understand and apply the school's behaviour systems effectively. They use this knowledge to give pupils the support that they require to meet the school's high expectations. Pupils understand why behaving well is important. They explain the systems in place across the school with accuracy. Positive relationships underpin the school's kind, supportive ethos. Staff deal with any incidents of bullying or unkindness swiftly and effectively. This results in a nurturing environment where pupils can learn with little disruption. Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes to learning are positive and enthusiastic. Playtimes are joyful. Pupils of all ages play together happily. They share equipment and encourage each other to engage in games.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have put in place a suitably broad, ambitious and well-ordered curriculum. They know where it is working well and where further refinements are needed. Throughout the school, reading is a priority. Carefully chosen texts support pupils' comprehension and build their vocabulary. Skilled staff ensure pupils who need further practice get it so they can read fluently. Leaders have identified that some pupils have gaps in their writing fluency, particularly their spelling and handwriting skills. Leaders' actions to address this are resulting in some improvements for pupils. However, at times, these gaps persist.

Knowledgeable staff are adept at explaining and modelling concepts and new learning. Tasks are typically well designed to build pupils' learning securely. However, leaders are working to ensure that staff check pupils' understanding in lessons consistently well. This is so that any gaps in knowledge are identified swiftly and addressed promptly.

Staff have a secure understanding of pupils' needs and vulnerabilities. They usually support pupils well and adapt learning when this is needed. For example, staff use information from support plans to ensure the curriculum is carefully planned around pupils' identified needs and targets. They provide sensitive support so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities can fully access the whole curriculum successfully.

Early years

Expected standard 

Children in early years get off to a positive start. They are well prepared for Year 1. Staff prioritise developing children's language and communication skills. They emphasise and effectively model appropriate vocabulary. Often, this is through the rhymes and songs that children learn. The teaching of reading is prioritised as soon as children join the school. Leaders ensure that staff receive the training they need. Staff have a secure understanding of the school's phonics programme and teach it skilfully. They ensure that children get the chance to practise their reading and writing throughout the curriculum. Children are supported effectively to keep up with their peers.

Leaders ensure that the early years curriculum is designed carefully. Children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, engage with meaningful learning across the provision. Leaders and staff work collaboratively with parents and carers. They quickly identify any barriers to learning children may have. This includes those children who join the school at different times of the year. Staff build caring and supportive relationships with children. Children seek help from adults if they cannot resolve a problem or when they have worries. Staff respond sensitively to children's individual needs. Staff interactions help children feel safe so that they are able to focus on developing their skills across the curriculum.

Inclusion

Expected standard 

The school has high expectations of each pupil, no matter what their needs are. Leaders promote a school culture where diversity is celebrated and every pupil is valued. Leaders support staff to understand pupils' individual needs swiftly and accurately. They ensure that, regardless of their individual needs, pupils feel a sense of belonging that helps them be ready for their learning. For instance, leaders have focused on improving the environment in each classroom so that pupils can focus better on their learning. This helps pupils to develop increased confidence and independence.

Leaders work well with staff to ensure that the curriculum is adapted effectively. Leaders and staff work efficiently with external specialists and pupils' families to ensure that the provision is effective. They monitor pupils' progress systematically and evaluate the impact of interventions to inform future planning. As a result, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, disadvantaged pupils and those known to social care, progress well from their individual starting points.

Pupil premium funding is used appropriately to enhance access and outcomes. Leaders check that this money is having a positive impact on disadvantaged pupils' progress in all aspects of their education.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

Leaders work purposefully to raise aspirations for what pupils can achieve. Together with staff, they work effectively to ensure that pupils have every opportunity to achieve well. Leaders make decisions in the best interests of pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, disadvantaged pupils and pupils who face other barriers to learning. They ensure that these pupils receive the support they need to succeed.

Leaders have a secure understanding of strengths and areas that they need to prioritise. They have put into motion the right actions to ensure that pupils learn increasingly effectively. The governing body members fulfil their statutory duties and have a deep knowledge of the school's context. They understand their role and work with the school. This has established a productive relationship with school leaders. The governing body challenges leaders constructively to ensure that pupils' educational and wider experiences are successful in preparing them for their futures.

Leaders prioritise the workload and wellbeing of staff. This helps staff feel valued. There is a real team spirit. An open culture exists in the school where staff feel empowered to share their views. Staff benefit from a well-structured professional development programme that is informed by research and tailored to the school's strategic priorities.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Pupils are taught to be confident and kind citizens who respect other people's differences. Leaders ensure that the personal development programme is woven across all areas of school life to develop these aspects. This helps pupils to grow into thoughtful and responsible individuals.

Pupils are taught about the importance of living out fundamental British values. Their understanding of these is developing. Pupils discuss topics such as equity and disability thoughtfully and with maturity. Their work on projects, such as litter picking, helps them to develop an appreciation of the significance of looking after the environment and of being self-reliant. Pupils talk maturely about differences and similarities between religious celebrations. The personal, social, health and education curriculum enables pupils to develop knowledge of important aspects of their wider development. This includes how to take care of their mental health and wellbeing, including age-appropriate relationships and consent. Pupils talk confidently about how to stay safe both online and offline.

Pupils participate wholeheartedly in a wide range of events and tournaments where they demonstrate their sporting and singing skills and talents. These opportunities also help pupils develop confidence to perform in front of and with others. Leaders track pupils' participation in these events, especially disadvantaged pupils. They ensure that pupils benefit from these opportunities to develop and broaden their horizons.

Secure and caring relationships between pupils and staff underpin the supportive culture within the school. Leaders and staff know pupils well. They are quick to recognise when additional support is needed. The school's mental health and wellbeing strategy ensures that pupils' needs are identified early and reviewed for impact. Leaders ensure that pupils are confident in accessing help when needed. Targeted support and interventions, such as time with the school emotional support practitioner, help pupils to manage issues such as friendship difficulties.

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

Pupils are very proud to be part of this inclusive school, where everyone is treated with dignity. There is a calm and kind atmosphere. Staff know pupils well and foster a culture of mutual respect and care. Parents and carers praise the efforts that staff make to help their children achieve and thrive.

From the early years onwards, trusting relationships are at the heart of the school. Incidents of bullying or discrimination are uncommon. Pupils are confident that staff will help them to deal quickly with any concerns they may have. They have a secure sense of belonging. Pupils feel safe and well cared for. Most pupils attend school regularly. They leave school well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities or who are disadvantaged, work hard to meet the expectations that leaders have for their behaviour and achievement. Staff understand the barriers and challenges that some pupils face in their learning. They provide the support pupils need to succeed. Typically, pupils achieve well. They learn the knowledge required to understand what is being taught. Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes towards school.

Pupils benefit from opportunities to deepen their understanding of the world around them, for example visiting Winchester science museum. Pupils also develop their sense of responsibility. The recently expanded leadership roles provided to pupils support them to be well prepared for life in modern Britain. These include being 'Mini Vinnies', which helps pupils think about what it means to be a good citizen. Pupils' horizons are broadened through taking part in a range of activities, such as fencing and glee clubs. Leaders ensure that these opportunities are available to all pupils.

Next steps

- Leaders should further develop staff expertise in checking for and addressing any gaps in pupils' knowledge, so that pupils are supported to make connections and deepen their understanding of their learning.
 - Leaders should continue to focus on improving the quality of pupils' writing across the curriculum, especially their handwriting and spelling.
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About this inspection

The school is part of a federation called St Anne's & St Martins Catholic Primary Schools.

The chair of the board of governors in this school is Yasmine Sanchez-Pearson .

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the education act 2005.

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

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and wider staff. They also spoke with the school's improvement partner from the local authority and a representative from the Archdiocese. The lead inspector met with members of the governing board, including the chair.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school is a Roman Catholic, voluntary aided school within the Archdiocese of Birmingham. It had its last section 48 inspection in October 2023.

The school does not currently make use of alternative provision.

The executive headteacher took up post in September 2025.

Executive Headteacher: Bridget Tobin

Lead inspector:

Neil Pilsworth, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Fiona Henderson, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 13 January 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

141

Below 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

210

Below 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)

16.31%

Below average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 26.3%

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

0.71%

Below 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

13.48%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs 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	75%	61%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	74%	62%	Above
2023/24 (final)	76%	61%	Above
2022/23 (final)	74%	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	92%	74%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	91%	75%	Above
2023/24 (final)	95%	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	75%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (revised)	74%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	76%	72%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	74%	71%	Close to average

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	92%	73%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	96%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	90%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	89%	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	71%	46%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	S	47%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	46%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	44%	S

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	86%	62%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	S	63%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	62%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	60%	S

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	71%	59%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	S	59%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	58%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	58%	S

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	71%	60%	Above
2024/25 (revised)	S	61%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	59%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	59%	S

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

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	71%	68%	4 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	69%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	67%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	66%	S

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	86%	80%	6 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	80%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	78%	S

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	71%	78%	-6 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	78%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	78%	S

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

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	71%	80%	-8 pp
2024/25 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	79%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	79%	S

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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 (2 term)	5.8%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	3.5%	5.5%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	4.2%	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 (2 term)	15.6%	13.3%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	9.5%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	11.0%	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.

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