

St Mark's CofE School

Address: Bay Tree Road, Bath, Somerset, BA1 6ND

Unique reference number (URN): 147801

Inspection report: 17 March 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.

Strong standard ●

Achievement

Strong standard ●

Pupils typically make excellent progress from their starting points. While there are many pupils who arrive at the school with gaps in their knowledge, or do not start in Year 7, by the end of Year 11, the school ensures that pupils are ready for the next stage of their education, employment or training. The school's published outcomes reflect this, but do not fully reflect the achievement of pupils who have experienced disruption to their education or for whom sitting a full suite of GCSEs would not be in their best interests. The school works effectively with pupils, and parents and carers to ensure the qualifications that pupils work towards are ambitious, appropriate and in their best interests. This includes pupils who attend the specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Younger pupils also achieve well. This is reflected in the quality of their work and the way they talk with interest and confidence about their learning.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

The curriculum is highly ambitious for all pupils. It is carefully planned and sequenced. With support from the trust, the school offers a broad range of subjects matched to pupils' interests. For example, pupils in key stage 4 are able to study a wide range of practical subjects such as hospitality and product design, as well as traditional academic subjects. The school ensures that pupils, regardless of their starting points, are able to progress well and achieve.

Teaching is consistently effective, across subjects. Staff are highly skilled at adapting resources and activities to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teachers have appropriate subject expertise. The trust supports them to develop this further through regular professional learning opportunities and links with larger secondary schools in the area. Staff present information clearly and ensure that pupils have regular opportunities to revisit important knowledge. This means that pupils connect current and prior learning effectively and that they are able to apply their learning to new contexts. The school places a sharp focus on developing pupils' vocabulary. Pupils who need extra support with reading, writing and mathematics receive this through targeted interventions. Staff use information from assessments effectively to adapt their teaching and ensure that any gaps in knowledge are quickly filled.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Staff are highly ambitious for all pupils. They are skilled at identifying any barriers to learning that pupils may face. Staff have received appropriate training and use this well to ensure that these barriers are reduced or removed. For example, staff know how to support pupils with autism and dyslexia in lessons effectively. There is a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEND) in the school, including pupils who attend one of the two specially resourced provisions for pupils with SEND. These pupils are integrated well into the main school. Pupils with SEND often thrive and achieve highly.

Leaders have established robust systems to monitor the quality of provision for disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils. They use additional funds to ensure that these pupils can learn alongside their peers and provide additional pastoral support when needed. Staff know all pupils' strengths and needs very well. This means that they are highly effective when adapting resources and activities to meet pupils' individual needs. Parents and carers feel listened to. The school works positively with other organisations and services to ensure that pupils receive the support and opportunities they need and deserve.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

Leaders and those responsible for governance at all levels are united in their understanding of the school's unique context, challenges and areas for development. Leaders are reflective and analytical. They have a detailed understanding of areas for improvement and know what is working well. Staff, and parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. Pupils are always at the centre of any decisions. Staff report high levels of consideration for their workload and wellbeing, knowing that pupils' wellbeing and progress drive decision making. The trust supports staff's professional learning through established subject networks and through providing access to other areas of expertise, such as safeguarding and special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff value opportunities to learn from and support colleagues at other schools, when needed.

Governors and trustees share the school's vision and understand its ethos. The school is highly inclusive and ambitious for pupils. Governors understand their statutory duties and challenge leaders appropriately while supporting them to drive further improvements to the school. For example, they have set up more opportunities for parents to get involved in school life and share their views. Leaders at all levels recognise and value the unique character of this school, one which supports disadvantaged pupils very well, but one which will not compromise on achievement for all.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

Pupils are given many opportunities to flourish here. They do so because the pastoral care they receive is excellent, helping pupils to feel confident and keen to take part in the wide variety of extra-curricular activities on offer. This includes trips abroad, choir performances and sports competitions. The annual school production is a celebrated event in which pupils of all ages take on a variety of roles. Pupils who may struggle to access activities are supported to do so sensitively by staff and peers.

Pupils enjoy discussing and debating ideas in their ethics lessons, developing their spiritual and cultural awareness. They learn about all world religions, visit places of worship and consider others' viewpoints. Pupils learn about personal finance and budgeting, healthy relationships and how to keep themselves and others safe, including online. They appreciate why certain characteristics are protected in law and not to discriminate against others who may be different. Pupils feel a genuine sense of belonging to their school community. They often come together as a whole school to celebrate individual and collective successes.

Pupils take part in democratic processes. They vote for school council representatives and elect which charities to support. The two school 'houses' raise money for chosen charities

through a variety of pupil-led events. As such, pupils are able to contribute meaningfully to their school community and beyond. Pupils' understanding of other fundamental British values are borne out in their respectful and tolerant behaviour. They are well-prepared for life in modern Britain, learning to work together and build resilience.

Pupils in both key stages have a range of opportunities to learn about different careers and post-16 options. The school is implementing a highly ambitious careers programme, making links with local employers and providing opportunities for all pupils to attend careers fairs and receive personalised advice and guidance. Currently, the programme is more established for older pupils.

Expected standard

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders have clear strategies in place to improve attendance. These have had a positive impact but some pupils still struggle to attend as regularly as they should. This includes some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). While some absence is down to long term medical needs, a few pupils with SEND remain persistently absent. With support from the trust, leaders' actions have led to improvements in attendance, but it is too soon to see the sustained impact of these improvements.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They show high levels of respect for one another and for staff. The school is calm and orderly and learning is very rarely disrupted. The warm and trusting relationships between staff and pupils mean that the pupils want to meet the school's high expectations of them, both academically and in terms of their behaviour. Bullying is not tolerated, extremely rare and dealt with swiftly by leaders. Pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning and to school more generally because they feel well-known and cared for. Pupils go out of their way to be helpful to staff.

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

Pupils thrive at this ambitious and inclusive school. They are proud to belong to a diverse community of dedicated staff and pupils who are kind to and respectful of one another. Pupils feel safe and say that bullying is not an issue in their school. They feel that staff listen to and understand them. For all pupils, but particularly for those who may have struggled with school in the past, the school provides a stable and happy place for them to 'be the best they can be'. Many pupils attend regularly but work is on going to ensure overall attendance improves.

The school has high expectations of pupils' behaviour and academic success. The curriculum is adapted to challenge pupils and ensure that those who need additional support receive this. Pupils therefore enjoy their learning across a range of subjects and know that staff will support them, whatever their starting points. Many pupils make swift academic progress from their starting points. Pupils, including those who attend the specially

resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are provided with a range of opportunities which enable them to fulfil their potential and prepare them well for life beyond school.

Alongside academic qualifications, pupils take part in extra-curricular opportunities ranging from drama, music, debating, art and games, to competitive sports and the Duke of Edinburgh's award. Pupils participate keenly, including those who are disadvantaged. The school's values of ambition, resilience and community unite everyone. St Mark's is a special place where difference is celebrated and pupils are able to succeed and be themselves.

Next steps

- Leaders should maintain a sharp focus on improving attendance, particularly the attendance of some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, so that recent improvements in pupils' attendance are sustained over time.
 - Leaders should continue to strengthen the careers programme so that younger pupils have even more opportunities to learn about the world of work.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Alun Williams, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Anthony Thomas Wells.

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 (HMI) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, senior leaders, the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator and groups of staff. The lead inspector met with the CEO and Deputy CEO for the trust as well as the chair of the local board of governors and a trustee.

The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

Since the previous inspection, there is a new headteacher who started their role in June 2024.

The school includes provision for ASD - Autistic Spectrum Disorder and MLD - Moderate Learning Difficulty for 25 pupils.

The school makes use of five unregistered alternative provisions and three registered alternative provisions.

Headteacher: Clare England

Lead inspector:

Victoria Griffin, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Tim Redding, Ofsted Inspector

Andrew Raistrick, 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 17 March 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

253

Well 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: 1,067

School capacity

513

Well 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: 1,153

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

31.23%

Close to average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 28.9%

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

22.53%

Well above 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: 3.09%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

22.53%

Well above average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 13.4%

Location deprivation

Well 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)

Resourced provision

What does this mean?

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

Type of specialist provision (if applicable)

ASD - Autistic Spectrum Disorder, MLD - Moderate Learning Difficulty

What does this mean?

The type of Special Educational Needs provision provided at the school (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

English and maths GCSE

Percentage of pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	44.2%	45.4%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	45.9%	45.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	52.5%	45.3%	Close to average

Attainment 8

A measure of pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	44.9	46.0	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	50.6	45.9	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2022/23 (final)	50.8	46.3	Close to average

Progress 8

How much progress pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	0.74	-0.03	Above
2022/23 (final)	0.44	-0.03	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' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	25.0%	25.8%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	16.7%	25.8%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	42.3%	25.2%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (revised)	30.0	34.9	Below
2023/24 (final)	36.0	34.6	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	41.6	35.0	Above

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.13	-0.57	Above
2022/23 (final)	-0.01	-0.57	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' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (revised)	25.0%	53.1%	-28.1 pp
2023/24 (final)	16.7%	53.1%	-36.5 pp
2022/23 (final)	42.3%	52.4%	-10.1 pp

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (revised)	30.0	50.4	-20.4
2023/24 (final)	36.0	50.0	-14.0
2022/23 (final)	41.6	50.3	-8.7

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	-0.13	0.16	-0.29
2022/23 (final)	-0.01	0.17	-0.17

Destinations after 16

Destinations after 16

Percentage of pupils staying in education or employment for at least 2 terms after the end of secondary school (key stage 4).

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023 leavers (provisional)	86%	91%	Average
2022 leavers (revised)	92%	93%	Not available
2021 leavers (revised)	88%	94%	Not available

16 to 18 performance

A-level average point score

The average points that students achieved per A-level entry.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2022/23 (final)	S	34.16	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.

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)	12.8%	8.1%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	9.6%	8.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	8.1%	9.0%	Close to average

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)	33.1%	21.9%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	28.0%	25.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	26.4%	26.5%	Close to average

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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