

Inspection of St Martin's Primary School

Rue des Coutures, St Martins, Guernsey GY4 6HN

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 December 2025

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development and welfare	Excellent
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Since the previous inspection, the school has significantly improved the quality of education and has raised expectations for what pupils achieve. As a result, pupils learn well across the curriculum and, by the end of Year 6, are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

From the very start of the school day, pupils feel safe, welcomed, and valued. Staff foster this positive atmosphere by greeting each child warmly by name and wishing them well for the day ahead. This continues throughout the day where pupils are curious, hardworking and engaged. Staff make their expectations of pupils' behaviour clear through 'The St Martin's Six'. Pupils understand these and behave well as a result. In the early years, well-established routines help children settle quickly. For example, they enjoy tidying and preparing their classroom ready for the next activity.

The school's provision beyond the academic curriculum is exceptional. Leaders place a strong emphasis on pupils understanding their rights, which helps them to develop into compassionate and empathetic individuals. This is evident in the kindness and tolerance pupils show towards one another. Bullying is rare.

The voice of pupils is central to the school's ethos. Pupils take pride in creating and running their own extra-curricular clubs, which fosters independence and enables them to develop their talents and interests.

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

The school ensures its curriculum is broad and sets out clearly what pupils should learn. It continues to adjust and adapt the curriculum to ensure that it is appropriate for the context of the school. For example, it has made changes to the phonics curriculum to ensure that pupils embed their knowledge fully before moving onto new content. This ensures that pupils learn to read well, including those with additional learning needs (ALN).

The school's improvements reflect a strong team effort. Leaders at every level take responsibility for driving forward the improvements in the curriculum. Staff appreciate the trust leaders place in them and appreciate the school's focus on their workload and well-being. One member of staff summed this up, stating, 'we are listened to and valued.' Parents and carers echo similar views about the care and support that pupils receive.

The school has supported teachers to teach the curriculum well. This has been centred on regular training and coaching for staff, using relevant research. Consequently, staff have the appropriate subject knowledge to teach effectively.

They ensure that pupils' learning builds on their prior knowledge. This helps most pupils to grasp new concepts confidently.

However, while staff follow the curriculum content closely, at times, tasks are too limited in their scope and ambition and do not extend pupils' thinking. When this happens, pupils do not learn as much as they could.

The school has ensured that reading has remained at the root of the school's curriculum. This starts in the early years, where children learn to read straightaway. Staff spot any pupils who have fallen behind and help them to catch up quickly. Older pupils read carefully selected books that develop their comprehension skills effectively. Staff expect pupils to know and use ambitious vocabulary, such as 'protagonist'. This enriches pupils' language skills.

The school's improvements in writing are less developed. While the school has started to ensure that younger pupils have the basic skills such as accurate pencil grip and letter formation, some older pupils have not secured these well enough. As a result, they find it hard to write at length fluently and accurately.

The school is highly inclusive. Well-trained staff identify pupils' barriers early to ensure that these are addressed quickly. The school works closely with a variety of agencies so that pupils with ALN receive the most appropriate support and guidance to help them to be successful.

Pupils enjoy their social times and play well together. Pupils are immensely proud of their school and are polite to visitors. Pupils feel safe and know that adults will help them if they have any worries or concerns.

The school develops pupils' moral understanding extensively. Through themed days, pupils learn to empathise with people experiencing famine and conflict. This fosters their global awareness. Pupils actively shape school life by leading initiatives, such as an active travel scheme that makes journeys to and from school safer for everyone. This involvement empowers pupils to become responsible and community minded. Older pupils visit a court, where they learn how to debate thoughtfully and respectfully. Pupils take on a wide range of leadership roles that nurture responsibility and teamwork. Residential experiences further promote pupils' confidence and self-belief.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

- At times, staff provide tasks that limit pupils' ability to show what they know and can do. When this happens, pupils do not deepen their learning as extensively as

they could. The school should provide ambitious tasks that enable pupils to demonstrate their understanding and extend their knowledge fully.

- Some older pupils struggle to record their written ideas with fluency and accuracy. This hinders progress for these pupils in their written work. The school needs to embed its handwriting approach, identifying and supporting any errors, so that pupils write well across the curriculum.

School details

Inspection number	10421465
Type of school	Primary School
Age range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	479
Appropriate authority	The States of Guernsey
Headteacher	Clare Giles
Website	www.stmartins-school.co.uk
Dates of previous Ofsted inspection	2 and 3 November 2022

Information about this school

- St Martin's Primary School is a three-form entry school, located in St. Martin's, Guernsey.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 35 of the Guernsey Education Law 1970.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, other school staff and a representative of the Education Office.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and music. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum, spoke to pupils and looked at samples of work in some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- Inspectors considered responses to the pupil and staff questionnaires, as well as the Guernsey Parent Survey.

Inspection team

Jason Edge, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Esther Best	His Majesty's Inspector
Lakmini Harkus	His Majesty's Inspector

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