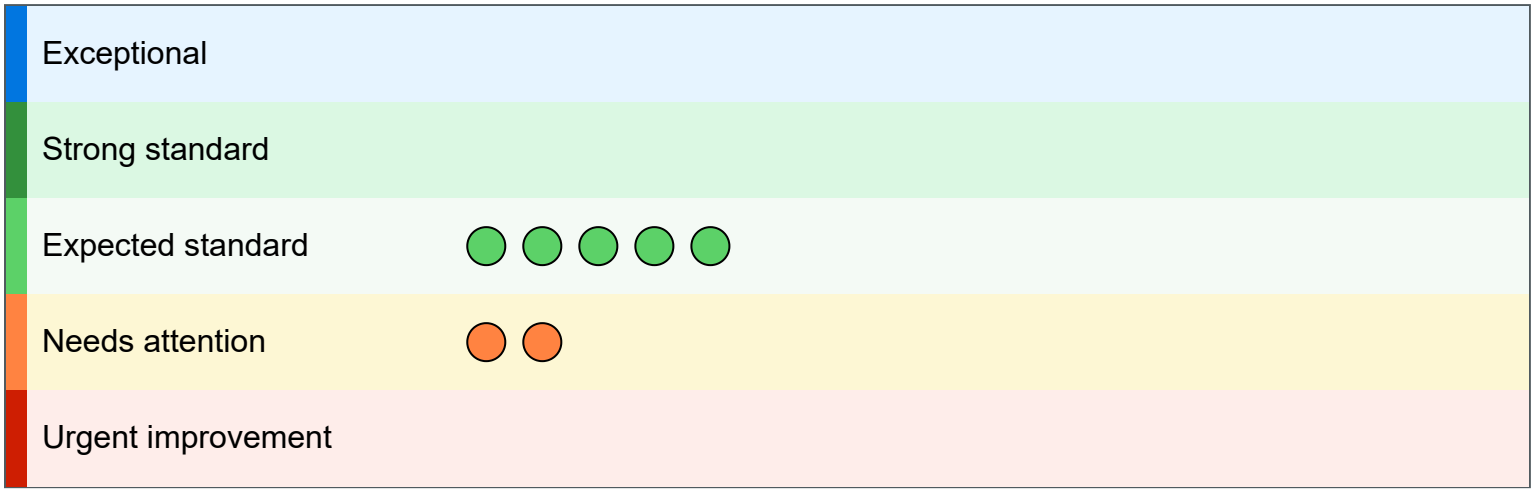
St Mary Magdalene & St Stephen's CofE Primary School

Address: Rowington Close, Warwick Estate, Paddington, London, W2 5TF

Unique reference number (URN): 101135

Inspection report: 2 June 2026



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

Pupils generally secure the knowledge and skills that they need across the curriculum. Whilst there is some variability in the quality of work produced in some subjects, largely pupils make progress from their starting points. Pupils learn subject-specific vocabulary and build their confidence when talking about their ideas. This has been prioritised by the school to support the high number of learners who have English as an additional language.

Pupils achieve close to national averages in published outcomes. This includes both disadvantaged pupils and the high number of pupils who join the school later in their educational journey. They are well-prepared for their next steps.

Pupils who require additional help with their learning are supported well, including with their reading and mathematics. They are supported to become fluent readers. To strengthen achievement further, leaders have recently introduced a writing curriculum. This is having a positive impact on younger pupils but its wider impact is still in the early stages.

Early years

Expected standard

Children in the early years follow a carefully crafted curriculum. Staff use imaginative activities to engage children and help them explore the world around them. Children quickly become curious learners. They benefit from the high-quality interactions with staff and the positive relationships they have with them. Staff model language and extend children's vocabulary. For example, staff talk through the ingredients they use in baking and how they will measure them out and 'stir' them together.

Early reading, writing and mathematics skills are woven through the activities set. This means children have time to practise and apply their skills. They are ably supported in gripping a pencil correctly and are proud of the work they produce. Children enjoy stories, songs and rhymes. As they move into the Reception Year, children are taught phonics and learn letter sounds. This helps them to prepare to read.

Children quickly settle into the early years. Staff identify and support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Where needed, children receive effective additional support. Clearly established routines provide a sense of security. Staff work in effective partnership with parents so that children thrive. Children quickly develop their social skills and happily play together. They are well-prepared for their move into Year 1.

Inclusion

Expected standard

This is an inclusive and nurturing school. Some pupils join the school at different points in the year. Staff prioritise getting to know pupils quickly and building positive relationships with pupils as soon as they join the school. Leaders identify pupils' needs quickly and accurately. They share relevant information with staff so that pupils are known and supported appropriately. Although at times the adaptations in class could be sharper, pupils can access their learning and generally do well in assessments.

Leaders have high expectations for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. A range of interventions and pastoral care is in place to help pupils thrive. Pupils who are particularly vulnerable are carefully monitored.

Both financial constraints and physical disabilities are not a barrier to full participation in the life of the school. Additional funding is used to give targeted support, raise achievement and provide varied opportunities.

Leaders have thoughtfully diversified the curriculum and taken care to ensure that difference is celebrated. They want pupils to see themselves in the curriculum they study and feel a sense of belonging. Many pupils have English as an additional language, so communication skills and building their vocabulary are prioritised. Families are supported with translation tools.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders know their school well. They are taking actions that are focused on the right priorities for improvement. Recently, the school has faced several significant challenges. These include merging with another local primary school, moving sites due to the impact of RAAC and joining a new partnership.

Leaders have responded to emerging priorities effectively, alongside developing the school's inclusive practice and raising the expectations for behaviour. They have an acute understanding of the context of the school. They have responded with meaningful support for the high numbers of pupils who are disadvantaged and those who join the school at different points in the school year.

Governors provide support and challenge that is purposeful and proportionate. Together with the leaders of the school, they ensure that decisions are made in pupils' interests. Leaders and governors know that pupils do not attend school as regularly as they should and have put a comprehensive approach in place. They work with external agencies to support this work and monitor the effectiveness of different strategies used.

Staff morale is high at the school. Staff are committed to serving the school community and pupils in turn feel nurtured and take pride in their school. Leaders and governors invest in well-considered professional development and balance this with staff's wellbeing. They provide various opportunities for parents and carers, including workshops and school-wide events. At times, these are not fully taken up and, whilst families are positive about the school, parental engagement is an area of leaders' focus.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

Pupils benefit from a thoughtfully designed programme that supports their personal development and wellbeing. Cultural and moral understanding are woven through the curriculum and school events. Leaders have thought carefully about the curriculum, books and figures studied so that pupils see themselves and feel a sense of belonging. Pupils are engaged in charity events and various initiatives to build citizenship skills and compassion for others. They maintain and stock their own school library bus, alongside a range of other leadership roles including eco leaders and worship leaders.

Leaders enrich the curriculum and ensure that all pupils can attend a variety of educational visits. These include museums, different places of worship and residential trips. Opportunities to participate in competitions and tournaments help pupils develop confidence and a sense of pride in their achievements. Younger pupils follow a considered outdoor curriculum. Older pupils undertake chess tournaments and learn to play musical instruments. Additional funding is used to ensure that financial constraints are not a barrier to participation. Many pupils take part in a variety of clubs to pursue their interests and talents.

Children from the early years are supported in building their social skills and managing their emotions. Pupils are taught the school values, reinforced through assemblies and workshops. Older pupils support their younger peers such as in their playground leader roles. Staff work effectively with families to ensure that pastoral care is paramount.

Staff deliver an appropriate personal, social, health and economic education. Pupils learn about healthy lifestyles, including exercise, nutrition and online safety. They are taught how to be resilient and given the tools they need to aid their mental health. Relationships and sex education is age-appropriate and inclusive. At times, some pupils have misconceptions as their learning could be more thoroughly checked, but largely pupils demonstrate secure knowledge and are prepared for life beyond school.

Needs attention

Attendance and behaviour

Needs attention

While pupils enjoy school, absence is too high. Persistent absence is significantly above the national average, including for disadvantaged pupils. These absences mean that some pupils have gaps in their learning. Leaders are tireless in their efforts to improve attendance and have made numerous changes to the procedures and processes. They have identified the barriers to pupils attending regularly, carefully analysing data and taking action to support pupils and their families where needed. The school works with external agencies to intervene in wider issues that may be impacting on attendance and have introduced a range of measures.

The school has high expectations for pupils' behaviour. School rules are commonly understood and applied. When incidents arise, staff respond sensitively and swiftly. Bullying is not tolerated. Suspensions are used appropriately and pupils are encouraged to reflect on their choices. At times, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are suspended more than their peers, but increasingly they are receiving earlier, effective support. Pupils are polite and respectful. Children in the early years are kind to one another. The school is calm and orderly. Lessons are not disrupted and pupils have a positive attitude to their learning.

Curriculum and teaching **Needs attention**

The curriculum is broad and ambitious. Knowledge is clearly mapped out with the skills that pupils need for each stage of their education. Leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths and areas of development of the current curriculum. For example, the newly introduced approach to developing pupils' writing has been securely embedded in the younger year groups. However, leaders know there is more to do to ensure expectations for writing are high across the curriculum.

Reading and mathematics are a priority. Teachers effectively deliver the phonics programme and pupils enjoy reading. Pupils' spoken language is developed through structured discussions. However, some aspects of teaching do not consistently enable pupils to consolidate important knowledge across subjects. Teachers' subject knowledge varies outside the teaching of core subjects. Consequently, the checking of pupils' understanding is not as precise as it could be, and misconceptions arise. Likewise, when absence affects pupils' learning, gaps are not effectively addressed. Consequently, some pupils' work is not of the high-quality they are capable of in some subjects.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well known by staff. Teachers have had training on how to provide appropriate support. At times, the adaptations made by staff could be better honed to support individual pupils.

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

Pupils are proud of their school. They feel safe and cared for with a clear sense of belonging. The school community is inclusive, warm and nurturing. Staff provide high levels of care. They help pupils new to the school settle quickly. Pupils are happy at school. However, they do not attend as well as they should. For some pupils, this creates gaps in their learning and they fall behind their peers.

Leaders have recently prioritised reading and developing pupils' communication skills to particularly support pupils with English as an additional language. Whilst this has had considerable positive impact, it is too early to see the impact of the renewed focus on pupils' writing. Likewise, while pupils make progress from their starting points, leaders know some teaching of different subjects needs to be strengthened. Nevertheless, pupils generally achieve in line with national averages, including in reading, writing and mathematics.

Children in the early years explore, play and develop their skills effectively. Pupils with additional needs and/or disabilities, and those who are disadvantaged, receive appropriate support. They achieve well and fully engage with the curriculum.

Pupils behave well at school. They value their learning and generally respond positively to staff reminders. Incidents of bullying are rare. When needed, staff act quickly and effectively to resolve any issues. Pupils benefit from positive relationships with staff. Younger children are considerate of each other and learn to manage their emotions, swiftly developing their confidence. Older pupils take pride in supporting their younger peers. They contribute to the school community, such as taking an active role in the school council.

Pupils thrive due to the rich range of experiences beyond the classroom provided. These support their social and personal development. Pupils are encouraged to have high aspirations and build a thorough understanding of the world around them preparing them for their next stage in education.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that teachers have the subject knowledge and expertise they need across the curriculum so that pupils build on their key component knowledge in different subjects.
- Leaders should ensure that teachers effectively check what pupils have learned to identify and address gaps that arise, including through pupil absence, so that all pupils can build their learning successfully and can complete high-quality work.
- Leaders should continue to check that there are high expectations for writing across the curriculum and that the new writing curriculum is embedded across all year groups.
- Leaders should check carefully that their attendance strategy is fully enacted and having the intended impact.

About this inspection

The head of school is Leoni White.

The co-chairs of the board of governors in this school are Matthew Champkin and Helen White.

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 HMI.

Inspectors spoke with senior leaders, the school governors, a representative from the local authority and diocese, staff, parents and pupils during the inspection.

Inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This school is registered as having a Church of England and religious character. It is in the Diocese of London. Its last section 48 inspection was in 2026.

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

The school has undergone several significant changes since the last inspection:

The school amalgamated with another local primary school in 2023.

The school was significantly impacted by the identification of RAAC and the building work needed for its removal since 2023. The impact of RAAC and the work taken by the leaders to maintain the day to day running of the school and manage different sites was discussed with inspectors. All year groups are now taught from the same site when the building work finished in April 2026.

A new head of school was appointed in September 2026.

The school joined a new partnership of schools, led by the executive headteacher Lee Duffy, in June 2026.

Executive Headteacher: Lee Duffy

Lead inspector:

Sarah Saunders, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Olly Wimborne, Ofsted Inspector

Paul Lufkin, 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 2 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

186

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

236
Close to 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)

50.00%
Well above 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

5.38%
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: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

9.68%
Below average

What does this mean?

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

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Well above 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	56%	61%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	70%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	39%	61%	Below
2022/23 (final)	67%	60%	Close to average

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	77%	74%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	96%	75%	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	68%	74%	Below
2022/23 (final)	71%	73%	Close to average

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	67%	72%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	70%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	58%	72%	Below
2022/23 (final)	76%	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	75%	73%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	83%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	71%	73%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	71%	73%	Close to average

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	50%	46%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	60%	47%	Above
2023/24 (final)	32%	46%	Below
2022/23 (final)	67%	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	74%	62%	Above
2024/25 (final)	93%	63%	Above
2023/24 (final)	64%	62%	Close to average
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	62%	59%	Close to average
2024/25 (final)	60%	59%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	56%	58%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2022/23 (final)	72%	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	72%	60%	Above
2024/25 (final)	80%	61%	Above
2023/24 (final)	72%	59%	Above
2022/23 (final)	67%	59%	Close to average

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	50%	68%	-18 pp
2024/25 (final)	60%	69%	-9 pp
2023/24 (final)	32%	67%	-35 pp
2022/23 (final)	67%	66%	0 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	74%	80%	-5 pp
2024/25 (final)	93%	81%	13 pp
2023/24 (final)	64%	80%	-16 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	62%	78%	-16 pp
2024/25 (final)	60%	78%	-18 pp
2023/24 (final)	56%	78%	-22 pp
2022/23 (final)	72%	77%	-5 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	72%	80%	-7 pp
2024/25 (final)	80%	81%	-1 pp
2023/24 (final)	72%	79%	-7 pp
2022/23 (final)	67%	79%	-13 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)	9.0%	5.2%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	8.8%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	8.6%	5.9%	Above

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)	34.2%	13.0%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	32.2%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	33.8%	16.2%	Above

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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