

Summary

- St Martin’s School has emerged positively and successfully from significant challenges posed by staff changes at all levels and the pressures and demands resulting from the Covid epidemic.
- Standards are broadly what would be expected and match those of other government-maintained schools.
- Children receive a very good start in the Nursery and Reception so they achieve well by the age of 5.
- Pupils have benefitted from secure teaching over the last few years, but there are a few shortcomings in the teaching of some lessons now.
- Boys’ attainment has compared relatively less well with the girls and boys in other government-maintained schools.
- Pupils’ behaviour remains a credit to themselves, their parents and the school.
- There are helpful arrangements to promote pupils’ personal and social development and those pupils most in need of help are very well supported.
- Leaders ensure effective provision for pupils who are multi-lingual learners and those for whom the school receives the Jersey Premium.
- The senior leadership is in secure hands with a new headteacher who has a clear vision for the school and an experienced deputy headteacher.
- Some elements of management and organisation, such as the school development plan and arrangements for assessment, need to be improved.

Full report

Achievement

- Over recent years achievement has been sustained at a level which compares well with other government-maintained schools on the island. Statistical analysis must be viewed with caution in this one-form entry school where one child often represents four percent of the total. Nevertheless, there is a clear positive pattern in the attainment data over the last three years.
- The children receive a very solid start in both the Nursery and Reception. In 2022, 96% of pupils attained the expected level in the prime areas of learning, confirming the pattern of attainment of previous years. There are particular strengths in personal and emotional development, physical development and understanding the world. In Year 2

the percentage attaining the secure level dipped in 2022 but the percentage achieving at the developing level or better matched the average for all government-maintained schools, albeit a little lower in reading.

- The school recognised that the last Year 6 cohort had a lower prior attainment than usual. Therefore, although the percentage achieving at the secure level was below the average for government-maintained schools, it represents effective progress. The attainment in the Key Stage 2 national tests and the CAT scores were both similar to the average for all government-maintained schools, reflecting a consistent three-year pattern.
- There are well-considered arrangements for supporting pupils with special educational needs. The numbers are small in most cohorts but the information available suggests they achieve well. There are also only a small number of pupils for whom the schools receive the Jersey Premium allocation. There are some cohorts too small for statistical comparison. However, a positive picture was evident in Year 2. Attainment for those pupils in Year 6 was less impressive but this cohort did include a higher proportion of pupils with more complex needs. This pattern was replicated for the similarly small number of pupils who are multi-lingual learners.
- One negative feature identified in the last report has continued, which is the relatively lower achievement of boys. Their attainment over a number of years, while not low, has compared less favourably with that of the girls in the school and their own gender in government-maintained schools on the island.
- The work seen in books was more variable than the historical data would suggest. The coverage at times lacked depth and presentation sometimes lacked care. Standards in writing and reading have been largely what would have been expected but they are variable in mathematics. The school provided progress data for both Puma and Pira tests which confirmed pupils had made clear progress over the last academic year.

Behaviour, personal development and welfare

- Pupils display positive attitudes around the school and in their classrooms which enables effective learning to take place. This is in part a result of a clear behaviour policy which has distinct scripts, rewards and consequences. A consistent approach is provided by staff who benefit from clear advice to follow. The three simple rules to be safe, respectful and ready can be applied to any situation and are memorable for both staff and pupils.
- Parents are kept well-informed about their children's behaviour through termly reports and are swiftly consulted if behaviour deteriorates. When there are pupils whose behaviour causes serious concern, individual behaviour plans are developed to support them. If there is a need for additional interventions to address severe misbehaviour, the school accesses and liaises with a range of external agencies such as the Educational Psychology Service.
- The ELSA (Emotional and Language Support Assistant) provides drop-in sessions which support the pupils to build and maintain positive relationships with other pupils and the staff. The use of zones and decider skills by the ELSA supports the social and emotional development of pupils as individuals, part of small groups and whole classes. The school

is committed to a positive ethos and there is an effective restorative justice approach in place, particularly with older pupils.

- Class PSHE lessons and school assemblies are used well to promote pupils' understanding and personal well-being. Any concerns for pupils' well-being or mental health are quickly identified and appropriate action or support is put in place. This was important during the disruption caused by Covid.
- The school places an emphasis on developing positive learning traits which it continues to monitor during learning walks. The use of learning partners is seen as a way pupils can support each other and gain mutual benefit.
- There is a relentless focus on supporting vulnerable pupils, and weekly meetings are used to monitor their progress. The recent introduction of a vulnerable learner profile has been particularly effective.
- Like many island schools, St Martin's level of pupil attendance was adversely affected by the Covid epidemic. In the last academic year, it fell below its previously high levels. However, now the level of attendance in most classes at least matches that of other local schools and the level of persistent absence is low. This is because the school has maintained effective systems to monitor any unexplained absence and built on the existing good relationships with parents. This is also partly because pupils enjoy coming to school which has been reflected in survey returns and discussions. One pupil commented, 'You always know you are safe here and have someone to talk to.'
- Parents confirm that incidents of bullying are extremely rare and when they do occur they are dealt with quickly.
-

Effectiveness of teaching

- The quality of teaching is a significant strength in the Early Years which provides a secure foundation for later learning throughout the school. Children in the Nursery are encouraged to be independent and can be seen working and playing purposefully either on their own or supported by a member of staff from the start of the morning. Good relationships with parents and carers are also forged at this time and they are welcomed in to the learning areas.
- Progress is swift in Reception as pupils benefit from highly effective teaching which relates well to the needs of their age. The children are both well-behaved and responsive in class lessons showing the benefit of clearly established and understood routines.
- Results are very positive at the end of Reception but the Early Years Leader recognises the need to work further on children's early literacy. Nevertheless, the pupils' secure phonic knowledge begins in Reception where this key skill is very well taught.
- This phonic development is sustained so that standards in Year 1 and 2 compare well with similar schools on the island. Even the less able readers can talk confidently about their strategies to read and pronounce more difficult words. Individual reading records reflect the strong support given by many parents.
- Although a large number of pupils make good progress in lessons, this is not yet consistent and there are a few shortcomings in the teaching of some lessons.

- All staff have secure, soundly based relationships with pupils which helps effective learning to take place. The pupils are well known by all the staff who are very well motivated to meet their needs. Thus, the small numbers of pupils, for whom the school received the Jersey Premium allocation are well catered for, just as the needs of multi-language learners are well understood.
- There are small numbers of pupils with special educational needs. They are taught both alongside their classmates in class lessons and withdrawn for either individual or group support from teaching assistants. The teaching assistants are well managed and support the pupils' learning effectively. They are well deployed to meet the relevant needs of pupils in the school.
- The teaching of literacy is generally of a standard that ensures pupils make at least appropriate progress. Mathematics is also taught soundly, although the purpose and value of journals is not clearly understood in all classrooms.
- The school has recognised the need to improve the relative performance of boys, which was identified as weaker in the last pilot report. However, there has not yet been a sufficiently precise and clear analysis of where boys' performance is less strong to enable effective strategies to improve the teaching.
- Lessons generally have clear learning objectives and proceed purposefully. Pupils' learning is at its best when the pace of the teaching is quicker and greater challenge is given. The school has encouraged the use of learning partners, which is evident throughout the school. At times, however, they are not given a sufficiently clear focus on what they are asked to discuss, to enable maximum benefit and progress.
- Parents and pupils report that homework is regular and appropriate for their age. The school has developed a new marking policy. However, this needs fine tuning to ensure the process is purposeful, provides a medium to recommend improvement but is not too time consuming. Assessment procedures are also not yet aligned together clearly enough to form an accurate picture of pupils' attainment and progress.

Effectiveness of leadership and management

- The school has experienced significant changes of staff at all levels, including the headteacher. This has occurred during the problems caused by the Covid pandemic. Leaders and managers have successfully ensure that the school has remained calm and levels of attainment and progress have been broadly maintained since the departure of the previous headteacher. The school now has a permanent headteacher who has a clear vision for the future and is supported by an effective and experienced deputy headteacher.
- Safeguarding at the school is effective with excellent systems and procedures in place. St Martin's is a very safe and secure environment for pupils, staff and the wider community. Comprehensive policies, safeguarding measures and child protection procedures are clearly embedded. The designated safeguarding head and other safeguarding staff are dedicated to meeting children's needs, as is evident in many of the actions taken to support the pupils. Records are kept using MyConcern from relatively low-level events up to High Concern in order to help build a comprehensive

picture. Staff are clearly aware of their responsibilities for child protection and the procedures to be followed. Health and Safety arrangements are effective.

- Leaders have a growing understanding of the quality and effectiveness of education at the school. There is a clear emphasis on promoting values which enable pupils to live with tolerance and understanding of each other. The leadership has been successful in creating a happy and harmonious community.
- The weekly timetables confirm all subjects are covered and the curriculum is balanced. Music is taught by a specialist teacher which promotes the pupils' creative development.
- The school has a clearly written self-evaluation, in response to the recommendations that have been made previously. It now needs to be updated after staff changes and developed so that future priorities can be developed. From these, strategies to bring about improvement need to be devised.
- The school development plan is a thorough document. However, success criteria is not always clear enough and measurable, where relevant, to enable well-focussed evaluation to take place to ensure future improvement.
- The new headteacher is planning to re-organise the middle leadership and recognises the need to tighten up monitoring processes after the impact of the Covid epidemic, so an accurate picture is formed of the school's performance.
- Relationships remain strong with parents and the community. Parents wrote very positive comments about the school in their survey returns.

Recommendations

In order to improve, the school should take the following actions:

1. Improve the relative achievement of boys by;
 - carrying out more precise question level analysis to ascertain the areas where they perform less well,
 - implementing strategies to address those areas and bring about improvement.
2. Improve further the quality of teaching by;
 - ensuring learning partners are given a clear focus for their discussions, which should be of a short-timed duration,
 - deepening pupils' thinking by providing challenging tasks and probing questioning,
 - ensuring there is a culture of high expectations of what pupils can achieve across the school,
 - providing clear scaffolding to support pupils' learning where appropriate.
3. Improve the understanding and practice of assessment in order to measure attainment more clearly and ensure strong progress for all groups of pupils, including the more able.

4. Improve school development planning further by making success criteria clearer and measurable where relevant so that well-focussed evaluation can take place to establish what needs to be done to ensure future improvement.

Information about the school

Age range of pupils: 3-11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

Number of pupils on the school roll: 200

Date of any previous Jersey review: 14-16 November 2017

Information about the review

The review team

The review team consisted of four reviewers and was led by an experienced off-island consultant. The other reviewers included a senior adviser from the Department for Children, Young People, Education and Skills.

Enquiries about this report should be addressed to Head of School Improvement and Advisory Service, Children, Young People, Education and Skills, Highlands Campus, PO Box 142, St Saviour, Jersey JE4 8QJ