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# Jersey Schools Review Framework

## Independent report of

## St Martin's School

La Rue de la Croix au Maitre  
St Martin's  
Jersey  
JE3 6HW

Headteacher: Mr Chris Godden  
Review date: 2-4 December 2025

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## Summary

St Martin's is a genuinely inclusive school where leaders and staff strive to ensure that every child succeeds. In a valuable dimension of their education, pupils learn about and are accepting of the needs of others from an early age. A sense of calm, belonging, and shared purpose runs through the school, established through consistent routines and sensitive, timely intervention by leaders. Pupils love being at the school and staff believe that they are lucky to work there.

The headteacher and his deputy bring an academic yet pragmatic approach to curriculum development, ensuring that their decisions are rooted in the best interests of their pupils. Working together staff have introduced a more rigorous curriculum. This is the foundation for the increasingly high standards being attained by all groups of pupils.

Reading is a major strength. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) make rapid progress through well-structured phonics teaching, regular assessment, and timely intervention. Strong reading foundations support high-quality writing across the school; pupils become confident writers, drawing on their handwriting, punctuation and grammar skills to write at length and for varied purposes. Mathematics provision is also strong, with a new curriculum helping pupils practise and revisit key concepts to deepen understanding.

The wider curriculum is rich. Pupils demonstrate impressive recall in subjects such as history and art, with sketchbooks showing high-quality work and understanding of techniques. Occasionally, pupils do not use or understand the subject specific vocabulary that they have been taught. Provision for pupils with SEND, multi-lingual learners and those eligible for Jersey Premium is equitable and ambitious. While teaching is well adapted overall, some older pupils, particularly in mathematics, are not consistently challenged and teachers sometimes miss opportunities to probe understanding through varied questioning.

Behaviour is managed equitably by leaders, so that all groups of pupils receive their entitlement. Reviewers agree with one parent who reported: 'We feel the St Martin's teachers & Mr Godden do a fantastic job, and generally make their job look easy, whilst we know it isn't'. Indeed, the headteacher and his deputy have, through skilful leadership of change, inspired the whole community with a sense of the possible. Staff have proved hungry for change and are eager to support curriculum development, and pupils show immense pride in their learning and in their school.

## Contextual information

- St. Martin's is a one form entry school for pupils aged 3-11, with a 30-place nursery.
- There are currently 209 pupils on roll, the majority of whom live in the parish of St. Martin.
- 11% of pupils at St Martin's are eligible for Jersey Premium, below the island average.
- 12% of pupils are multi-lingual learners
- The school is housed in a modern, light building with specialist rooms for art, music and a library. Pupils enjoy of plenty of outdoor space.

## Information about the review

The Jersey School Review Framework (JSRF) was launched in 2018. Following a pause during the COVID-19 pandemic, reviews continued from September 2022. The first cycle of school reviews was completed for all Government of Jersey schools by July 2024. The framework was updated from January 2025. This particular review was conducted, and its report written, under this updated framework.

- Reviewers evaluated the curriculum, teaching and learning through sampling these subjects: reading; PSHE including citizenship; mathematics and art. For each subject, the reviewers discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons where possible, talked to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. They also listened to some pupils read to a familiar adult. The team considered the school's curriculum provision by focusing on subjects, including in writing, history and geography.
- Discussions were held with leaders to explore the various aspects of the school's work. Meetings were also held with teaching staff. The views of all staff were drawn from surveys specifically for this review. The views of parents, staff and pupils were also considered by analysing the responses to surveys conducted by the school and explicitly for this review.
- The team observed pupils at break and lunchtimes, and as they moved around school. Reviewers talked with pupils informally during these times and in meetings with groups of pupils to hear their views of the school and how it looks after them.
- The review team considered a range of documents, including leaders' self-evaluation, their improvement plan, and behaviour and safeguarding records. They scrutinised the school's single central record of checks on staff. They also took account of policies and information on the school's website, the data report produced by CYPES and the school's own internal assessment data and analysis.

# Full report

## Curriculum, teaching and learning

- Leaders and staff are working at pace and with ambition to ensure that each pupil receives a high quality, well-taught curriculum entitlement which prepares them, socially and academically, for secondary school. The implementation of some subjects is at an earlier stage. Nevertheless, the thoroughness of the school's work has ensured that the curriculum fulfils the requirements of the Jersey Curriculum.
- The past two years have seen strong improvements in reading and writing across the school for all groups of pupils. Since the previous review leaders have embedded a range of strategies to tackle the gap between boys' and girls' achievement seen at that time. Generally, boys are now attaining at a similar level to girls. By the time they leave the school, pupils' attainment is broadly in line with the Jersey average. Pupils with special educational needs are making similar progress to their peers.
- The early reading curriculum is well thought out and, with skilled teaching, ensures that all groups of children make strong progress. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) get off to a flying start, learning the sounds that letters make and using this knowledge to read and to spell. Children's progress is assessed very regularly and interventions put in place to ensure that children keep up rather than catch up.
- Pupils' reading, together with a tight writing curriculum, underpins strong attainment in writing across the school. In the EYFS, children discover the joy of mark-making using pencils, crayons and chalks. They are taught how to form letters, and are supported to develop a correct and comfortable pencil grip so that pupils can write comfortably, fluently and legibly. Throughout the school, pupils master and use increasingly complex grammar and punctuation. They write coherent and engaging stories, craft interesting personal accounts, and develop writing stamina as they write for a range of different purposes.
- Within the EYFS, practitioners ensure that children make a secure start with number skills by capitalising on the mathematics to be found within everyday activities. Across the school, the new mathematics curriculum, introduced at the beginning of this term, is similarly well implemented, so that pupils practise taught number facts and mathematical concepts, and revisit these to develop their knowledge further and embed their understanding.
- The wider curriculum is also coherently planned and skilfully taught, and demonstrates significant strengths. Year 2 children were proud to demonstrate their knowledge of the Great Fire of London, using vocabulary such as 'firebreak' and 'flammable'. Similarly, Year 3 pupils talk with confidence about their understanding of the Neolithic age, brought to life for them by a class visit to La Hougue Bie.
- In Art, pupils showed great pride when selecting a piece of work with which they were especially pleased. They each had many high quality pieces from which to choose. Their sketchbooks provide deep and rich evidence of a subject that is comprehensively planned and knowledgeably taught. Pupils talked expertly about techniques such as weaving and layering, and about traditionally less celebrated artists such as Frida Kahlo, as well as studying Van Gogh.
- Equity as well as entitlement are guiding lights of this school. The curriculum, teaching and learning meet the needs of pupils with SEND, multi-lingual learners, and those

eligible for Jersey Premium. Tasks are planned and teaching is adapted to ensure that all groups of pupils receive the input they need to make the progress of which they are capable. However, teachers are not yet so familiar with the new curriculum that they adapt it consistently to challenge older pupils with high prior attainment, particularly in mathematics.

- The recently introduced curriculum is clearly having the desired effect. Teachers spoke with enthusiasm about the online training materials they now use in each subject; these are having a powerful effect on teachers' subject knowledge and confidence. However, at times, when teaching new knowledge, teachers miss opportunities to vary their questioning styles and so test pupils' understanding, to check for misconceptions and to build knowledge more quickly by ensuring that pupils are engaging with the new material.

## **Behaviour, attitudes and attendance**

- An all pervading, almost magical sense of calm and purpose pervades St Martin's. Leaders have devised systems and routines which have become second nature for pupils. All adults know what to expect of pupils and, in turn, all pupils, regardless of need or ability, rise to meet these expectations. Pupils are polite, happy and eager to share their achievements.
- From the earliest years, children imbibe an atmosphere that encourages their development from the self-centred patterns usual for their age into important members of a community that values them and their participation. Sensitive interactions teach every child to take turns, to be kind, to cooperate with their friends and to think of others. The result is a warm and nurturing enjoyment that builds children's self-confidence in their early years at school.
- Breaks and lunchtimes are sociable occasions. Lunchtimes are split across the school, so allowing the smaller number of pupils in each shift to enjoy an unflustered break in the already generous outdoor space. In classrooms, pupils understand how to behave so that all may learn in a spirit of friendly endeavour. The use of praise by adults ensures that pupils strive to behave respectfully. It is rare that teachers need to challenge the behaviour of individual children.
- The management of behaviour is highly impressive. The headteacher and deputy headteacher intervene quietly to check individuals and to ensure that support is put in place to help the pupil get quickly back on track. They make a point of capitalising on improvements made by individual pupils by offering timely encouragement, so pupils feel their efforts are worthwhile and recognised. Overwhelmingly, staff feel supported by leaders in their successful efforts to maintain the vibrant yet respectful air of the school.
- Pupils are self-assured members of the school community. They show pride in their uniforms. Pupils walk purposefully around the school with heads held high. They become accustomed to negotiating; one pupil said, 'If there's a problem we solve it together'. These positive attitudes are the result of the strong sense of empowerment instilled in pupils from their earliest days at the school. Leaders have achieved the remarkable in helping pupils to understand themselves and control their behaviours.
- As a result of the value placed upon them by staff, pupils across the school make their views known, politely but resolutely. Older pupils offer suggestions for improvements

whilst simultaneously appreciating the opportunities provided for them by the school. Even the youngest children sustain high levels of focus when inspired by a task.

## **Personal development**

- The school has a highly inclusive ethos, aiming for pupils to become independent, successful members of their community, who achieve highly, academically and socially, and who understand the important part they play in the life of the school. The fact that one pupil said that, 'pupils who don't find it easy have someone to rely on' is testament to leaders' success.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves physically and mentally safe. Knowledge of healthy eating is developing as pupils move up the school. The impact of the school's work could be seen at lunchtime when nearly all children were eating fruit brought from home. Pupils have participated in cycling crocodiles as part of the school's work to encourage environmentally friendly journeys to school.
- Pupils gain a good understanding of different viewpoints. Every pupil surveyed agreed that the school encourages respect for different backgrounds. Topics in the PSHE curriculum and a thoughtfully tailored range of reading books broaden pupils' horizons, helping them to see beyond themselves and consider how others think and feel. Leaders promote equity effectively, for example by prioritising staff training to implement the recommendations of the Violence Against Women and Girls report.
- Through participation in St Martin's Action Response (SMART) teams, pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 work in mixed age teams to influence the direction of their school lives. These teams give every pupil the opportunity to mentor and be mentored as they work together on projects that build pupils' sense of responsibility and leadership. The activity by one SMART team to improve the range of activities for use in the outdoors is just one example of pupils' leadership skills in action.
- A considered approach to local studies account for the pupils' understanding of and pride in their identity as Jersey islanders. Pupils have visited a synagogue as part of learning about different faiths. Although pupils are familiar with the main tenets of Christianity, they are not confident when recalling details about other major faiths and festivals.
- Pupils feel comfortable about approaching staff if they have a problem. Older pupils recently received the 'Safety in Action Award' for completing a first aid course, and pupils are taught about cyberbullying and how to keep safe on the internet.
- The school successfully develops pupils' understanding about democracy through the house system. Pupils feel they have 'a say in things'. Year 6 pupils stand for election to be house captains, providing a manifesto which is shared with others. Each school house chooses a charity to support each year, for example, Jersey Dementia and Therapy Dogs.

## **Leadership and management**

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher form a cohesive and purposeful team. Their ambition for their pupils is demonstrated by their work to implement a knowledge-rich and meaningful curriculum that empowers and inspires their pupils and staff. In this they

have been successful. Members of staff, pupils and parents alike show overwhelming support for the direction of the school.

- Senior leaders balance the differing needs presented by their pupils with finesse and sensitivity. As a result, standards are rising because all groups of children make the progress of which they are capable. Achieving such a balance is no easy task, but the reward is the atmosphere that is felt at St Martin's where all the school's pupils, regardless of their needs, can actively play and learn together in harmony.
- School improvement planning is fast paced. Until now, the headteacher and deputy headteacher have shouldered much of the responsibility for leading curriculum development. The staff have been empowered by the way in which the new curriculum supports their teaching, and the time is ripe to broaden the scope for staff to share in curriculum training, development and leadership.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher keep the work of the school under review, regularly visiting classrooms to support staff, as well as to evaluate the degree to which the curriculum is being implemented. Currently, records of those visits, which are shared with staff, tend to check whether lessons are being taught as planned, rather than also evaluating the quality of the teaching and learning.
- The special education needs and disabilities co-ordinator knows and understands the needs of children with SEND throughout the school. She is proactive in offering expert support to colleagues, but also by working with CYPES to assess children at the right time so they get the support or adaptations that they need.
- Safeguarding is effective. The care and guidance provided for pupils and their parents is exemplary. A culture of placing the child at the centre of every child protection or safeguarding decision means that no stone is left unturned to overcome barriers and keep children safe and thriving. Parents, too, get support from the school to be the best they can, from guidance on how to help their child with reading to more individual, tailored support when in crisis.
- Staff feel very well supported by senior leaders, and change is managed adroitly so that staff do not feel overwhelmed. They say that they can be open and honest and know that their views will be heard and appreciated. They feel valued as individuals and colleagues.

## **Notable strengths**

The school has notable strengths in the following areas:

- The sensitive and collaborative leadership of change
- The equitable management of behaviour to ensure that the needs of all members of the school community are properly balanced
- The inclusive provision which ensures all groups of pupils thrive.

The review team recommend that the school seeks to share its learning, expertise and strengths in these areas with other schools on-Island.

## Recommendations

The review team recommend that the school should take the following actions

1. Maximise the impact of the curriculum by:
  - ensuring that teachers adapt lessons to better stretch older higher ability pupils
  - using a wider range of questioning styles to engage pupils, to make sure they are on track, and to check their learning
  - ensure that newly introduced vocabulary is consistently used and understood by pupils.
2. Broaden the range of monitoring activities to focus on the quality of teaching and learning as well as compliance.
3. Develop the scope for staff to contribute to curriculum training, development and leadership.

## Information about the school

**Age range of pupils:** 3-11

**Gender of pupils:** Mixed

**Number of pupils on the school roll:** 209

**Headteacher:** Mr Chris Godden

**School telephone number:** 01534 851812

**School website:** [www.stmartin.sch.je](http://www.stmartin.sch.je)

## Information about the review team

Jersey School Reviews take place over three days. The size and specialist experience of each review team reflects the size and the context of the school.

This review was led by an experienced off-Island school inspector/reviewer and consisted of a total of four reviewers. This team included one other off-Island team reviewer (also an experienced off-Island school inspector/reviewer) and two senior leaders from other schools who have been trained as reviewers.

Enquiries about this report should be addressed to the Head of the School Review and Inspection, Children, Young People, Education and Skills, Government Building, Union Street, St Helier JE2 3DN.