



School Improvement Priorities 2026–2027

St Mary's School is committed to securing consistently strong outcomes for all pupils through a sharp focus on early reading, writing, mathematics and the achievement of vulnerable learners. Leaders will ensure that improvements are embedded through robust monitoring, high-quality professional development and a relentless focus on the quality of education for every pupil.

Priority 1: Strengthen Phonics and Early Reading

Intended Impact: Pupils develop secure phonics knowledge, decode unfamiliar words accurately and read with increasing fluency, confidence and understanding. Outcomes in early reading improve, ensuring pupils are well prepared for the next stage of learning.

Key Actions:

- Deliver phonics teaching in smaller, attainment-based groups to ensure instruction is precisely matched to pupils' needs.
- Implement regular assessment systems to identify misconceptions and adapt teaching promptly.
- Ensure reading books are closely matched to pupils' current phonic knowledge and stage of development.
- Provide targeted professional development and coaching to secure consistent and effective delivery of the phonics programme across all staff.
- Strengthen reading fluency through targeted interventions, flexible grouping arrangements and regular opportunities for repeated reading.
- Monitor the fidelity and effectiveness of phonics provision to ensure consistency and impact.

Priority 2: Improve Writing Fundamentals Across the School

Intended Impact: Pupils develop the foundational skills necessary for successful writing, enabling them to write fluently, accurately and with pride in their work.

Key Actions:

- Embed a consistent whole-school approach to handwriting and presentation.
- Ensure explicit teaching of pencil grip, letter formation, joins and handwriting fluency across all year groups.
- Embed clear, high expectations for presentation in all subjects.
- Deliver targeted interventions to address identified gaps in handwriting and spelling.
- Provide professional development to ensure consistent implementation of agreed approaches.
- Regularly monitor pupils' work to evaluate consistency and progress.

Priority 3: Develop Cognitive Automaticity and Mathematical Fluency

Intended Impact: Pupils develop secure mathematical knowledge and fluency, enabling them to apply skills efficiently and accurately across the mathematics curriculum.

Key Actions:

- Embed a structured whole-school approach to the teaching and assessment of multiplication tables.
- Embed regular assessment practices to identify gaps in mathematical understanding.
- Use assessment information and gap analysis systematically to inform planning and intervention.
- Establish clear expectations for responding to identified misconceptions and gaps.
- Deliver targeted interventions that address barriers to learning and accelerate progress.
- Monitor the effectiveness of intervention and classroom provision through regular review cycles.

Priority 4: Raise Attainment and Achievement for Vulnerable Learners

Intended Impact: Vulnerable pupils, including those with SEND and disadvantaged pupils, achieve well from their starting points, access the full curriculum and develop increasing independence as learners.

Key Actions:

- Embed a consistent whole-school approach to identifying and addressing gaps in learning.
- Embed clear small-step target setting, regular review and robust progress tracking.
- Strengthen collaboration between leaders, teachers and support staff to monitor provision and hold one another to account for outcomes.
- Ensure consistent teaching and reinforcement of learning behaviours that support engagement, resilience and success.
- Embed effective scaffolding strategies that enable pupils to access ambitious learning while promoting independence.
- Monitor the impact of interventions and adapt provision based on evidence of progress.
- Vulnerable learners have high rates of attendance, ensuring that they can maximise opportunities to learn.