Inspection of a good school: Marlborough Primary School

Tytherington Drive, Tytherington, Macclesfield, Cheshire SK10 2HJ

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 February 2024

Outcome

Marlborough Primary School continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Susan Pollard. This school is part of the Fallibroome Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Jeremy Spencer, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Michael Gorton.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish at this welcoming and friendly school. They feel happy to be part of such a warm and caring community.

The school has high expectations for pupils' learning. Pupils proudly rise to meet these aspirations. They achieve well across a range of subjects.

Pupils are polite and respectful. They behave well. Any pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), who may struggle with managing their behaviour, are supported well by staff.

Pupils enjoy taking on different positions of responsibility within school. For example, they eagerly take on roles such as school councillors, eco-committee members and well-being warriors. They also attend clubs and events including boccia, football and arts as well as singing in the choir. Pupils spoke with pride about the annual 'festival on the field' event where the whole school comes together to enjoy music and to perform songs for parents and carers.

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

The school's strong focus on reading begins in the early years where children enjoy sharing books with adults. Children eagerly join in with much-loved stories and rhymes. They begin to learn their letters and sounds as soon as they start school.

Well-trained staff teach the early reading programme with fidelity. Any pupils who struggle with their reading are quickly spotted. They receive effective support so that they can

keep up with the pace of the programme. Early readers read books which are well matched to the sounds that they know. This helps to build their confidence and fluency when reading.

Staff consistently ensure that pupils read at home and at school regularly. Pupils in key stage 2 show very positive attitudes to reading. They talked about an interesting range of books that they have enjoyed reading themselves or with their teachers. Pupils read well and with secure understanding.

The trust and school have worked together effectively to design a curriculum which is ambitious for pupils. Curriculum content has been organised in a logical order from the beginning of the early years to the end of key stage 2. The school has made sure that staff receive effective training so that they deliver the curriculum with confidence. Staff explain new learning to pupils effectively.

In the large majority of subjects, the key concepts that pupils will be taught have been clearly identified. In these subjects, staff carefully emphasise this content in lessons. They use assessment information well in most subjects to check that pupils can use and apply their prior knowledge to new content. As a result, pupils learn well in most subjects.

In a small number of subjects, pupils do not know the most important words to remember, to help them to understand concepts. This sometimes hampers their ability to make deeper connections between new learning and earlier content.

The additional needs of pupils with SEND are quickly and effectively identified. The considerable expertise of staff is used well. This helps to ensure that these pupils receive the support that they need to access the same learning as their peers.

Pupils understand and follow the school rules. They enjoy receiving raffle tickets for good behaviour and work. They also look forward to gaining a 'star of the week' award.

Pupils show a secure understanding of different faiths and cultures. They explained that they know it is important to treat people from different backgrounds with tolerance and respect. The school places a strong emphasis on promoting both the physical and mental health of pupils. Pupils spoke proudly about their roles as well-being heroes. They very much enjoy going on residential visits. Some pupils said that they particularly enjoyed their school sleepover where they spent the night in the school hall. Pupils proudly represent the school in different events. They enjoy gaining trophies and awards when they compete against other schools in the local area.

Governors and trustees have a strong grasp of the school's strengths and priorities for further development. This helps them to support and challenge the school effectively. The trust and school engage well with staff. Staff spoke overwhelmingly positively about the school and the way that decisions are made with their workload and well-being in mind.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, the most important concepts and vocabulary have not been as well learned. This sometimes hampers pupils' ability to make deeper connections between new learning and earlier content. The school should further refine these curriculums so that pupils can successfully build on prior knowledge in these subjects in the longer term.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, the Marlborough Primary School, to be good in September 2012.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use Ofsted Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further guidance on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for published performance information about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the definition of children in need of help and protection; pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's pupil premium funding (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	142561
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	10321453
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	400
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Michael Gorton
CEO of the trust	Jeremy Spencer
Headteacher	Susan Pollard
Website	www.marlborough.cheshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 January 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Marlborough Primary School converted to become an academy in April 2016. When the predecessor school, the Marlborough Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school makes use of one alternative provider.
- The school offers a before- and after-school club.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection that the school has received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken this into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and computing. For each deep dive, she met with leaders, discussed curriculums, visited a sample of

lessons, met with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and reviewed samples of pupils' work. She also observed pupils from Years 1 to 3 reading to a familiar adult.

- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher, other leaders and staff.
- The inspector met with governors, including the co-chairs of the governing body. She also spoke with the CEO and the deputy CEO of the Fallibroome Trust as well as one of the trustees.
- The inspector spoke with different groups of pupils to gather their views of the school and held discussions about their behaviour and learning. She also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at playtime.
- The inspector spoke to some parents at the beginning of the school day. She considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. She also considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. There were no responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector 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 inspector considered a range of documentation provided by school leaders and staff. This included the school's priority action plan, minutes of governing body meetings, headteacher reports and the school's self-evaluation document.

Inspection team

Louise McArdle, lead inspector	Senior His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
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