

# Marden Lodge Primary School and Nursery

Croydon Road, Caterham, Surrey CR3 6QH

<b>Inspection dates</b>	29–30 June 2016
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The headteacher leads the school with total commitment. Her leadership has ensured the rapid improvement required to make this a good school.
- Senior leaders work together as an effective team. They lead by example and demand the best of staff and pupils. As a consequence, the capacity for further rapid improvement is very clear to see.
- Governors are effective in their roles and know the school well. They provide school leaders with the right balance of support and challenge to ensure improvement.
- The support of the multi-academy trust has been fundamental to the school's recent significant and sustained improvement.
- The conduct of pupils is good. Their attitude to learning has improved because teachers have high expectations for behaviour and learning.
- The school's system for assessing the progress of pupils is highly effective and ensures that pupils in danger of falling behind are supported well.
- Most pupils make good or better progress because the quality of teaching is consistently good or better.
- Disadvantaged pupils make very good progress. Most are making the rapid progress required to close the gap in attainment with other pupils.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of the support they receive.
- Children in the early years make good progress from their different starting points.
- The school's work to keep children safe is highly effective.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Middle leaders do not have enough impact on improving the quality of teaching to ensure outstanding outcomes for pupils.
- The early years provision is still evolving after the school recently took over the on-site nursery provision.
- Because of the legacy of poor teaching in the past, the attainment of some pupils is not yet as good as it could be.
- The recent focus on improving outcomes in English and mathematics has reduced the breadth and balance of the school's curriculum.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the impact that middle leaders, including in the early years, have on improving the quality of teaching and learning, so that outcomes improve to become outstanding.
- Ensure that teachers maintain a clear focus on accelerating the progress pupils make, especially pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds, those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those capable of achieving at higher levels, so that more pupils achieve above age-related expectations.
- Further develop the curriculum so that pupils benefit from a more balanced proportion of time allocated between core and foundation subjects.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher leads the school with determination. Since taking up her position earlier this year she has driven the urgent improvement required to transform the school. Her vision is one of excellence. Under her leadership there is no room for complacency and the pace of change has been formidable.
- The senior leadership team work very well in partnership. They act in a highly professional manner and are excellent role models for other staff. Their differing strengths and areas of expertise complement each other well. Their uncompromising approach to improving the quality of teaching has had a very big impact in a short period of time. Consequently, outcomes for pupils are improving rapidly.
- Self-evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses is accurate. School development planning, including the school's short-term rapid improvement plan, is effective, and enables school leaders to prioritise and act on aspects that require urgent attention.
- The monitoring of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by senior leaders is strong. This has ensured that teachers and learning support assistants are aware of their strengths and what could be better in their day-to-day classroom practice. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the support and guidance they receive from school leaders.
- The appraisal of staff performance, including that of support staff, is robust. Performance management targets are closely linked to the school's priorities for improvement, including improving the environment for learning and the outcomes of pupils.
- Leaders have ensured that the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is strong. The school has developed its own approach to developing resilience, character and ethical values, as well as promoting fundamental British values. Pupils explained to inspectors that trustworthiness, showing respect and caring for others, as well as fairness, taking responsibility and acting as a good citizen, are important aspects of life that also help support their learning.
- Additional government funding to support pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds is used well. As a result, pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds are making much better progress than they did in the past.
- Additional government funding to promote physical education and sport is used effectively, including funding the employment of specialist sports coaches to support teachers with planning and delivering lessons. Other one-off activities such as the recent 'X-Treme' fitness training as part of the school's family fun day to celebrate Her Majesty the Queen's birthday are well received and enjoyed by pupils.
- Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy the extra-curricular opportunities they are given, as well as the special events that punctuate their learning. Baking cakes, drumming workshops and the pottery club were all mentioned, as was the star gazing evening held on the school field during the autumn term.
- The continuing support and challenge offered by the multi-academy trust impact positively on improving the school, ensuring that school leaders have access to the additional resources or advice they require. Support from specialist staff, including the extra capacity created by the secondment to the school of an assistant headteacher with expertise in assessment and tracking pupil progress, is invaluable.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the progress the school has made in the last year. They told inspectors they are now proud of the school after a period when things were not as positive as they might have been. They also told inspectors that communication from school leaders is much better and that they value the updates they are now receiving three times a year about their children's progress.
- Because of the hands-on approach of senior leaders in their determination to bring about rapid improvement, the role of middle leaders in improving the quality of teaching and learning is not as developed as it might be. This situation is gradually changing, but senior leaders recognise that further developing middle leadership will be a priority as the school strives to become outstanding.
- Some aspects of the school's curriculum have been squeezed due to the pressing need to improve pupils' outcomes in English and mathematics this year. School leaders are aware of this and after a detailed review, have already taken effective measures to address this imbalance.
- **The governance of the school**
  - The governing body has a strong vision for the future of the school and has ensured that school leaders fully understand the need for sustained improvement. Governors carry out their statutory duties well and demonstrate a clear understanding of their strategic role. Their support for school leaders throughout the inspection is testament to their total commitment to the school.

- The introduction of a governors’ strategy group to oversee and monitor the school’s rapid improvement plan has been instrumental in ensuring that senior leaders are held to account for the key actions required to improve the school. Because of this, the quality of education received by pupils is improving quickly.
- Partnerships between governors, senior leaders and the multi-academy trust are strong. The chair of governors facilitates a high degree of communication between each group, ensuring that little time is wasted and that decisive action is taken when required.
- Arrangements for safeguarding are effective. School leaders and governors make sure that policies and procedures are robust and that statutory training required by staff is up to date, including that for first aid, health and safety compliance, and training for those responsible for the safe recruitment of staff. The school site is maintained well and access arrangements, including routines for the start and finish of the school day, are sound. Parents told inspectors that they feel their children are safe at school and that staff go out of their way to ensure that their children are well cared for. Pupils also told inspectors that they feel safe and know who to talk to if they have any concerns.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good**

- The quality of teaching is good and improving. This has not always been the case in the past. Teachers know pupils well and plan engaging lessons that motivate them to do their best. Because of this, pupils enjoy their time in classrooms and their progress is accelerating term on term.
- Teachers offer good challenge to pupils across the school and in most classes the excellent quality of teaching is producing accelerated progress over time, especially for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and those that have fallen behind in the past.
- Classrooms are industrious places. Year 6 pupils were enthused by a writing task that encouraged them to improve their spoken pitch for a stall they will run as part of enterprise week. The need to ‘get it right’ so that their stall would be successful provided all the incentive required to engage them deeply in the task. One group’s use of epistrophe in their writing (repeating a word at the end of successive clauses), linking back to earlier work they had completed on Shakespeare, was particularly impressive.
- The school’s assessment system is used well by teachers, not only to monitor the progress pupils make, but to plan learning opportunities that ensure that the gaps in pupils’ knowledge are addressed. The lead inspector was impressed with the depth of knowledge and proficiency of class teachers when they were asked to explain in detail how they use the system as a tool that complements their own judgements about the achievements of pupils.
- Because of the quality of assessment, pupils in danger of falling behind are identified quickly and high-quality interventions are put in place. As a result of extra capacity in the number of qualified teaching staff available, it is not unusual to see one class split in half, with one group of pupils taught in a separate classroom, having basic misconceptions addressed before having their learning further extended.
- School leaders ensure that learning support assistants are used effectively in classrooms because they realise this valuable asset needs to have maximum impact on the progress pupils make. Classroom observations have ensured that the quality of input from teaching support staff has risen, with in-school training and external professional development used wisely to develop individual competencies.
- Sometimes, in some lessons, pupils capable of achieving at higher levels are still not challenged enough. This means that, over time, most-able pupils do not make the progress they are capable of. This aspect of teaching is improving, because school leaders have identified it as a priority, but the legacy of poorer teaching in the past means this should be one of the priorities for school improvement going forward.

### **Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good**

#### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school’s work to promote pupils’ personal development and welfare is good. Pupils benefit from a caring, nurturing environment. They told inspectors that bullying no longer happens, but that they know staff would act immediately if there were problems.
- Pupils’ pastoral needs are met well, especially those of pupils with complex needs. Specialist staff who deal specifically with the social and emotional aspects of pupils’ welfare are effective in their work and have an increasingly positive impact on the progress of pupils in danger of falling behind.

- Staff work hard to develop pupils' resilience and attach a great degree of importance to perseverance. Because of this, pupils are less likely to give up when they find work is difficult and display positive attitudes to learning.
- Pupils understand how to stay safe in and outside of school and know of the potential dangers when using the internet. They also understand the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle, including the impact exercise has on their bodies.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils told inspectors that teachers are 'firm, but fair'. The recently revised behaviour policy is used consistently by all staff. Rewards for good behaviour are the norm. Pupils understand the consequences of making the wrong choices, especially if behaviour impacts on learning. As a result, disruption to learning in classrooms is now rare.
- It was clear during the inspection that pupils are proud of the school. Parents also told inspectors on a number of occasions that there is a new sense of pride in the school, which they feel is engendered by staff and, in particular, the new headteacher.
- Pupils are polite to adults and displayed good manners during the inspection. They move around the school in an orderly manner, including on the stairs, where the rules of walking on the left are adhered to well, even if an inspector who is not aware of the rules is blocking the way.
- Attendance is improving and is now more in line with national averages. The school's work on reducing absence is effective, especially for pupils who are persistently absent. Because staff responsible for monitoring absence are proactive, they are able to respond quickly when attendance deteriorates.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

### **are good**

- Outcomes for pupils have improved very significantly this year and are now good. Most pupils are making at least good progress. Many pupils, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are making accelerated progress. This is because of the high-quality teaching they are now receiving.
- The progress children make in the early years, especially the Reception Year, is good. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development prior to their move up to Year 1 has increased this year and is likely to be broadly in line with or above the national average.
- The phonics skills of younger pupils are also improving. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) during Year 1 is likely to be in line with the national average this year. Only one pupil has not achieved the expected standard by the end of Year 2 this year, representing a significant improvement on last year's results.
- Last year, the outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 1 were not as strong as those seen nationally. Due to the better quality of teaching this year, pupils are making very good progress in both Year 1 and 2. Because of this, the school expects their outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics to compare much more favourably with national averages. Inspection evidence supports the school's predictions.
- Last year, outcomes at the end of Year 6 fell below the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This year, pupils in Year 6 are making greatly accelerated progress. The school's assessment system shows very clearly that outcomes will be much better this year.
- Most pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds are making very good progress. Taken as a group across the school, they are making better progress than other pupils in mathematics and writing. In reading, their progress is equal to that of other pupils in the school.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, although this varies across different year groups, due mainly to the low numbers and complex needs of some pupils. The school tracks the attainment and progress of these pupils well and plans effective interventions when required.
- This year, the school has ensured that pupils in danger of falling behind with their learning receive extra support, mostly with qualified teachers. This is true of any pupil, whether from vulnerable groups or not. The efficacy of these interventions is monitored closely by leaders to ensure that this valuable resource is not wasted.
- The impact of focused support has been instrumental in arresting the decline in standards seen in the

recent past and complements the good or better teaching now seen in classrooms. However, because of the legacy of weaker teaching in the past, and despite their good or better progress, some pupils are still not attaining as highly as they might. School leaders know this and are relentless in their drive to ensure that these pupils eventually catch up.

## Early years provision

is good

- Children get off to a good start in the early years provision because of the excellent quality of care and support afforded to them by staff. This is especially the case in the Reception Year, where an increasing proportion of children are achieving a good level of development and are well prepared for their move up to Year 1.
- The school has recently taken over the running of the on-site nursery classes and school leaders are very keen to ensure that this is as beneficial as possible to the progress children make. Communication is good between the Nursery and Reception class staff, although senior leaders' plans to site the classrooms closer together will bring added benefits in the near future.
- Children in the nursery classes make good progress from their different starting points because staff are very responsive to their needs and plan learning opportunities that interest and engage. During classroom visits inspectors observed children being encouraged to extend their vocabulary through thoughtful questioning by staff. Activities such as discussing building cars in the sand, or measuring heights using ribbons, then rulers, encourage children to concentrate as well as work cooperatively with each other.
- Children in the Reception class display high degrees of concentration. This was especially the case when working with the class teacher to divide objects into groups of three or four. Carefully directed questions enabled individual children to explain their reasoning while others listened attentively, in the hope that it would be their turn next.
- The few pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress in the early years because of the focused support they receive. School leaders track their progress well and have ensured that staff are aware that outcomes for these children is given a high priority.
- Behaviour is good in the early years, although much of the learning is lively. Good use is made of the outdoor areas, including the mud kitchen, where a group of girls were making 'mud smoothies' for the boys. One boy explained how his playdough cake was a 'phonics' cake, as he stamped letters on its surface, sounding the individual letters out as he did so.
- Parents were very positive about the early years. They told inspectors that communication is better and staff are much more approachable than in the past. As a consequence, they feel they have a better knowledge about what is 'going on'. They told inspectors they feel their children are doing really well and are 'coming on in leaps and bounds'. They also feel their children are safe because staff 'care for them well'.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	139915
<b>Local authority</b>	Surrey
<b>Inspection number</b>	10011713

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	236
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Tim Rogers
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kelly Storey
<b>Telephone number</b>	01883 343014
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.mardenlodge.org">www.mardenlodge.org</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:info@marden-lodge.surrey.sch.uk">info@marden-lodge.surrey.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Marden Lodge is a smaller than average-sized primary school with nursery provision. The school has only recently taken over running the nursery classes.
- Pupil numbers have risen substantially in the last year. In September 2016, the school will increase its early years provision to include two Reception classes at the request of the local authority.
- The school converted to academy status in September 2013, when it joined the GLF Schools multi-academy trust.
- The headteacher took up her substantive position in April 2016 after a short period of time as joint acting headteacher.
- There have been many changes in teaching staff, including at leadership level, in the recent past.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding) is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The school meets the requirements for the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school shares its site with a local authority children's centre, which was not part of this inspection.
- In 2015 the school did not meet government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors conducted 15 lesson observations across all phases of the school, 11 of which were joint observations with senior leaders.
- The lead inspector also carried out an unaccompanied learning walk in the early years provision.
- Meetings were held with pupils, parents, the headteacher, senior leaders, middle leaders, teachers and the chair of governors accompanied by two other governors.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with the chief executive officer and the head of education of the Glyn Learning Foundation multi-academy trust.
- Inspectors looked at a range of pupils' work, heard pupils read and observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents, taking into account 46 responses to Ofsted's online parent questionnaire, Parent View. The inspectors also considered 46 'freetext' responses submitted by parents.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff using the online staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents including those to do with safeguarding, attendance, minutes of meetings of the governing body, information about pupils' outcomes provided by the school, the school's self-evaluation of its own performance and the school's development and improvement planning.
- Records of monitoring visits and support provided by the multi-academy trust were also examined.

## Inspection team

Clive Close, lead inspector

Penny Orme

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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