

Market Harborough Church of England Academy

Fairfield Road, Market Harborough, Leicestershire LE16 9QH

Inspection dates

3–4 May 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Senior leaders' monitoring of the progress made by pupils, including in the early years, has not been rigorous enough to identify and address pupils' underperformance.
- Senior leaders do not manage the performance of teachers well enough to secure the accelerated progress of pupils who need to catch up.
- Governors have not been tenacious enough in challenging the school's leaders about the attainment and progress of pupils.
- Middle leaders' and subject leaders' plans for improvement do not focus sharply enough on raising pupils' progress and attainment.
- Teaching is not consistently good. On too many occasions, pupils' progress is slowed because work is not well matched to the needs of pupils with different abilities.
- Teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to develop their problem-solving and reasoning skills in mathematics.
- Pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged and the most able, do not always make as much progress as they should.

The school has the following strengths

- The school is improving rapidly. The headteacher, deputy headteacher, senior leaders, the trust and the governing body are instilling a culture of ambition and moving the school forward.
- Teachers are benefiting from the range of training and initiatives provided and the pupils' attainment and progress are improving.
- Standards in reading are improving across the school.
- Middle leaders are increasingly empowered in identifying actions that will bring about improvements in different areas of the curriculum.
- Pupils behave very well. There are good relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils in all classes take pride in their work and their school.
- The school promotes well pupils' personal development, safety and welfare.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so it is consistently good or better and accelerates the progress of pupils, particularly the most able and those who are disadvantaged, by:
 - further improving the accuracy and use of information about pupils' progress so that work is well matched to pupils' abilities and is consistently challenging
 - providing more frequent opportunities for pupils in all year groups to develop their problem-solving and reasoning skills in mathematics.
- Increase the effectiveness of leaders in improving pupils' outcomes by:
 - further refining systems of assessing and analysing pupils' progress to ensure that challenging targets are in place, and carefully monitored for impact, for all groups of learners
 - ensuring that the management of teachers' performance is more rigorous and closely linked to the progress of pupils
 - further developing the role of middle leaders so that they have a thorough understanding of pupils' progress in their subject and how to accelerate pupil's progress further.
- Develop the role of governance by ensuring that the governing body is more effective in challenging the school's leaders about the performance of different groups of pupils.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management should be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because the many actions and initiatives introduced by leaders have not yet had sufficient impact on the attainment and progress of pupils.
- Leaders, working with the trust, are developing a new approach to the assessment of pupils' attainment and progress. Leaders do not yet analyse well enough the progress of different groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, the most able and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They do not yet check on the impact of their actions in sufficient detail to ensure that these groups are catching up as quickly as they need to.
- Leaders do not focus sharply enough on improving pupils' progress when managing the performance of teachers and subject leaders. Leaders' plans for improvement are not specific enough to fully assess the impact of the actions taken to bring about more rapid improvement in pupils' outcomes. This is particularly the case for the attainment and progress of the most able pupils, those who are disadvantaged, and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The school's curriculum is sufficiently broad but there are inconsistencies in the depth of learning in some subject areas. The recent introduction of the new approach to the teaching of phonics in the early years and in key stage 1, for example, is already having a clear impact on standards in reading. Work to improve pupils' problem-solving skills in mathematics is at an early stage.
- The new headteacher and the deputy headteacher have clear drive and ambition for the school. Leaders' evaluations of the school's performance are accurate and thorough. Leaders have accurately identified the key priorities for improvement and implemented, often informed by established research, a range of new initiatives and staff training to improve standards.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered well through experiences which expand their understanding of the beliefs and lives of others. Enrichment activities and extra-curricular clubs equip pupils well, socially and emotionally, for their life in modern Britain. The fundamental British values of respect and tolerance are understood by most pupils.
- The trust works well with the school to support leadership, improvement planning, and the development of key initiatives, such as the school's new approach to assessing pupils' progress and attainment. However, much of this work is still in the early stages of development and not yet having sufficient impact.
- Leaders have introduced a programme of 'lesson study' and coaching, to address inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and support, along with the introduction of new initiatives and approaches. This is improving the quality of teaching.
- Senior, middle and subject leaders say they are more empowered under the leadership of the new headteacher. They are increasingly effective in monitoring standards in their

areas of responsibility, identifying aspects which can be improved and leading the drive to achieve that improvement.

- The senior leaders are increasingly effective in assessing the impact of the pupil premium funding on the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. Leaders say this has not been as effective as it should have been in the past. Leaders are now checking the progress of disadvantaged pupils more closely. Leaders have used the additional funding for physical education (PE) and sport well, to support the improvement in teaching and rates of pupils' participation in sporting activity.
- Additional funding to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is used to support a range of specific interventions. The progress of these pupils is usually in line with that of other pupils. However, leaders are aware that the progress of these pupils is not yet monitored closely enough to ensure that the funding has the maximum impact.

Governance of the school

- Governors have not been sufficiently focused in analysing how effectively the pupil premium funding has been used in the past, particularly in relation to its impact on improving the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils.
- Governors have a good understanding of their overall role and are ambitious for the school. Many governors are experienced, and have a well-informed overview of the school's performance. However, they do not place enough emphasis on challenging the school about the performance of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, the most able, and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Governors undertake regular visits to the school to monitor the curriculum, meet with subject leaders and review, for example, safeguarding arrangements. Their understanding of safeguarding is strong.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders and governors ensure that all statutory requirements are met, with governors and staff undertaking regular training to ensure that their practice is current.
- The school's single central record of employment checks meets statutory requirements. Staff recruitment and vetting procedures are rigorous.
- The designated safeguarding leads record and analyse incidents and actions taken in relation to specific concerns, bullying or use of racist or homophobic language. Pupils say bullying is rare. They trust adults in the school to deal with any concerns they may have, quickly and effectively.
- An ethos of safeguarding is evident. As a result of the school's curriculum, assemblies and events, such as a recent internet safety school trip, pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in variety of situations. Pupils are very aware of how to keep themselves safe online.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because teachers do not always provide work which is well matched to pupils' abilities, particularly for the most able pupils. In some lessons, teaching and learning are not consistently challenging. As a result, over time, the progress of too many pupils is not as good as it could be.
- Teachers are not adept enough in accurately assessing pupils' understanding and using this information to plan the next steps in their learning. Pupils' work shows that, in some classes, and particularly in mathematics, pupils often complete work that is at the same level of difficulty, rather than quickly moving on to more challenging work. Pupils' books show that not all teachers regularly plan opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical knowledge or to show their reasoning skills.
- Teaching staff have benefited from the wide range of training and professional development offered by the school recently. Extensive work has been carried out to develop assessment practices, including moderation of judgements with other schools. In key stage 1, teachers and teaching assistants have had training to develop their expertise in the teaching of early reading.
- Teachers are positive and enthusiastic. Where teaching is stronger, teachers use skilful questioning to assess pupils' understanding and take their learning forward.
- Work in pupils' books is consistently well presented in all classes and across different subject areas. Expectations for the quality of pupils' writing are improving. Pupils, including children in the early years, produce sustained pieces of written work of consistent quality across a range of subjects.
- The support given by teaching assistants to pupils is often effective. Teaching assistants are increasingly proficient in teaching phonics and have clearly benefited from the recent training. Pupils of different abilities are confident in using their phonics knowledge to read and write unusual words.
- Pupils perceive that there have been improvements in the quality of their education. Pupils in key stage 2 said, 'We learn more in lessons now. Children get on with their work.' The large majority of parents who responded to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, or who spoke with inspectors, were very positive about the quality of teaching.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school. This view is supported by nearly all parents who responded to Parent View. Many parents with whom inspectors spoke commented on the caring, nurturing nature of the school. Pupils spoke eloquently about the value of respect and were emphatic that people should not be treated differently because of

their background, religion or family arrangement.

- Teachers and staff promote pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Inspectors observed class assemblies, in which pupils were asked to consider moral themes, for example considering the impact of Mother Teresa on the lives of others. Pupils showed how they could reflect and share their ideas and feelings; in a PE lesson, the teacher actively promoted the importance of cooperation and teamwork.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils spoke confidently with inspectors about positive changes in behaviour since the appointment of the new headteacher. Many parents also said they felt that behaviour had improved and was improving even further.
- In lessons, pupils listen carefully, work well together, are respectful and apply themselves well to their work. They are polite, confident and enthusiastic. In a small number of lessons, some pupils were a little unsettled when work was not well matched to their needs.
- Leaders monitor attendance closely and use a wide range of strategies to rigorously promote attendance. While still below the national average, attendance for all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, is improving. Leaders' detailed analysis of attendance shows that some patterns of attendance have a significant impact on overall figures. School leaders and governors are working with parents, and an educational welfare officer, as well as employing a member of staff to liaise with the school and families of the Traveller population, in order to continue to improve rates of attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes for pupils require improvement because some groups of pupils, particularly the most able and those who are disadvantaged, do not always make enough progress.
- There are inconsistencies in pupils' attainment and rates of progress in different subjects and classes. In too many instances, over time, pupils do not make the progress expected from their starting points.
- Leaders are aware that outcomes are not yet consistently good and are addressing a legacy of underachievement in many areas. Decisive actions, implementations and staff training are geared towards tackling underachievement. These are beginning to have positive impact, as is evident in improvements in standards in reading. However, more time is needed for many to effectively impact on standards more widely.
- Work in pupils' books shows that lower- and middle-achieving pupils often make expected, and sometimes better than expected, progress. However, this is not consistently good or as rapid as it could be. In mathematics, for example, pupils do not always move on quickly enough to more challenging work, so their progress is slowed.
- In 2016, attainment at the end of key stage 1 was below that seen nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. The number of pupils achieving at the higher levels

was low. School assessment information and work in pupils' books show that standards are improving. In reading, standards are improving in the early years, key stage 1 and key stage 2. The school's own information suggests that the number of pupils on track to pass the phonics screening check in Year 1 is rapidly improving after a significant period of decline.

- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities in most year groups often make similar progress to other pupils as a result of targeted support. However, the assessment of pupils' progress is not yet rigorous enough to effectively evaluate the impact of interventions and ensure consistently strong progress.
- In the early years and key stages 1 and 2, in 2016, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils was often well below that of pupils nationally. Leaders now check more closely on the progress of disadvantaged pupils. They ensure that teachers provide increasingly focused support for those pupils who are falling behind. School information and work in pupils' books show the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils are improving in nearly all areas. However, overall, the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils are still below the figures for pupils nationally.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- The effectiveness of the early years requires improvement because the progress of some children, particularly boys, the most able children and those who are disadvantaged is not always rapid enough. The proportion of children on track to exceed expectations to achieve a good level of development is still too low.
- The deputy headteacher works closely with teachers in the early years to improve the quality of teaching and learning and to improve how children's progress is assessed in order to more effectively plan the next steps in children's learning. Leaders have accurately identified areas for improvement.
- Children's learning journey development records show that children are making improved progress. Expectations for writing are high. Children's written work is sustained, and of good quality. However, while standards are improving in some areas, particularly in reading, this is not consistent across all areas of learning.
- Children are respectful and enjoy their learning. Relationships are positive and children behave very well. During the inspection, children had their lunch outside because the school was being used as a polling station. The children showed good personal development in the way that they happily and sensibly ate their lunches, chatting with their friends and enjoying an unusual day.
- Teachers' questioning in the early years often helps children to make progress in developing their understanding. For example, in a lesson in which children were learning about two- and three-dimensional shapes, the teacher helped the children to understand the different properties of shapes.
- The safety and well-being of children are well managed and the early years welfare arrangements are met.

School details

Unique reference number	141151
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10031206

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	402
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Joan Williams
Headteacher	Mrs Emma Tayler
Telephone number	01858 464112
Website	www.marketharboroughcofe.co.uk
Email address	etayler@mhce.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Market Harborough Church of England Primary Academy is a larger than average-size primary school. Pupils are taught in single-age classes.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds or who speak English as an additional language are below the national averages.
- The proportion of pupils who are of Traveller heritage is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with the national average.

- In 2016, the school met the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The headteacher was appointed to the school in September 2016.
- The school joined the Learn At multi-academy trust in September 2016. The trust itself was formed at the same time.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what an academy should publish on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all year groups, apart from Year 4 who were away on a residential trip during the inspection. Some lessons were observed jointly with the deputy headteacher. Inspectors observed the teaching of early reading skills and listened to pupils reading. Inspectors talked with pupils about their school and looked at examples of their work with subject leaders.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, middle leaders, members of the governing body and chief operating officer of the trust. Discussions explored a wide range of subjects, including safeguarding arrangements.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents, including: the school’s self-evaluation of current performance and plans for improvement; information relating to the safeguarding of pupils; the school’s most recent information on the achievement and progress of pupils; minutes of meetings of the governing body; external review documents; performance management records and the school’s most recent information relating to the attendance of pupils. Inspectors took account of the 15 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors spoke with parents informally at the start of the school day. They took account of the 47 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View.

Inspection team

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Dorothy Martin	Ofsted Inspector

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