

Market Drayton Junior School

Alexandra Road, Market Drayton, Shropshire TF9 3HU

Inspection dates

9–10 November 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher, senior leaders and governors provide clear vision and direction. Pupils, parents and staff unanimously appreciate this leadership. Staff form a united and dedicated team.
- Leaders and governors know the school very well. They address weaknesses quickly and effectively.
- The school's curriculum promotes pupils' basic skills and their love of learning in many subjects. It is supplemented by a wide array of extra-curricular clubs, activities and visits. Pupils enjoy and benefit from these a great deal.
- Most pupils make good progress across a wide range of subjects, including English and mathematics. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher standard at the end of Year 6 has been below average in recent years.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make strong progress. They are very well supported by teachers and teaching assistants.
- Pupils enjoy reading. They read regularly and fluently. Pupils who join the school with weak basic literacy skills catch up quickly. However, pupils' comprehension skills lag a little behind their reading fluency.
- Teachers' recent focus on improving pupils' numeracy has proved successful. Pupils are confident in using calculation. However, the teaching of mathematical reasoning is not as consistently strong across the school.
- Teachers' skilled use of assessment helps pupils to know what they have to do to improve their work. Leaders use assessment information well to help pupils, or groups of pupils, who are falling behind.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are excellent. Teachers establish clear routines that ensure that little time is wasted in lessons. Pupils trust their teachers. They are happy to attempt challenging work and they are eager to learn.
- Pupils' behaviour is impeccable in lessons, at breaktime and at lunchtime. In class, they are attentive, respectful and hard working. At social times, they are courteous, sensible and mature.
- Pupils eagerly take advantage of the school's many leadership and other opportunities. They are confident, caring and considerate. Pupils express their views maturely and articulately.
- Pupils enjoy school and, consequently, attendance is high. They recognise and value the care and support they receive from the school's adults. Pupils feel very safe in school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment at the higher standard in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6, by:
 - improving pupils' comprehension and inference skills in English and other subjects
 - ensuring that all teachers routinely expect pupils to reason and think deeply when solving problems in mathematics.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher and senior leaders have established a clear vision for high-quality education. They are committed to pupils achieving well academically while developing the skills and attitudes that equip them to be successful learners and good citizens. Staff are fully committed to the school's aims. All staff who completed their inspection questionnaire said they are proud to work in the school, which they believe is well led and managed.
- Leaders and governors understand the school's strengths and weaknesses well. Their plans to address areas that need to improve are detailed, clear and effective. Inspectors' evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses matches that of leaders very closely.
- Parents appreciate the education and opportunities which the school provides for their children. All parents who responded to Parent View said that the school is well led and managed, that their child is well looked after and that they would recommend the school to another parent. One parent expressed the views of many when they wrote, 'We cannot praise the school enough. Our children have brilliant, positive teachers, whom we feel we could approach at any time. We are more than happy with this school and our children's progress. Thank you, keep doing what you are doing!'
- Leaders have ensured a high degree of consistency of practice even though several teachers are new to the school this year. For example, all teachers apply the school's marking and feedback policy consistently. Similarly, all staff constantly praise positive behaviour through the school's rewards policy.
- Teachers' use of assessment and leaders' use of assessment information are strengths of the school. Teachers assess pupils' attainment each term. Leaders use this information to identify pupils or groups of pupils who might be doing less well than they should. They then provide extra support that helps these pupils to catch up.
- The school's curriculum has been carefully and thoughtfully constructed to excite and enthuse pupils. It has a clear focus on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy in all years. However, this focus is not to the detriment of other subjects. Pupils spend sufficient time studying the full range of national curriculum subjects. When asked by inspectors which subjects they enjoy, pupils listed a wide range including English and mathematics, but also science, physical education (PE), art, music and history.
- A very wide range of extra-curricular activities, visits and opportunities supplements the taught curriculum well. Almost all pupils participate in at least one extra-curricular activity. Sport is particularly strong and the school holds the Schools Games Mark at the gold level. Participation in sport is high and staff have introduced several non-traditional school sports to engage a wider range of pupils. These include bocchia, archery, golf and badminton. Leaders use the PE and sport premium well to increase pupils' participation in sport and to improve the expertise of school staff.
- High-quality care and support for pupils is evident throughout the school. Provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is particularly effective. Leaders have trained teachers well to plan for these pupils' needs in lessons.

- Teaching assistants provide excellent support in class. An additional class with expert teaching and several adults provides high-quality support for pupils who need it, either for a short period or on an ongoing basis. Additional funding for SEN and/or disabilities is therefore used very effectively.
- Leaders use the pupil premium well to support disadvantaged pupils. Teachers make these pupils a priority when planning lessons and providing feedback. Any pupils who begin to fall behind with their work are helped to catch up. Leaders also use this funding to ensure that all pupils are able to participate in the full range of school activities, such as residential visits.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the quality of teaching across the school because they regularly check on it, using several sources of information including lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work. They provide training that is well targeted to address any weaknesses they find. For example, staff training has contributed to recent improvements in pupils' reading, handwriting and calculation skills. Staff collaborate well, sharing ideas within year teams and across the school. All staff who completed their inspection questionnaire said that leaders use professional development to encourage, challenge and support their improvement. Members of staff new to the school quickly become an important part of the teaching team because of high-quality induction and support from their colleagues.
- Subject leaders form an effective team. They know their areas well, including weaknesses that need to be addressed. They take appropriate action to address issues and can point to the impact that their actions are having.

Governance of the school

- The governing body contains considerable expertise in relevant areas, including education and safeguarding. They carry out regular audits of their skills and seek to recruit governors who might fill any gaps that they identify. For example, the most recent skills audit identified little expertise in governance in different settings. As a result a new governor, with governance experience, has joined the governing body.
- Governors ensure that they are kept up to date through training. They have recently undertaken training in safeguarding and in interpreting published school performance data. Each governor is linked to an aspect of the school development plan. They monitor its progress through school visits and report back to the governing body. Governors receive regular, high-quality, information about many aspects of school life from the headteacher. Consequently, they understand the school's strengths and weaknesses and they make good use of their expertise to hold leaders to account for the school's performance.
- Governors carry out their statutory duties diligently. They check that additional funding, such as the pupil premium, is being spent effectively and is having sufficient impact. They ensure that leaders and teachers are set targets that are well focused on improving teaching and raising standards. They check that safeguarding arrangements are effective.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- All staff understand that keeping pupils safe is their top priority. They provide high levels of care for their pupils, who appreciate the support that adults give them. Vulnerable pupils are supported particularly well. Staff are well trained and regularly updated about safeguarding issues. Consequently, they are quick to identify signs that pupils might need extra help and they pass on their concerns appropriately.
- Safeguarding policies and procedures are clear and well understood by all. Leaders ensure that child-protection records are detailed, well organised and stored securely. Leaders and governors understand how to recruit staff safely and relevant procedures are used appropriately. Governors regularly check that safeguarding is effective through meetings with senior leaders.
- Pupils feel safe in school. All parents who spoke with inspectors and all parents who completed Parent View said that their children feel safe in school. All members of staff who completed their inspection questionnaire said that pupils are safe in school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is characterised by strong, respectful relationships. Teachers know their pupils very well. Pupils like and trust their teachers. Well-established routines in classrooms mean that little time is wasted as pupils move seamlessly from discussing in groups to listening to their teacher's explanation. Pupils are attentive, hard-working and eager to learn.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They use this well when planning lessons as they take account of pupils' abilities and needs. Consequently, lower-attaining pupils or pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are well supported and are able to succeed. Teaching assistants provide excellent support in class for these pupils. Similarly, the most able pupils are usually challenged well so that they do not find work too easy.
- Teachers' use of assessment is consistently strong across the school. They regularly check on pupils' understanding in lessons and they step in to help when necessary. They use questions well to encourage pupils to think and so better understand their work. Pupils' responses also help teachers to know what pupils have learned and understood and where gaps remain. Teachers provide pupils with learning targets. Pupils understand these and are able to show how this feedback helps them to improve their work.
- Teachers plan activities that interest and motivate pupils. Consequently, pupils are enthusiastic and enjoy learning. Pupils were keen to tell inspectors how much they enjoy their lessons in a wide range of subjects including English, mathematics, science, PE, art, computing, history and music.
- The teaching of writing is effective. Pupils write confidently and at length, using correct spelling and grammar. Teachers' recent efforts to improve handwriting have proved successful. Books are typically well organised with neat, legible, cursive handwriting.

- Teaching successfully promotes pupils' reading. Pupils are encouraged to read regularly and most do. Weaker readers are given extra support that helps them to catch up with their peers. Leaders recognise that some pupils' comprehension and ability to make inferences from texts is weak. Regular guided reading sessions are seeing some improvement, but this aspect of reading remains less strong than other areas of English for many pupils.
- A clear focus on improving pupils' basic mathematics skills over recent years has proved successful. Most pupils use basic arithmetic and calculation confidently. The teaching of mathematical reasoning and problem-solving is weaker, although some very effective practice is evident. For example, inspectors observed pupils learning about long multiplication. Having mastered the basic technique, pupils were presented with worked examples that had firstly one missing digit, then two missing digits. Finally they had to explain errors and misconceptions in a worked example. This progression of reasoning and problem-solving served to deepen pupils' understanding very effectively. However, inspectors saw examples in pupils' books where pupils simply completed numerous, near identical calculations that did not deepen their understanding of mathematical concepts. Similarly, pupils are sometimes moved on to completely different topics when they have completed some basic practice, rather than attempting more complex and challenging problems.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils enthusiastically embrace the wide range of opportunities that the school offers them. This is particularly evident in the many ways in which pupils serve others and develop leadership skills. For example, an active school council presents pupils' views to leaders. Members of the sports council help to organise sporting events. 'Eco warriors' maintain the school's green flag status. Librarians help to keep the school's library well organised. The school's gardening club regularly wins awards in the 'Market Drayton in Bloom' competition.
- Pupils feel very safe and well cared for in school. All pupils who spoke to inspectors said that they feel safe in school. They told inspectors that bullying is very rare. Indeed the vast majority have had no first-hand experience of bullying in school. The school's adults model friendly and respectful behaviour. In turn, pupils trust their teachers and other adults to deal with any worries they might have.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, for example when using the internet. Pupils explained to inspectors how they had been taught to protect themselves online by keeping personal information private, by keeping passwords secure and by only being 'friends' with people they know.
- Pupils know about the importance of living a healthy lifestyle. They enjoy physical activity and understand how they should eat healthily. Pupils in Year 5 operate a popular 'fruit tuck shop' during each morning breaktime.
- Residential weeks away in Years 4 and 6 help to broaden pupils' horizons and develop

their confidence and independence. The Year 4 visit to the Conway Centre, Anglesey has an art focus and helps pupils to reflect the school's key 'learning behaviours'. The Year 6 visit to Arthog, Gwynedd, involves a range of outward-bound and team building activities.

- Regular personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education mornings help pupils to understand a wide range of safety and personal-development issues. Pupils are taught PSHE in mixed-age classes and pupils of all ages told inspectors how much they enjoy working with pupils from different year groups.
- The impact of the school's ethos, its rich curriculum and its very wide array of extra-curricular activities, visits and opportunities is clearly evident. Pupils develop into confident, courteous, caring and articulate children. They are resilient and enthusiastic learners. Their time in the school contributes exceedingly well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- In lessons, pupils demonstrate exemplary attitudes to learning. They listen to their teachers and each other attentively. They are keen to offer answers to questions, to share ideas with others and to support their classmates. They are enthusiastic learners who are not afraid to have a go at challenging work, secure in the knowledge of their teachers and classmates' support.
- At breaktime and lunchtime, pupils' behaviour is of the same high standard. They queue for lunch sensibly and the lunch hall is calm and orderly. Pupils sit and eat quietly while one pupil brings glasses of water to any who want one. Outside, pupils are considerate of others as they play. Older pupils check to see if any pupil is sitting on the 'friendship bench' indicating that they are feeling lonely.
- Because pupils behave so well, sanctions are used rarely in school. Exclusion is used appropriately but extremely rarely. The school's behaviour system is used well, and focuses heavily on rewarding good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. Staff reward positive 'learning behaviours' such as persevering, concentrating and understanding others with certificates of recognition. Inspectors observed a weekly 'sharing assembly' where many pupils' positive behaviours and effort were celebrated.
- All pupils who spoke to inspectors said that they enjoy school. They cited many subjects which they enjoy as well as their teachers and the wide range of clubs, visits and activities they take part in as reasons for this. One pupil told inspectors that, 'It is impossible to be bored here.' Consequently, attendance is consistently higher than the national average. Very few pupils are persistently absent. Those who are, often because of medical or other reasons, are well supported while absent and as they return to school.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The school, supported by the local authority, conducts extensive and rigorously moderated assessments of pupils' attainment in all years. For example, pupils take externally marked tests twice in Year 3 and once in each other year. Similarly, English and mathematics assessments are moderated through the North Shropshire Teaching School Alliance and a group of local schools. The school's assessment information shows that pupils make good progress and detailed inspection evidence confirms this to be the case. This is at odds with the most recent published information on pupils' progress because of inaccuracies in the identification of pupils' starting points in that data.
- Over recent years at the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment at the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics has been broadly average. In 2017, it was below average because the cohort was less academically able than in previous years. Most pupils in this year group made good progress from their starting points. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher standard in reading and mathematics has been below average, and a little lower than it ought to have been, for the last two years.
- Pupils make good progress in subjects other than English and mathematics. The well-planned curriculum and good teaching ensure that pupils achieve well in most subjects, including science, PE, history and art. For example, pupils told inspectors about what they had learned through conducting scientific experiments. Inspectors observed pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities making measurable progress as they learned to shoot arrows in an archery lesson. Pupils' high-quality artwork is displayed around the school building.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make strong progress. The teaching of these pupils is very effective and they receive high-quality support from adults in lessons and at other times.
- Disadvantaged pupils make similar good progress as other pupils. Teachers carefully and regularly check on how they are doing and step in if they need extra help. Consequently, there is little difference between these pupils' progress and that of others.
- Leaders and teachers' efforts to accelerate boys' progress have been successful. Differences between boys' and girls' attainment have diminished and, in most classes and subjects, boys and girls achieve similar standards.
- The school promotes reading well. Pupils are enthusiastic, confident and fluent readers. Several pupils join the school unable to read as well as they ought. Leaders quickly identify these pupils. They then provide effective extra help, including phonics teaching where necessary. Consequently, most catch up rapidly.

School details

Unique reference number	123411
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	10043155

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	353
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mary Elkin
Headteacher	Tim Hayward
Telephone number	01630 652 769
Website	www.marketdraytonjunior.co.uk/
Email address	admin@marketdrayton-jun.shropshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13–14 December 2012

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- It is larger than the average-sized junior school. It became a foundation school in 2014.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above average.
- The school has an average proportion of disadvantaged pupils.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in lessons, and some of these observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors paid particular attention to the work in pupils' books to make judgements about pupils' progress. They carried out a detailed scrutiny of books belonging to pupils in Year 5.
- Inspectors talked with many pupils about their learning and their attitudes to, and opinions about, school. They observed pupils at breaktime and lunchtime and as they moved around the school.
- Inspectors visited an assembly.
- A wide range of documents were scrutinised including information relating to governance, attendance, behaviour, safeguarding, pupils' progress and the checks made on the quality of teaching.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, middle leaders, teachers and five governors including the acting chair of the governing body.
- The lead inspector met with a representative of the local authority and spoke on the telephone with another. He held a telephone conversation with the headteacher of a local secondary school.
- Inspectors took account of parents' views by considering 27 responses to Parent View, including 15 'free-text' comments. They also spoke with several parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors took account of 21 responses received on Ofsted's staff inspection questionnaire.

Inspection team

Alun Williams, lead inspector

Janet Lewis

Matt Wilson

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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