

Marland Hill Community Primary School

Roch Mills Crescent, Off Roch Valley Way, Rochdale, Lancashire OL11 4QW

Inspection dates

9–10 May 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- School leaders have very successfully addressed a sharp decline in standards that followed the previous inspection. Their excellent leadership has ensured that the school is now firmly back on track.
- Leadership at all levels across the school is of a very high standard. This has led to rates of pupils' progress improving strongly in key stage 2. Attainment is rising throughout the school, including for disadvantaged pupils.
- Children get off to a flying start in early years. Excellent teaching and leadership have ensured that the proportion of children achieving a good level of development has risen sharply.
- Highly effective phonics teaching has ensured that an above-average proportion of pupils reach the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, including those in the hearing impaired resource base, are extremely well supported and so make good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils' behaviour around school and attitudes to learning are outstanding. Pupils' above-average attendance rates illustrate how much they enjoy coming to school.
- The school provides excellent care and support for potentially vulnerable pupils and their families.
- Governance is a significant strength of the school. Governors bring excellent levels of knowledge and experience and very effectively hold school leaders to account.
- The curriculum is suitably broad and well-balanced, with notable strengths in art, outdoor learning and physical education (PE).
- Teaching across the school is of a consistently good standard, and some is highly effective. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and typically use assessment well to plan next steps in pupils' learning. However, not all teachers provide the most able pupils with the challenge they need to reach the very highest standards.
- Teachers ensure that pupils quickly develop a good level of mathematical fluency and problem-solving. The development of pupils' reasoning skills is also improving, although this area is stronger in some classes than others.
- Pupils write well in a range of styles and are broadening their vocabulary well. However, errors in spelling, punctuation and handwriting that are the legacy of previously less effective teaching are evident in some pupils' work and are not consistently well addressed.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning and so accelerate pupils' progress, particularly in key stage 2, by:
 - ensuring that teachers consistently provide the most able pupils with tasks that challenge them to reach the high standards of which they are capable
 - ensuring that teachers consistently address errors and misconceptions in pupils' basic skills in spelling, grammar and handwriting
 - making sure that teachers provide pupils with sufficient opportunities to use and develop their reasoning skills in mathematics
 - ensuring that the very strong practice evident in some classes is effectively shared across the school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- Leaders have very skilfully and successfully steered the school through a challenging period and have reversed a disturbing decline in the school's fortunes. Standards that were too low have risen significantly, particularly in early years and key stage 1, where the turnaround has been especially strong. Marland Hill is once again providing pupils with a good quality of education, and there is no sign of improvements stopping.
- School leaders, including governors, have an excellent appreciation of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Their plans to keep the school moving forwards at a rapid pace are very well thought out, accurately pinpointing the next steps to take and setting out with great clarity how improvements will be made and measured. Leaders' excellent record of securing improvements so far and the high quality of improvement planning amply illustrate the great capacity of leaders to further improve standards.
- Leaders, governors and staff all show a very high level of commitment to the school. There is a real shared purpose about their desire to succeed. Staff say that they thoroughly enjoy working at Marland Hill and have benefited greatly from an excellent range of professional development opportunities. Newly and recently qualified teachers have been particularly well supported, as school leaders created a leadership role specifically dedicated to overseeing their welfare and development. This innovative and successful step is one example of leaders' pro-active approach to improving the quality of teaching and learning. There is scope for making more use of some of the highly effective practice within school to further develop the skills of less experienced staff.
- Continuing professional development is used effectively to develop staff skills and knowledge. Staff say that they particularly enjoy the opportunity to work with colleagues from other schools in their local network. This is typical of the impressively reflective approach of the staff, who are keen to learn and further develop their own practice.
- Leadership at a range of different levels is extremely strong. Subject leaders for English and mathematics have secured improvements in their areas of responsibility, but are also realistic about other improvements that they wish to make. Leadership in other areas is also very effective and illustrates the successful way in which the headteacher and other senior staff have developed individuals' leadership skills.
- The leadership of provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, including those in the hearing impaired resource base, is highly effective. Pupils within the base are very well integrated into the school while also benefiting from highly skilled specialist provision. The high number of pupils who have education, health and care plans are well supported. Funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is put to very good use so that this group of pupils typically make at least good progress from their individual starting points.
- Other additional funding received by the school is also used very effectively. Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils are improving strongly. Many disadvantaged pupils also benefit from the excellent pastoral care and family support work that the school provides. This represents effective use of pupil premium funding. The funding for primary school PE and sport is also used extremely well. The leader for PE

enthusiastically oversees a high-quality programme of in-school and extra-curricular sports and games activities and many pupils have the chance to represent the school in inter-school competitions.

- The school provides pupils with a broad and well-balanced curriculum that allows them to develop subject-specific skills and knowledge in a number of areas. There are particular strengths within the teaching of art, PE and music, in which areas subject-specialists on the staff play a major role. The quality of artwork on display around the school is especially commendable.
- The curriculum is further enhanced by a range of trips out of school, such as to Manchester Museum, the local theatre and to take part in outward-bound activities. The school also makes very good provision for pupils to learn outdoors in its own wooded outdoor learning area.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very effectively. Pupils are taught and learn to show respect for other people's beliefs and ideas. Leaders ensure that there is good coverage of topics linked to British values, work from which is displayed all around school. Respect and tolerance are words that are regularly heard around school. The seamless way in which pupils newly arrived from abroad slot into school life is the clearest indication of how welcoming the school is to people of all backgrounds and beliefs.
- Excellent provision is in place to support pupils who speak English as an additional language. Focused interventions and high-quality in-class support ensure that pupils quickly develop the language skills that they need so that they can quickly make friends and catch up with their learning.
- The local authority has provided the school with effective support and challenge, and the school also works very effectively with a network of schools located within the local area, arranging professional development activities and sharing best practice.

Governance of the school

- Governance at Marland Hill is of the highest quality. Governors are extremely knowledgeable and bring with them a wealth of experience both of education and the wider world. They are aware that the school's effectiveness declined following the previous inspection, and that standards were not high enough. Governors actively sought the advice of skilled and experienced school improvement professionals to bring greater rigour to the school's self-evaluation, and continue to welcome such scrutiny to ensure that improvements continue.
- Governors have worked extremely effectively with school leaders to secure a significant upturn in the school's fortunes and have a clear and accurate view of the school's current strengths and areas that require further development. They hold school leaders robustly to account for the quality of education on offer, asking thoughtful, probing questions to ensure that no stone is left unturned in the pursuit of excellence.
- Governors have a very secure understanding of how effectively school leaders use additional funding, including the primary school PE and sport funding and pupil premium funding. They have put secure procedures in place for managing the performance of the headteacher and teachers and ensure that decisions they make about pay progression are fair and well informed.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The headteacher ensures that thorough checks are made on staff, governors and regular visitors to the school to make sure that they are suitable people to work with children. The school maintains detailed records of these checks.
- School leaders have ensured that staff and governors receive regular training to make sure that their understanding of safeguarding practice is kept up to date. Staff know what to do if they are worried about a child's welfare and there are excellent systems in place to ensure that any concerns are carefully recorded and swiftly acted upon.
- The school provides high-quality support for vulnerable pupils and families through its own family support and pastoral team. Leaders have also established effective working relationships with a range of external agencies.
- The school's work to protect pupils from radicalisation is of a very high quality. Staff are well trained, understand potential indicators that may give cause for concern and are clear about the steps to follow if they do have a concern. The school website provides helpful guidance for parents and carers as well, aptly illustrating leaders' determination to keep all pupils safe from potential harm.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Effective, well-planned teaching which effectively builds on pupils' prior knowledge is now the norm at Marland Hill, and in some subjects and classes teaching is of an especially high quality. Teachers typically have good subject knowledge which allows them to provide pupils with clear explanations and instructions. They also use questions successfully to check what pupils know and use assessment well to plan next steps in learning, particularly for lower- and middle-ability pupils.
- Reading is given a high priority across school, and teachers work hard to ensure that they develop pupils' reading skills alongside fostering a love of reading. Their efforts are bearing fruit and outcomes in reading are improving strongly. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils typically have become keen readers. Teachers ensure that pupils experience a range of texts and authors. Pupils talk enthusiastically about visiting the library and about their favourite authors, including Malorie Blackman, Michael Morpurgo and C S Lewis.
- The teaching of phonics is highly effective, leading to a continuing rise in the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Teachers and teaching assistants have a strong knowledge of phonics, and the school's consistent approach to teaching phonics maximises progress. Although phonics is now taught very well, the impact of previously less effective phonics teaching can be seen in some older pupils' spelling, where weaker understanding leads to errors being made.
- Teachers ensure that pupils develop the ability to write well across a range of different types and styles of writing. They provide them with a range of opportunities to practise and refine the skills linked to different genre, such as using evocative vocabulary when writing a description of a character or setting. Consequently, pupils write with

increasing confidence and sophistication as they move through the school. The overall effect of their writing is, however, sometimes dampened by errors in spelling and punctuation or by underdeveloped handwriting which teachers have not been consistently quick enough to challenge.

- Mathematics is taught effectively across the school. Pupils learn to work confidently with numbers and develop mathematical fluency. Teachers provide them with plenty of opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills to problem-solving tasks. There is also a focus on developing pupils' reasoning skills across the school. In the classes where this has been most successful, pupils are able to discuss and debate their suggestions and solutions to problems articulately, demonstrating a very good understanding of the mathematical concepts involved.
- Support for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, or who are in danger of falling behind, is successful across the school. This includes pupils who attend the hearing impaired resource base. Specialist teachers, well supported by skilled teaching assistants, ensure that all pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities typically make at least good progress from their different starting points. However, the rates of progress made by the most able pupils are less consistently strong because not all teachers provide this group of pupils with sufficient challenge, or do not fully appreciate how much the most able pupils are capable of achieving.
- There are some notable strengths in teaching across the wider curriculum, particularly where subject specialists lead learning. For example, teaching in art, music and PE is leading to pupils making swift progress and producing impressive work in those areas.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- School leaders have ensured that the school very successfully achieves its goal of promoting 'values and attitudes of care, tolerance, trust and respect'. These values are evident in the daily life of the school, allowing pupils of all backgrounds and abilities to thrive in a safe and nurturing environment.
- Excellent pastoral systems support all of the work that the school does. Pupils newly arrived in school, many from overseas and with limited understanding of English, are very well cared for so that they settle into school quickly and happily. Staff know pupils well; potential barriers to learning are swiftly spotted and appropriate support put in place.
- The school very effectively teaches pupils how to keep themselves safe in different situations, such as when using the internet, and ensures that pupils are aware of different types of bullying, such as cyber bullying. Pupils have no concerns about bullying in school and say that they feel very safe and well looked after.
- Pupils develop great confidence as learners. They quickly learn that making mistakes is an important part of learning, and so are happy to 'have a go' at tricky questions and to ask an adult for help when they are unsure of something.
- The school promotes healthy living well. Very good use is made of the additional

funding for PE and sport, meaning that pupils have access to a wide variety of healthy, sporty activities both in lessons and after school. More than nine out of 10 pupils have taken part in extra-curricular activities this year, which is a highly impressive participation rate. Pupils also benefit from being able to choose from a range of healthy snacks on offer at breaktimes.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils' conduct around school is exemplary. They walk very sensibly in the corridors and are quick to hold doors open for visitors. At breaktimes, pupils play well together, making very good use of the extensive grounds and wide range of equipment available. Pupils mix extremely well and ensure that nobody is left without someone to play with.
- Pupils say that this high standard of behaviour is typical in their school. Staff display high expectations of pupils' conduct, which pupils respond to extremely well. Pupils particularly like the clear system that the school has in place to reward good behaviour. They say that staff deal quickly and effectively with any rare instances of poor behaviour that do occur. Leaders provide highly effective support for those pupils who otherwise struggle to manage their own behaviour, and so disruptions to learning are few and far between.
- Pupils in all year groups demonstrate extremely positive attitudes to learning. They listen well to their teachers and to other pupils and show a real keenness to answer questions and offer their own ideas and suggestions. They settle quickly to the activities that teachers have set for them so that a minimal amount of teaching time is wasted.
- A number of parents commented on how much their children enjoyed school. One typical comment was: 'My child is really happy and loves coming to school.' This is evident in pupils' rates of attendance, which are typically above average and continue to improve.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- There was a marked decline in pupils' outcomes following the previous inspection, so that attainment and progress measures at the end of key stage 2 were regularly well below the national average. Leaders have successfully reversed this decline, and standards are rising once again. In key stage 2 in 2017, pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics was in line with other schools nationally. Outcomes in key stage 1 were stronger still, with pupils' attainment being at national average in reading and mathematics and higher in writing.
- The school's tracking information indicates that current pupils are typically making at least good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. In some subjects, most notably mathematics, and year groups, particularly in key stage 1, rates of progress are extremely strong. Work in pupils' books confirms that this is the case.
- The performance of disadvantaged pupils across the school is improving strongly. In 2017, the progress of disadvantaged pupils by the end of key stage 2 was broadly in

line with others nationally. Although the attainment of disadvantaged pupils was below average, the difference in attainment with other pupils nationally closed significantly, particularly in key stage 1. Current school tracking information confirms that these improvements are continuing. Disadvantaged pupils currently in the school are making good progress in their learning when compared with other pupils in the school and nationally, and in some year groups are now outperforming their classmates.

- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, including those who attend the hearing impaired resource base, make good progress from their different starting points and regularly reach their individual targets. This is because they benefit from support that is carefully planned and effectively delivered.
- The achievement of pupils who speak English an additional language is typically at least on a par with other pupils in the school. In 2017, the proportion of this group of pupils at the end of key stage 2 who reached the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics was in line with other pupils nationally.
- As a result of highly effective leadership and improved teaching, outcomes in the Year 1 phonics screening check have improved significantly from being typically below average to now being consistently above average. Pupils quickly gain a secure grasp of phonics and this helps them to develop broader skills in both reading and writing. However, the impact of previously weaker performance in phonics is evident in many key stage 2 pupils' spelling, as pupils make too many errors in spelling common and regularly formed words.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the higher standards by the end of both key stage 1 and key stage 2 rose in 2017. The school's current assessment data, supported by evidence in pupils' books, shows that outcomes for the most able pupils are continuing to improve. However, this improvement is not yet consistent across all classes and subjects because teachers do not consistently provide sufficient challenge in the work that they set for the most able pupils.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- The substantial and sustained improvement in the quality of early years provision has been one of the most significant developments at Marland Hill in recent years. Children typically enter early years with levels of skill and knowledge below those typical for their age, and with particular differences in terms of communication, literacy and numeracy. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development at the end of early years has risen from fewer than one in 10 in 2013 to now be in line with the national average. Children now get off to a flying start to their school careers and are well prepared to continue their learning in Year 1.
- Around two thirds of the children currently in Reception class also attended the school Nursery. School tracking shows that their progress from the start of Nursery has been excellent, and that a number are exceeding the level expected of them at the end of Reception class in a number of areas of learning. Those children whose first experience of school comes at the start of Reception class also make very swift progress but from typically lower starting points than those who have also attended Nursery.
- The early years leader is extremely knowledgeable and enthusiastic. She has an excellent understanding of the quality of provision in early years and uses data

exceptionally effectively to track the progress of groups and individuals and so ensure that the provision on offer is very well matched to their needs. She has ensured that links between school and home are effective and developing strongly, particularly through the use of online communication between school and home. She also makes sure that there are no breaches of statutory welfare requirements.

- Teaching in the early years is first class. Staff are extremely knowledgeable. They assess children's learning and progress exceptionally accurately and skilfully use their knowledge of individual children to identify children's future learning needs and then move their learning forward swiftly. Staff work very well as a team.
- The learning environment, both indoors and outside, is highly welcoming and engaging. Staff ensure that children have access to a wide range of very well-chosen activities, and that there is a very well-judged mix of child-led and adult-initiated tasks. Children's books and learning journeys show that they have had an excellent range of opportunities to develop and practise their skills and deepen their knowledge and understanding.
- The standard of behaviour in the early years is highly impressive. Staff ensure that children settle in happily, developing positive relationships with each other and with their teachers. Children quickly develop a love of learning. They give full attention during adult-led sessions, listening and joining in enthusiastically. When accessing the provision independently, children play and work together extremely happily.

School details

Unique reference number	105778
Local authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	10048650

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	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	473
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rosemary Nunwick
Headteacher	Joanne Cunningham
Telephone number	01706 647147
Website	www.marlandhillprimary.co.uk
Email address	office@marlandhill.rochdale.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	16 May 2013

Information about this school

- Marland Hill is a larger-than-average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above average. The school has specialist provision for up to eight pupils in its hearing impaired resource base.
- The proportion of pupils from different minority ethnic backgrounds is well above average, and over 30 languages are spoken by pupils attending the school.
- Children in the early years provision attend the Nursery part-time and Reception class on a full-time basis.
- In 2017, the school met the government's floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning across the school. They also looked at pupils' work in books, records of children's learning in the early years and other information about pupils' attainment and progress.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and held discussions with two further groups of pupils. They also talked informally with pupils around the school.
- There were no responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. However, inspectors did take account of the responses to a parental survey carried out recently by the school. They also talked informally with parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors met a group of three governors, including the chair of the governing body. They also had discussions with staff in the school, including the leaders responsible for the provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, the leader for the early years and the leaders for English, mathematics and PE.
- Inspectors had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors examined several documents. These included information about pupils' attainment and progress, the school's reviews of its own performance and records of meetings of the governing body. They also examined safeguarding documentation and various records of pupils' attendance and behaviour.
- The inspection was initially instigated following a complaint to Ofsted. The inspection did not investigate the complaint itself, but the broader issues raised by the complaint were considered as part of the inspection process.

Inspection team

Neil Dixon, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Doreen Davenport	Ofsted Inspector
Barbara Harrold	Ofsted Inspector
John Shutt	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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