

# Sir Martin Frobisher Academy

Frobisher Drive, Jaywick, Clacton-on-Sea, Essex CO15 2QH

## Inspection dates

11–12 June 2019

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Until recently, actions by the REAch2 Academy Trust (the trust) have not raised pupils' achievement quickly enough. Outcomes in pupils' reading, writing and mathematics have been too low over time.
- The quality of teaching and learning varies too much across year groups. As a result, too few pupils are meeting the attainment targets for their ages in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders do not carefully evaluate the work they do to improve pupils' attendance. Although improving, attendance remains too low and too many pupils regularly miss school.
- Some leaders, new in post, are not making a strong enough impact on the quality of education.
- Teachers do not always plan activities that challenge the most able pupils so that they can reach the higher standards of attainment in reading and mathematics or greater depth in writing by the end of Year 6.
- Teachers do not routinely assess pupils' learning in lessons. This results in some pupils not being able to access the work because activities are too hard.
- In early years, adults have not received the necessary training to know how to move children on quickly in their learning. They do not model handwriting correctly.
- The quality of phonics teaching is variable. Pupils are not acquiring early reading skills well enough.

### The school has the following strengths

- New leadership has brought about rapid improvements this school year. Pupils are beginning to catch up in reading, writing and mathematics and to make better progress, particularly in key stage 2.
- Strong systems for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are in place and beginning to show a positive impact on improving pupils' outcomes.
- Pupils are polite and respectful and develop positive relationships with staff. Most pupils enjoy school and are enthusiastic about their learning.
- Leaders provide a safe environment for pupils to learn. Staff are vigilant and ensure that pupils are well looked after.

## Full report

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

- Improve pupils' achievement, by:
  - ensuring that, by the end of Reception, children have developed secure early reading, writing and mathematical skills
  - ensuring that pupils' progress and attainment by the end of key stage 2 are at least in line with national averages and sustained over time
  - increasing the proportions of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6, especially the most able pupils, attaining greater depth or the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management, by:
  - evaluating the impact of their work more closely, particularly for attendance, to know what works well so that it improves and reduces persistent non-attendance
  - continuing to develop leaders' skills at all levels so that more are making a significant contribution to school improvement.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, by:
  - ensuring that handwriting and letter formation are accurately taught in early years and key stage 1
  - ensuring that pupils apply their knowledge of sounds accurately when reading and writing
  - adapting learning activities to ensure that all groups of pupils are challenged and stimulated to persevere and excel
  - making sure that teachers use assessment information accurately to plan learning that meets the needs of all pupils in their class.
- Improve the provision in early years, by:
  - ensuring that teaching of early reading develops children's phonics skills effectively and enables them to use their knowledge and understanding of the sounds that letters represent accurately to read and write
  - providing training for all staff so that they are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to support all children to make good progress in all areas of learning so that they are well prepared for learning in Year 1.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Since joining the trust, leaders' actions to raise pupils' achievement have not been well thought through. However, the new dynamic and strategic leadership now in place has seen significant improvements over this school year. More pupils in all year groups are making better progress and more pupils are working at age-related expectations.
- The new executive headteacher has approached the much-needed school improvements determinedly. In September, she immediately set about identifying weaknesses in the quality of teaching and learning that had led to significant gaps in pupils' skills and knowledge and hampered pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics. She has achieved some quick wins. Staff have a better understanding of leaders' high expectations.
- Leaders have an established system for monitoring the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. They monitor pupils' progress in English and mathematics closely. However, leaders do not use this information to take immediate action and improve the progress that pupils make.
- The school's themed curriculum inspires and motivates pupils across a range of subjects. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the different topics that happen several times throughout the term. Planning and pupils' work across year groups show that pupils build on their prior knowledge and skills through carefully planned sequences of topics and activities. However, there are still fundamental gaps in pupils' knowledge in subjects such as design and technology and computing.
- Leaders are ensuring that they are increasing opportunities to develop pupils' moral, social and cultural understanding. The school's 'Aim High' value is fostered through planned curriculum enrichment activities. Trips to Essex University are arranged for pupils to explore their own future opportunities and pupils also enjoy team-building weekends. All pupils leave Year 6 having achieved a level 1 sailing award. Trips to the Methodist church and litter picking at the local beach give pupils a sense of community and belonging. Pupils are confident individuals, and when spoken with, were able to discuss their aspirations for the future.
- There are new systems in place to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Until recently, leadership of SEND did not check that support for pupils with SEND was effective. Leaders have identified that more training is required so that support staff can deliver interventions more effectively and to support pupils with specific needs such as autism spectrum disorder.
- Leaders of English and mathematics are beginning to have an impact on pupils' learning. However, they have not had time to evaluate all that they do so that they know precisely what is working well.
- Funding is used effectively to support the high proportion of disadvantaged pupils to be ready to learn. For example, the school's breakfast club encourages families to better support their children to attend school more regularly. However, leaders have not fully evaluated the impact of all spending so that they know precisely what is working well.
- Leaders use the physical education (PE) and sport premium funding to provide pupils

with a wide variety of sports and events. Pupils take part in inter-school events and football and dodgeball tournaments and achieve success, with teams finishing in high positions this year. During National Sports Week, pupils experienced taster sessions in golf and judo. Even so, curriculum requirements such as dance are not currently being taught and teachers are not benefiting from training in PE. Leaders have not evaluated the impact of funding for PE.

- Pupils learn about British values. Pupil governors were elected through a democratic voting system and displays show that pupils have taken some part in creating posters. However, for some pupils, there is a significant gap in their understanding of different cultures and religions to prepare them fully for life in modern Britain.
- New systems in place hold staff stringently to account for the progress pupils make. There are early signs that this is having a positive impact on improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- The trust provides a wide range of professional development for leaders, teachers and assistants. Experienced leaders across the trust work with less experienced staff within the school to help develop skills and subject knowledge. However, more training is needed for staff who work with children in early years and for all teachers in subjects such as PE.

### **Governance of the school**

- Due to recent departures of members of the governing body, the trust has put in place an intervention board.
- Governors are aware that there is an urgency to raise pupils' achievement across the school in every subject. Having acted too slowly in the past, governors are working closely with school leaders, ensuring that the trust provides training and professional development to staff at all levels to support the many areas requiring improvement.
- A regional director within the trust has taken on the temporary role as chair of the governing body. The trust's chief executive is also closely involved with the school. They know the school well and liaise closely with the executive headteacher to provide clear strategic direction.
- Governors visit the school regularly to check the information they are provided with by school leaders. The trust has an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school's performance. However, inspectors found that minutes of some meetings of the governing body were not recorded accurately.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. School leaders, governors and representatives from the trust have ensured that the school is a safe and secure place for pupils and staff.
- Staff and governors are appropriately trained, in line with current national requirements. Records are well kept, and staff are knowledgeable about raising concerns they may have about the welfare of a pupil. In the staff questionnaire, all staff stated that pupils are safe.

- There is a strong safeguarding culture within the community. Staff are vigilant, and report concerns immediately to those who need to know. Staff are aware of the potential dangers of county lines and those who may be at risk. They are quick to pick up on pupils who may be at risk of being radicalised.
- The designated senior leaders know the pupils and the school community well. They are meticulous in their recordings and act immediately, liaising very effectively with agencies, to ensure that pupils they are concerned about get the right support quickly.
- Children who are looked after and other vulnerable pupils who are a concern to the school are tracked thoroughly in terms of their attendance and well-being.
- Leaders ensure that pupils are taught about online safety and the dangers when playing online games. There are secure systems in place to follow up swiftly and address any concerns that staff have if pupils are thought to be engaging in unsuitable online activities.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe and are safe at school.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

### Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is too variable across classes and subjects. The trust is providing specific staff training to develop teachers' English and mathematical subject knowledge. This is having a positive impact on improving the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Even so, pupils' work and teaching seen during the inspection demonstrate that not enough pupils complete learning activities that are well matched to their skills and abilities.
- Teachers are not using assessment information effectively to plan activities that meet the needs of all pupil groups. On too many occasions, teaching activities are too broad and do not move individuals on from their starting points, including those pupils who are disadvantaged and those who are most able.
- The teaching of phonics is not yet secure in key stage 1. The school's chosen programme for teaching phonics is supporting most pupils in key stage 1 to catch up. The school recently chose and implemented a new phonics programme. There are some inconsistencies in the way adults deliver the programme as it is so new to them.
- Pupils who did not reach the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check are beginning to read confidently using their phonics knowledge accurately. They read books accurately matched to their reading ability and could explain the meanings behind the words. However, some pupils in key stage 1 are given reading tasks that are beyond their capabilities and therefore not supported to make the progress they should.
- The quality of teaching and learning in reading and writing is improving. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy reading and were able to talk about their favourite authors. Leaders have accurately identified gaps in pupils' knowledge and are working hard to address them. Teachers consistently focus on vocabulary in lessons, and classroom displays support pupils to develop their vocabulary using exciting word choices. Essential vocabulary is discussed in topic work, and books show pupils using this well in their writing.

- Leaders identified that pupils needed more support to help them understand and develop the confidence to attempt difficult mathematical ideas. Evidence indicates that pupils are becoming more proficient in applying their number skills to more complex mathematical tasks. However, sometimes pupils are not sufficiently challenged. In some instances, time for learning is not maximised. For example, pupils were observed waiting when they had finished their work early.
- Pupils with SEND are supported well by additional adults so that they can access their learning with increasing confidence.
- The teaching of subjects other than English and mathematics is variable. Not all aspects of the PE curriculum are being taught and pupils' work shows that the full curriculum is not being covered sufficiently across all year groups.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Requires improvement

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Leaders have not ensured that all pupils have a sufficient understanding of life outside their community. Year 6 pupils spoken with were not able to talk confidently about equality and cultural diversity or current news topics such as Brexit.
- Pupils spoken with in Year 6 were confident, polite and respectful. Some spoke of their aspirations to follow in their family's footsteps, while others wanted a lucrative career. They all felt that they were ready for the challenges of secondary school.
- Leaders ensure that the most vulnerable pupils are well looked after. They make every effort to ensure that pupils attend school regularly and that families get support to make this happen.
- Leaders have a good understanding of pupils' mental, emotional and behavioural health. They work well with external agencies to get the right support to help pupils. They have had much success in developing pupils' confidence and resilience.
- Pupils are taught how to stay safe online and the effect of online activity on their digital footprint.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Attendance is tracked very well and procedures for following up absences are rigorous. Although improving, pupils' attendance is still too low. In addition, too many pupils have been permanently excluded and the rate of persistent absence still remains too high.
- Pupils seen on inspection were polite and respectful to adults. They mostly listen well in lessons and when teaching is effective and are enthusiastic about their learning. In some lessons, where activities are not well matched to pupils' needs, attitudes to their learning are not always as positive as they could be. As a result, low-level disruption

takes place.

- Pupils are keen to discuss their aspirations. Year 6 pupils spoken with are confident and excited about the next phase of their education.
- Pupils told inspectors that bullying does not happen at the school. They recognise the improvement to be because of the new behaviour systems. Leaders have ensured that pupils know about the different types of bullying and the difference between bullying and 'falling out' with a friend.
- Within the small number of parents who responded to Ofsted's free-text service, some were concerned that bullying incidents had not been dealt with sufficiently. Inspectors found that the school's new behaviour systems are having a positive impact on pupils' behaviour.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Requires improvement

- Pupils' attainment and progress over time have been typically well below national averages at the end of key stage 2. Although many pupils enter the school with skills typically low for their age, they are keen, enthusiastic and able learners. Pupils have not made enough progress in each key stage.
- Pupils' achievement varies across key stages, particularly in reading and writing. Pupils of different abilities do not make enough progress. For example, in key stage 1, the less able pupils are not provided with precise enough support or resources to develop their independence and skills.
- Published data for key stage 1 shows an improving picture over time in reading, writing and mathematics. However, pupils' work and speaking with pupils indicate that their progress and attainment are still not good enough.
- The most able pupils do not make as much progress as they could from their starting points. By the end of the academic year in 2018, no Year 6 pupils reached the higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined.
- Disadvantaged pupils are given support to access their learning. They are closely monitored by leaders and teachers and are provided with small-group support to catch up. Too few reach the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics before they leave the school. Although current pupils are making better progress, it is not yet good.
- Pupils with SEND make similar progress to their peers from their individual starting points. Adults provide effective support. However, it is currently too soon to evaluate the impact of new leadership on the progress these pupils make.
- Phonics attainment fell well below the national average in 2018. The school's assessment information, listening to pupils read and observations of teaching in key stage 1 show a far more positive picture. New strategies to improve teaching in reading have recently helped some pupils to catch up.
- Pupils' topic work is neatly presented, and it is evident that pupils have many opportunities to develop skills in science, history, geography and art. There is limited evidence, however, of learning in other subjects such as modern foreign languages,

design and technology, and computing.

## Early years provision

## Requires improvement

- Children start Reception with skills and abilities typically low for their age. Historical published attainment information indicates that too few children reach a good level of development by the time they leave Reception.
- The recently appointed leader has ensured that there are clear and established routines in place. Children know what is expected of them and respond well to adults' instructions. However, activities are not always matched to children's abilities, adults do not move children's learning on quickly enough and too often time is lost while children wait to start the next activity.
- There is inconsistency in the teaching and learning of handwriting across Reception. Not all adults model handwriting effectively. As a result, children do not develop handwriting skills well enough by the time they enter key stage 1.
- Some adults have not had sufficient training to teach phonics effectively. Adults' pronunciation of sounds is not always accurate. As a result, children do not develop an accurate understanding and therefore this hinders them in making good progress in phonics.
- Leaders are rightly giving speaking and listening and communication and language a high priority. Gaps in children's vocabulary are being addressed through engaging themes that immerse children in stories and rich language. Regular storytelling and additional phonics teaching are helping children to catch up.
- Children engage enthusiastically while listening to stories. Well-chosen topics, such as the pirate theme, capture children's imagination and encourage them to be inquisitive, ask questions and offer their ideas about what might happen next in the story. Leaders build on this enthusiasm so that they can tackle writing and number tasks with confidence across the many areas of learning. This is helping most children to make better progress from their different starting points across the early years curriculum.
- Children in Nursery are confident and can work on a task independently for a sustained period of time. They willingly share their learning with adults and engage in activities with a clear purpose.
- Adults know the children well and children's work shows that they are making better progress over this current school year.
- Children are safe and well looked after in early years. Safeguarding is effective and welfare requirements for early years are met.



## School details

Unique reference number	143121
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10088639

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	265
Appropriate authority	The board of trustees
Chair	Tim Culpin
Executive Headteacher	Sarah Barton
Telephone number	01255 427073
Website	<a href="http://www.smfa.org.uk">www.smfa.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:head.teacher@smfa.org.uk">head.teacher@smfa.org.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Sir Martin Frobisher Primary School joined the REAch2 Academy Trust in September 2016.
- The school currently has an intervention board in place that is responsible for governance.
- The school has nine classes and a Nursery. In key stage 1 and key stage 2, pupils are taught in mixed-age classes that include two year groups.
- Most pupils are White British. Few pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through pupil premium funding is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average.
- Since September, there has been a new executive headteacher. Since January, several

staff have joined the teaching and the senior leadership team.

## **Information about this inspection**

- This was the school’s first inspection as an academy.
- The inspectors observed teaching and learning across all year groups.
- The inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher, senior leaders, school staff and the trust’s chief executive.
- The inspection team looked at pupils’ written work, information on pupils’ attainment and progress, curriculum planning and records of leaders’ monitoring of subjects. The inspectors also looked at the minutes of governing body meetings, safeguarding documents (including mandatory checks made on the recruitment of staff), and the school’s website.
- Discussions were held with groups of pupils from key stages 1 and 2 and informal conversations with pupils took place during lessons.
- The inspectors took account of 19 responses to Ofsted’s online parent questionnaire, Parent View, 10 responses to Ofsted’s free-text service, and five responses to the staff survey. Inspectors also spoke with parents at the beginning of the school day.

### **Inspection team**

Cindy Impey, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Ashley Best-White	Ofsted Inspector
Simon Harbrow	Ofsted Inspector

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