

Market Harborough Church of England Academy

Fairfield Road, Market Harborough, Leicestershire LE16 9QH

Inspection dates

2–3 July 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The school has improved considerably since the last inspection, as a result of strong, determined leadership.
- Leaders quickly established clear plans for improvement. The resulting actions have led to improved teaching in most year groups, and improved attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The quality of teaching and support for disadvantaged pupils has improved rapidly. In 2018, disadvantaged pupils' progress was above that of other pupils nationally.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils. They insist that pupils present their work to a high standard, and pupils' books confirm their pride in their work.
- Teachers use skilful assessment and questioning to ensure that pupils develop secure understanding and work productively in lessons.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Leaders' current work to review the curriculum has had a marked impact on the quality of teaching and learning in science and history.
- Relationships are strong throughout the school and pupils in all year groups show positive attitudes to learning.
- Safeguarding procedures are effective. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and that bullying is rare.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They collaborate well in lessons and show courtesy and kindness at playtimes and as they move around school.
- Leadership and teaching in the early years are good. Children make good progress during the Reception Year and are well prepared for Year 1. On occasion, the outdoor activities in the afternoon sessions do not support children's learning and development as effectively as those in the morning.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved. However, in some instances, the most able pupils are not moved on quickly enough to more demanding activities.
- Pupils' awareness and appreciation of a range of faiths and cultures other than Christianity are not as well promoted as other areas of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - the recent improvements in science and history are expanded and embedded across the curriculum
 - pupils have increased opportunities to develop stronger awareness and appreciation of a range of faiths and cultures, so that they are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in mathematics, by ensuring that the most able are moved on to more demanding work as soon as they are ready.
- Improve the quality of teaching in the early years by ensuring that:
 - the afternoon activities in the outdoor area support children’s learning and development as effectively as those inside the classroom
 - the early years staff consistently apply the school’s approach to assessment in the afternoon sessions.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- At the time of the last inspection, the headteacher was new to the school and improvements were in the early stages of implementation. Since then, the headteacher has pursued a comprehensive plan for improvement throughout the school and built a strong leadership team.
- Leadership at all levels has improved as a result of focused training and a restructuring of roles and responsibilities. Leaders carry out regular, systematic checks on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. This means that they have an accurate overview of strengths and weaknesses, which they typically address without delay.
- Leaders with responsibility for English and mathematics are skilled and enthusiastic. They provide strong leadership which has contributed to improved teaching and increased pupils' attainment and progress in these subjects. Other subject leaders are actively involved in developing their subjects and enacting planned improvements across the curriculum. The assistant headteacher with responsibility for curriculum development is currently reviewing and revising the curriculum provision. Early indications are that this is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning, notably in science and history.
- Leaders ensured that an external review of the school's provision for disadvantaged pupils was carried out, following the recommendation from the last inspection. The headteacher responded quickly and decisively to the recommendations from the review. Widespread improvements have ensued, leading to improved provision and teaching for disadvantaged pupils. Regular assessments ensure that staff have a precise and accurate overview of pupils' needs and their individual barriers to learning.
- The leader with responsibility for coordinating provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is new to the role. She has a clear plan for ensuring that pupils with SEND continue to receive effective teaching and support so that they make consistently good progress from their starting points.
- Many parents and carers express positive views about the school, including those who spoke with inspectors or who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. Typical comments were, 'The school is very nurturing and caring', 'They offer excellent opportunities for pupils with regards to extra-curricular clubs, trips and music lessons' and 'My child is thriving and progressing well'. A small number of parents expressed concerns about communications between school and home.
- In discussion, teaching and support staff stressed that morale among staff is high, with a strong sense of teamwork and commitment to pupils' welfare and progress. Staff value the frequent opportunities for professional development, especially those offered through the Learn At multi-academy trust group of schools, saying that the trust has 'a learning culture' for its staff. Leaders provide appropriate support and training for newly-qualified teachers. Staff agree that leaders are mindful of workload pressures when allocating tasks.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively through

the curriculum and through the range of extra-curricular activities on offer. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about clubs such as athletics, basketball, eco club, dance and ukulele. Cultural activities are in evidence around the school, for example through art, music and languages. The school's values, which are aligned with fundamental British values, are clearly embedded and pupils can speak with confidence about tolerance and respect. Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is very well promoted in regard to Christianity. However, there are noticeably fewer opportunities for pupils to learn about and appreciate the wider range of faiths and cultures represented in modern Britain.

- The primary school physical education (PE) and sport funding is used effectively to support pupils' physical and mental well-being.

Governance of the school

- The responsibility for governance of the school lies with the trust. They delegate specific areas of responsibility to the local governing body.
- All those with responsibility for governance have an accurate overview of the school as a result of the clear, analytical information provided by leaders. Governors carry out a programme of visits to monitor the work of the school, alongside leaders. They are effective in holding leaders to account for the school's performance.
- Governors fulfil their statutory duties regarding safeguarding. They ensure that thorough procedures are in place for keeping children safe.
- The trust has provided effective support and challenge for the school, together with increased opportunities for leaders and staff to receive training and share good practice across the group of schools.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Employment checks meet statutory requirements.
- Staff throughout the school receive regular training so that they are well informed about potential risks to pupils and know what to do if they have any concerns.
- There is a strong ethos of care and concern for pupils throughout the school. Pupils and families benefit from the support of the school's full-time pastoral leader. She arranges and leads activities such as the nurture group for pupils and the homework club for pupils and parents, as well as being available at both ends of the school day for individual queries and concerns.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have high expectations of pupils. They establish clear routines that pupils follow sensibly, as they become increasingly confident learners. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and collaborate well with each other in paired and group activities.
- In most year groups, teachers use assessment effectively to ensure that the work is well matched to pupils' needs and abilities. Teachers' careful questioning develops and

deepens pupils' understanding, enabling them to move on to the next steps in their learning, except for an occasional lack of challenge for the most able pupils in mathematics

- Pupils present the work in their books consistently well throughout the school, across a range of subjects, showing undoubted pride in their accomplishments. Teachers and pupils alike frequently annotate the work, asking challenging questions such as, 'Can you find half of an odd number – yes or no? Explain your answer', to which pupils write thoughtful responses.
- The teaching of English is good. Pupils' books show that they make good progress in writing. Pupils apply well-developed writing skills in other subjects such as science, geography and history. The work in their theme books shows that well-planned sequences of lessons effectively enable pupils to build deep knowledge and skills over time. For example, in a Year 6 science activity about materials, a pupil was keen to explain that, at the beginning of the topic, 'I didn't know anything about atoms and matter, and now I do.' Pupils value the 'in and out' quizzes at either end of a topic, saying that these help them to measure their own progress.
- Pupils are keen readers and those who read to inspectors used their phonic knowledge accurately. Older pupils are fluent, confident readers who express a love of books. The large, well-stocked school library is an attractive and inviting environment designed to encourage pupils to relax and enjoy reading as if in a tranquil forest setting.
- Pupils with SEND receive effective support in lessons that enables them to work alongside their peers and access learning at the appropriate level for their needs.
- Teachers throughout the school apply a consistent approach to the teaching of mathematics, with clear expectations. Workbooks show that pupils of all ages have regular opportunities to develop mathematical reasoning, through problem-solving. As in other subjects, the work is well presented. On occasion, the most able pupils are not given work that is sufficiently challenging for them and they spend too long completing activities that are well within their capability.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils who spoke with inspectors were eager to share positive opinions about the school, saying, 'It's very welcoming, like a home,' and describing their school as 'educational but fun'.
- Pupils say that they are proud of their work and were happy to talk about their learning. They described what helps them to 'get better at learning' such as the feedback in their books and the interesting lessons. Pupils recalled memorable learning in certain subjects, for example a series of activities about pollution, plastics and the effects on the world's oceans.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and show awareness of the meaning of bullying and what to do if they have any concerns.

- Pupils enjoy the range of extra-curricular activities on offer and appreciate the spacious and well-equipped outdoor areas that promote their physical, social and emotional well-being.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Their conduct around the school was orderly, throughout the inspection. Pupils typically display positive behaviour and attitudes in lessons, cooperating well with each other and with adults. They are kind and respectful to all around them.
- Pupils say that there are few instances of learning being disturbed by the behaviour of others. They are well aware of the consequences of breaking the school and class rules and know that parents will be contacted after a series of unheeded warnings.
- Records show few instances of serious misbehaviour or bullying. Where concerns have arisen, matters are followed up appropriately by leaders. There is a small proportion of pupils who may display challenging behaviour related to their additional needs. Leaders deal with such situations on an individual basis.
- Current records show that attendance has stabilised, following an increase in the persistent absence in 2018. The school's attendance figures were adversely affected by pupils from the Traveller community who join the school from time to time. Leaders now ensure that these pupils attend every day when they are in the area.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- There has been a trend of consistent improvement in attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics in key stages 1 and 2, since the last inspection. In 2018, progress at the end of key stage 2 was well above average in reading and writing, and above average in mathematics. Similarly, standards of attainment at the expected standard were above average in key stages 1 and 2, in all three subjects.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils improved in 2018 and was above that of other pupils nationally. Current pupils continue to make good progress from their starting points, as do pupils with SEND.
- The school's latest assessments show that the improvements have been sustained for a further year. This was confirmed during the inspection by considering evidence from current work in pupils' books and from observations of learning in lessons, across a wide range of subjects.
- Leaders and staff have introduced more stringent systems for assessing pupils' progress since the last inspection. This has enabled teachers to analyse individual pupils' progress more frequently, to better inform planning and teaching and to target support where it will have the greatest impact.
- The teaching of reading is effective. The proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standard in the phonics screening check in Year 1 has steadily improved each year and is on track to be above the national average for the first time, in 2019.

Early years provision

Good

- Leaders have a comprehensive understanding of children's stages of development, based on the outcomes of their monitoring and analysis of assessments.
- Children enter the early years at a stage in their development below that which is typical for their age, in some areas. As a result of strong teaching in the foundation stage class, the majority of children catch up and make good progress over the course of the Reception Year. The proportion of children who achieve a good level of development by the end of the year has been consistently in line with the national average for three years.
- This year, leaders have introduced changes to the organisation of the early years, in relation to the use of the indoor areas and the teaching of phonics. This has resulted in improvements in children's early reading and writing.
- Adults interact thoughtfully with children, seeking out regular opportunities to promote language development through careful questioning.
- Activities in the afternoon sessions are structured differently from those in the morning and are sometimes less effective in promoting children's learning and development, especially in the outdoor area. While activities led by adults build on those undertaken earlier in the day, afternoon activities which are not adult-led tend to lack the same purpose and interest. Also, in the afternoon sessions, adults are less thorough in recording their ongoing assessments of children's development in relation to the early learning goals.
- Safeguarding in the early years is effective. Children receive good-quality care from well-trained staff. Indoor and outdoor areas are safe and secure.
- Parents are regularly involved in their children's learning, through activities such as the 'stay and read' sessions run by the school's pastoral leader and through invitations to attend information evenings and join their children at lunchtimes.

School details

Unique reference number	141151
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10087387

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	371
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Gillian Weston
Headteacher	Emma Tayler
Telephone number	01858 464112
Website	www.marketharboroughcofe.co.uk
Email address	etayler@mha.learnat.uk
Date of previous inspection	3-4 May 2017

Information about this school

- Market Harborough Church of England Academy is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is broadly in line with the national average.
- A broadly average proportion of pupils is of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below the national average.
- The responsibility for the governance of the school lies with the Learn At multi-academy trust. They delegate specific areas of responsibility to the local governing body.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all classes, at least once, many jointly with leaders.
- Inspectors looked at work in a wide range of pupils' books and considered the school's assessment information on the progress and standards achieved by current pupils.
- An inspector listened to pupils read and talked with them about their reading.
- The lead inspector met with a group of pupils from Years 5 and 6, and all inspectors spoke with pupils informally in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other leaders with specific responsibilities in the school. Inspectors also spoke with a range of other teachers and support staff.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with a group of governors, including the chair of the local governing body.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with the chief executive officer from the Learn At multi-academy trust.
- Inspectors met with parents at the start of the school day and considered the views of 83 parents who completed Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. Inspectors considered responses from Ofsted's online staff and pupil surveys.
- Inspectors considered a wide range of documentation, including the school's improvement plan and self-evaluation summary, minutes of meetings of the governing body, attendance records, behaviour and bullying logs, external reports on the work of the school, monitoring and evaluation records and a range of documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Christine Watkins, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jeannie Haigh	Ofsted Inspector
Jo Ward	Ofsted Inspector

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