

Inspection of a good school: Marvels Lane Primary School

Riddons Road, Grove Park, London SE12 9RA

Inspection dates: 14–15 January 2020

Outcome

Marvels Lane Primary School continues to be a good school.

What it is like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at Marvels Lane Primary School. They like the friendly atmosphere. From a young age they are taught about their rights and responsibilities. This helps them to develop a good understanding of the importance of tolerance and respect. They enjoy a wide range of activities, such as sport and music, that help them to develop as well-rounded individuals. Pupils know about different forms of bullying. They told me that bullying is very rare at the school and that staff quickly sort out any problems.

School leaders have high expectations of pupils. This is reflected in the school's broad curriculum and the high-quality work that is displayed around the school. Teachers and other staff work hard to make learning memorable. In most subjects, teachers make pupils think. This helps pupils achieve well.

Parents and carers are very positive about the school. They appreciate the wide range of opportunities that the school provides for pupils, both within and outside the school day. They value the many trips, special events and parent workshops that the school organises. Nearly all parents who responded to Parent View agreed that pupils are safe and well looked after.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Pupils have a strong sense of pride in their school. They behave well when moving around the school as well as in class, with no disruptions to lessons. They enjoy school and attend regularly. Children settle happily into the Nursery and Reception classes. Few pupils are persistently absent.

Pupils have a good grasp of most subjects. Staff use well-considered subject plans to make learning meaningful and fun. They help children to develop a good understanding of reading and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well. In a few subjects, such as history, pupils do not achieve as well as in others. This is because the school's curriculum is not yet coherently planned and sequenced in these subjects.

In recent years, pupils have not achieved as well as they could in phonics. Leaders identified the reasons for this. They have taken effective action to remedy the situation. The teaching of reading and phonics is a high priority. Early reading is now taught well. Children learn about phonics from their very first days in school. Adults continually encourage the children in the Nursery and Reception classes to practise new vocabulary through songs and play activities. Teachers keep a close check on how well children learn new letters and sounds. This knowledge, for a very few pupils, is not effectively used by teachers to plan the next activity. Pupils who find reading difficult receive extra support that they need to succeed.

Teachers encourage pupils to develop a love of reading. They introduce children to a wide range of books in the Nursery and Reception classes. Older pupils have a good knowledge of different authors and different types of books. Many pupils read widely and achieve well in reading.

Determined work by leaders and staff has improved English teaching and pupils' writing. Teachers set interesting work for pupils. They make sure that pupils start new work that builds on what has gone before. Pupils enjoy discussing the writing styles of authors and happily correct and improve their own work. In each year group, teachers set clear expectations for pupils' writing. This helps teachers to support pupils who do not fully understand their work, especially those pupils with SEND.

Teachers work hard to make learning memorable in science. Lessons often intrigue pupils. Pupils absorb knowledge from enthusiastic teachers. The science curriculum fosters pupils' scientific thinking and skills. It helps pupils to think like scientists and use scientific vocabulary to test ideas. Pupils' contributions in class are usually detailed and insightful. They happily described how the blood circulates around the body, for example.

Leaders have worked with teachers to create detailed plans for all subjects. Teachers know what they are required to teach and when. However, teachers do not have a good enough understanding of how well pupils are learning in history. Activities are not logically sequenced. As a result, the work that they set often fails to build on what pupils know already.

The wide range of additional activities on offer at the school contributes well towards pupils' personal development and appreciation of culture. Pupils take part in sports tournaments, visit museums, art, music and drama events. Leaders make many opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and develop independence.

The experienced leadership team is stable and effective. Leaders support staff well-being and are mindful of workload. Subject leaders and other staff are trained well. Governors know the school well. They provide regular challenge to leaders about the achievement of pupils in English and mathematics. They do not hold leaders to account, however, for pupils' achievements in other subjects.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils feel safe at the school. They know what to do if they have any worries. They understand how to keep themselves safe, including when online.

All staff know what to do to protect pupils. Regular training keeps staff aware of the different risks pupils face. They know what actions to take if they have any concerns about a pupil's welfare or safety. Staff work well with other agencies, including the social services, to report any concerns they have.

Leaders make appropriate checks on adults who work with pupils in the school. The school's safeguarding records are thorough and detailed. The named governor for safeguarding regularly checks on the school's provision and reports to governors on the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding arrangements.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school has made substantial improvements to its curriculum since it was last inspected. However, pupils' learning in history, for example, needs further attention. Pupils do not achieve as well in history as they do in other subjects. Leaders have begun to review subject content where it needs refreshing. As they do this work, they need to ensure that the curriculum content is sufficiently challenging. They also need to ensure that teachers have sufficient specialist knowledge in each subject, so they can help all pupils learn as much as possible.
- Early years practice in teaching phonics is strong. The books pupils read are mostly well matched to their phonic knowledge. Teachers have a detailed knowledge of pupils' skills but for a small number of pupils this knowledge is not used well to plan the next activity. Leaders should do more to support staff in their work to improve reading further and ensure that classroom practice is consistent.
- Governors have a good understanding of pupils' achievement in English and mathematics. They do not have a full knowledge of how well pupils do in the wider curriculum. Senior leaders should provide governors with information about pupils' broader achievement. Governors should use this to ask questions and hold leaders to account for pupils' achievements in subjects beyond English and mathematics.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged Marvels Lane Primary School to be good on 12–13 July 2016.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	100696
Local authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	10121625
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	390
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Christine Turner
Headteacher	Edward Dove
Website	www.marvelslane.lewisham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12–13 July 2016

Information about this school

- There have been no significant changes to this school since the last inspection.

Information about this inspection

- During the inspection I met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, senior and subject leaders, governors and the leader who coordinates the support for pupils with SEND. I also met with the early years leader. I spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- I met with groups of pupils across the school to ask about safeguarding. I also met with the headteacher, the safeguarding lead and teachers. I reviewed documentation which includes the safeguarding policy, the register of the checks carried out on new employees and safeguarding records.
- I observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes and discussed behaviour and bullying with parents, pupils, teachers and senior staff.
- I spoke with parents at the start of the school day and took account of 57 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey.

- I did deep dives in these subjects: reading, writing, history and science. For those subjects, I spoke with the headteacher, met with curriculum leaders, teachers and pupils, undertook an analysis of pupils' work and visited lessons. I heard pupils read. I also looked at pupils' work in mathematics and art.

Inspection team

Phil Garnham, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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