

Inspection of Matchborough First School Academy

Matchborough Way, Matchborough East, Redditch, Worcestershire B98 0GD

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 October 2021

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to go to this school. They are happy and feel safe. This is because adults work as a team to care for them and treat them with respect and compassion.

Pupils behave well in lessons. This helps them to learn. Pupils can talk about what they are learning now. Pupils can remember and apply what they have learned when the curriculum is well delivered. However, this is not the case in some subjects. For example, some cannot remember which country they live in or stories they have read.

Many pupils develop a love of reading. They enjoy visiting the 'Starbooks' café at lunchtimes where the older pupils support the younger pupils to read from a range of books. However, some pupils do not enjoy reading and others find it hard to read.

Pupils across the school play well together. They show respect to all adults and are polite and well mannered. As one pupil said, 'It's nice to be kind.' Pupils say that bullying does sometimes happen, but they know that adults will sort it out.

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

Leaders have designed a curriculum that aims to help pupils learn transferable skills, as well as knowledge. This is to prepare them for the next stage of their education.

The school's curriculum plans are at different stages of development. As a result, in some subjects, pupils are unable to confidently build on what they have learned before. This is because the plans do not identify clearly enough what they want pupils, including children in the early years, to learn. Pupils do better in subjects, such as mathematics, where there is a clear sequence of knowledge that builds lesson to lesson and year to year. This helps pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding. Sometimes, the expectations of what children can achieve, including in the early years, are not high enough.

Staff have not completed as much subject-specific training as leaders intended. Consequently, not all staff have the necessary subject knowledge and know-how to help pupils learn as well as they should.

After the lockdown, staff used assessments to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge. Leaders used the information to develop a 'bounce back' curriculum. This helped many pupils to catch up on the learning they had missed in some areas, such as mathematics.

In phonics and early reading, the catch up has not worked as well for those pupils who struggle to read. Children in early years learn to read as soon as they join the school. However, the delivery of the early reading curriculum is inconsistent across classes. Some teachers do not yet have the necessary expertise to deliver the

phonics programme well. Consequently, some children and pupils are not able to combine letter sounds together to read words. This stops them reading fluently and confidently.

Leaders make sure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) get the right support at the right time. Staff quickly identify pupils' needs. Pupils and their families have access to specialist services to support them. Pupils with SEND follow the same curriculum as all pupils. Staff deliver this well through appropriate support and adaptations to lessons, equipment and resources. This support is particularly strong for pupils with speech, language and communication needs. These pupils do well in their learning.

When out on the playground and in areas outside the classroom, pupils are calm and orderly. They cooperate well with each other in games at breaktime and lunchtime. Pupils behave well in lessons and have good attitudes to learning. They respond positively to staff's high expectations. Staff skilfully manage pupils who find this more challenging.

The curriculum enriches pupils' broader personal development in a variety of ways. Events such as 'Jeans for Genes Day' and Black History Month contribute to pupils' understanding of how we are all unique but equal. Pupils accept differences and they do not discriminate. The school ethos is caring and inclusive.

The governors show commitment to the school. They know the school community well and the challenges it faces. Governors can talk about the school's strengths and the key areas for development outlined in the school improvement plan. However, they do not provide sufficient challenge to leaders about the impact of their actions to improve pupils' outcomes.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding pupils and their families is a high priority. Leaders and staff are quick to act when they have a concern. They work with agencies to follow up concerns. They follow up these concerns until they know that their pupils are safe. The family support worker offers valuable help to families in need. The curriculum teaches pupils how to stay safe online, and in the community. Leaders ensure that all staff are qualified and safe to work with children.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Staff do not deliver the phonics programme consistently well. As a result, children and pupils, particularly the weaker readers, struggle to combine the sounds they know to be able to read fluently. Leaders must make sure that staff deliver the

phonics programme well so that pupils are able to blend sounds successfully and read with fluency, accuracy and confidence.

- The curriculum plans in some subjects, including in the early years, do not always identify clearly enough what teachers want pupils to know. As a result, pupils in those subjects struggle to build on what they have learned. Leaders must make sure that plans for the curriculum clearly identify the knowledge they want pupils to learn and how that knowledge is built on.
- Some areas of the school's performance require improvement. Governors have not given sufficient challenge to leaders about the impact of their actions to improve pupils' outcomes. Governors must make sure that they explore in more detail the information presented by leaders about these outcomes and challenge them when the actions do not have the intended impact.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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	140309
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10200152
Type of school	First
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	416
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Bryonie Williams
Headteacher	Jackie Harris
Website	www.matchborough.worcs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4 October 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The school has a specialist language unit for 11 pupils. Places are commissioned and funded by the local authority.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Prior to the inspection, the lead inspector reviewed documents on the school's website, as well as published information about the school's performance and previous Ofsted inspections.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteachers, special educational needs coordinator, designated safeguarding lead (DSL), subject leaders, family support worker, speech and language therapists and governors,

including the chair of the governing body, and spoke to the school improvement partner.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, English, geography and art. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors looked at curriculum plans and discussed subjects and other activities with staff and pupils.
- The lead inspector met with the deputy headteacher, who is the deputy DSL, and the family support worker. Pupils' case files were reviewed. The single central record of the checks on staff's suitability to work with children was scrutinised.
- Inspectors met with staff, including early career teachers, experienced teachers and support staff, to discuss their workload and the support they receive to carry out their roles.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils at breaktimes and lunchtime about how safe they feel in school and how they learn to keep themselves safe.
- Inspectors visited the Nursery and Reception classes.
- Inspectors visited the language base.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, to the pupil questionnaire and to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Helen Forrest, lead inspector

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