

Inspection of a good school: The Martin Wilson School

New Park Road, Castlefields, Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY1 2SP

Inspection dates:

6 and 7 October 2021

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

This school sits at the heart of the local community. The school's motto: 'In this school everyone is important' is evident in how staff engage with parents and pupils. Parents value the nurture and care that each child receives. As one parent said in Ofsted's Parent View survey, 'My children love this school. It is a really important part of the community and feels very inclusive.'

Pupils behave well at school. They enjoy their lessons and have strong relationships with staff. Pupils say that bullying does sometimes happen. However, they are confident that teachers would deal with this quickly.

Leaders have plans in place for how they want the curriculum to be taught. However, in subjects other than English and mathematics, plans are still at an early stage of development. There is more work to do to set out what pupils should know and remember.

Pupils have many different experiences while at school. There are several different clubs which run after school, including football, learning Welsh and computer coding. Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 have recently attended a science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) workshop at RAF Cosford.

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

Leaders have a strong understanding of the local community. They recognise that a large proportion of pupils come from disadvantaged backgrounds. Staff have positive relationships with parents and keep in touch with them regularly. This helps to ensure that teachers deal with behaviour concerns quickly and that pupils remain focused on their learning. If parents and pupils do need support, leaders make sure they get the help

they need. Leaders have clear plans in place to help children learn to read and develop their mathematical knowledge. This is not the case for all subjects. In some wider curriculum subjects, there is still more work to do.

Helping children learn to read remains a high priority for leaders. Pupils begin to learn phonic sounds in the early years, and this is built upon as they move into key stage 1. Pupils have daily phonics sessions and are read to every day by their teachers. There is a clear programme in place which outlines the sounds pupils should know at each point of the year. Teachers carefully select the books they read with pupils and make connections with topics in other subjects. Teachers also ensure that pupils take home books which are matched to the sounds they know. Teachers regularly check what sounds pupils know and remember. Leaders have put in place support to help pupils who fall behind in their reading. However, this support is not always as focused as it could be to ensure weaker readers catch up quickly.

In mathematics, leaders have clear plans which outline what pupils are expected to know by the end of each year. These plans look to build pupils' mathematical knowledge and skills over time. Leaders ensure that pupils revisit topics within the same year to make sure this knowledge is secure. Pupils have several opportunities to develop fluency, reasoning and problem-solving skills. Although leaders' plans have been disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, pupils are able to make connections in their learning and are more confident in what they know.

This is not the case in some wider curriculum subjects. Leaders have structured several subjects under thematic headings. Some plans to implement this new curriculum have been disrupted by the pandemic. However, it is not clear what key knowledge and ideas pupils are expected to know and remember from each topic. Pupils therefore struggle to connect ideas and sometimes get jumbled up in their learning.

Leaders have introduced a new system to check pupils' learning at the end of each term. Leaders are using this to check pupils' progress and ensure that pupils who fall behind get the right support, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, not all teachers make regular, ongoing checks on what pupils know and remember. This is particularly the case for some subjects in the wider curriculum. Staff have also not had sufficient training in some subjects to look at strengthening their subject knowledge and improving their teaching.

Leaders are keen to ensure that pupils' learning extends beyond the classroom. Trips are planned throughout the year and leaders ensure no child misses out due to financial hardship. In the summer term, Year 6 pupils attended a residential trip to Elan Valley, where they were able to participate in various activities. Pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 will shortly be visiting Llangollen railway station to ride on a steam train. Leaders also ensure pupils develop their cultural understanding. For example, there is an annual visit to the local church, where pupils put on a drama performance. Pupils also have workshop sessions led by adults from the 'Windrush Generation' to explore the theme of prejudice.

In discussion with the headteacher, the inspector agreed that history, geography and science may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have clear systems in place to help identify those pupils who may be at risk of harm. Staff are aware of how to record concerns and receive training from leaders about how to safeguard children. Leaders have strong relationships with external agencies and use a family support worker to help those families most in need. Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe through personal, social and health education lessons. This includes topics such as online safety and 'stranger danger'.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some wider curriculum subjects, leaders have not clearly identified the key knowledge and concepts that they want pupils to know and remember. This means that it is unclear how pupils build on their knowledge over time or make connections in their learning. Leaders should ensure that all subjects set out clearly what key knowledge and ideas they want pupils to know so that they can remember more in the long term.
- Teachers do not use assessment as effectively as they could do. It is not clear how teachers check what pupils have learned in some wider curriculum subjects. This means that teachers do not always spot errors or misconceptions as quickly as they ought to. Leaders should ensure that teachers use assessment routinely to ensure that pupils are secure in what they know and remember.
- Staff have not had sufficient training in different subjects. This includes training on how staff can support weaker readers effectively. This means that staff are not as well prepared as they could be to support pupils with their learning. Leaders should provide staff with the appropriate training to help improve their teaching.

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 or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 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 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	123447
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	10199904
Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	212
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Steve Wright
Headteacher	David Purslow
Website	www.martinwilsonschool.com
Dates of previous inspection	30 June and 1 July 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school's Early Years Centre has in place provision for two-year-olds. This provision opened in the autumn term 2019.
- The school uses no alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspector focused on the following subjects: reading, mathematics and history. The inspector examined leaders' plans, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and talked with pupils about the way these subjects are taught.
- The inspector reviewed a range of school documents. These included information about behaviour, attendance, the school curriculum and improvement planning. The school website was also checked.

- The inspector talked to staff and leaders about safeguarding arrangements. He examined how leaders make employment checks on staff and scrutinised further safeguarding records. He also asked how incidents reported by pupils are recorded and analysed.
- The inspector observed informal times of the day to evaluate safeguarding and pupils' behaviour.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers and pupils. He also talked informally to pupils and staff to gather general information about school life.
- The inspector considered 31 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and 31 free-text comments. He also considered 4 responses to Ofsted's survey of staff.

Inspection team

Mark Howes, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2021