

Inspection of a good school: Mary Swanwick Primary School

Church Street North, Old Whittington, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S41 9QW

Inspection dates:

19 and 20 October 2021

Outcome

Mary Swanwick Primary School continues to be a good school.

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?

Pupils enjoy coming to Mary Swanwick Primary School. They like learning new things. They say that they feel safe because there are lots of adults around who they can talk to. Leaders take any bullying very seriously. It rarely happens, but when it does, it is dealt with swiftly and successfully.

There is a calm and busy atmosphere. In lessons and around school, pupils behave well. They are respectful to adults and their classmates. They concentrate on the work that teachers set and do not disturb others around them. Pupils enjoy earning tokens called 'cygnets' for their efforts in their work. They can spend their 'cygnets' at the Swan Shop, which is run by pupils.

Leaders want all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to do well. They provide a range of opportunities for pupils to learn both in and out of the classroom. Pupils are not gaining a strong-enough grasp of what they are being taught in some subjects. This is because these subject plans are still in the early stages of being written.

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

The teaching of mathematics is a strength of the school, right from when children join the school in the Nursery or Reception classes. Children who have started in the early years just a few weeks ago learn about shapes and how to count accurately. As pupils get older, their teachers use the 'get ready' sessions to refresh pupils' memories about what they have previously been taught. This helps pupils to be ready for what they will learn in their next mathematics lesson. Teachers make sure that any gaps in understanding are filled. They explain new concepts to pupils clearly so that pupils understand and remember

what they are being taught. Pupils with SEND have extra help, if they need it, so that they can learn alongside their peers.

Phonics is taught well. Teachers provide pupils with books to read that are at the right level for them. Pupils practise reading the sounds that they have learned. Those who are still at the early stages of reading are supported to read their books with a kind word of encouragement or a gentle reminder. This helps pupils to build their confidence. Throughout the school, pupils say that they enjoy reading. They say that when they read, it 'feels like you are there in the book'.

The curriculum plans in most subjects are in the early stages of development. Leaders have made sure that all the subjects of the national curriculum are taught. The plans include what pupils will learn in the early years. Leaders have not determined all the useful knowledge that pupils must learn in each year group and in each subject. They have chosen some important vocabulary that pupils must learn, but they have not finished setting this out. There is no clear strategy to check that pupils remember the most important information in most subjects. Pupils are not well placed to build their knowledge more deeply in the future.

Curriculum leaders are new to their posts this year. They do not have a clear oversight of the subjects that they are responsible for.

All staff have equally high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils live up to these expectations. They are taught to recognise different kinds of bullying, including cyber-bullying. Pupils say, 'We are taught not to do it.' They are encouraged to think how it would feel for the other person involved.

There is a wide range of clubs for pupils to take part in. These include sporting clubs, gardening and choir. Pupils can take responsibility for some of the day-to-day aspects of school life. For example, they can be a school councillor, friendship ambassador or librarian. Pupils in Year 6 are looking forward to their trip to London when they will visit the Houses of Parliament and see a West End show. Leaders know the community that the school serves well. Pupils learn about a range of religions, cultures and lifestyles that may be different from their own.

Typically, parents and carers speak highly of the school. All parents who expressed a view through the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, agreed that the school has high expectations for their child.

Staff appreciate the consideration that leaders, including those from the trust, give to their workload. They feel supported and part of a team.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that staff have the necessary training so that they can quickly spot signs of potential abuse. Staff know how to report any concerns that they may have.

Leaders provide support for families and pupils. When needed, they show families where they can access help from food banks and for financial difficulties. They reach out to external services such as the educational psychologist and social care when they may be beneficial to pupils.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. They learn about how to use modern technology safely.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum plans for most subjects are in the early stages of development. Teachers cannot ensure that pupils build new learning on a solid base of prior knowledge. Pupils do not reliably recall what they have been taught in these subjects. Leaders must set out exactly the knowledge and vocabulary that pupils must learn, and the precise order in which they must learn it, in all subjects.
- Assessment is not used well enough to check that pupils learn and remember the most important content in the long term. Pupils are not able to recall what they have previously been taught. Leaders must ensure that there is a clear strategy in place to check that pupils remember the most useful content and vocabulary in all subjects.
- Curriculum leaders are new to post this term. They do not have a clear oversight of the curriculum in their subject areas. Senior leaders must ensure that leaders at all levels receive the training they need so that they can fulfil their responsibilities.

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 predecessor school, Mary Swanwick Community Primary School, to be good in January 2013.

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

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| Unique reference number | 143578 |
| Local authority | Derbyshire |
| Inspection number | 10199529 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy converter |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 236 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | John Rutherford |
| Headteacher | Katie Parr |
| Website | www.learnerstrust.org |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- Mary Swanwick Primary School converted to be an academy in The LEARNERS' Trust on 1 June 2017.

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 her evaluation.
- The inspector did deep dives into reading, mathematics and geography. She spoke with leaders, visited lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils, listened to pupils reading to a familiar adult and examined a range of pupils' books.
- The inspector spoke with the headteacher, trust partner and the chair of the board of trustees. She spoke with leaders responsible for reading, mathematics, geography, the early years and the provision for pupils with SEND.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in class and around school, including at lunchtime. She spoke with midday supervisors and kitchen staff. She spoke with pupils formally in groups and informally at lunchtime.

- The inspector examined a range of documents provided by leaders, including the school's evaluation of the work it does and its plans for improvement, curriculum plans, and documents relating to the safeguarding of pupils.
- Account was taken of the 20 responses to the online survey Ofsted Parent View. The inspector reviewed the most recent responses to the school's own survey of parents' views. She spoke with staff and pupils and took account of the 12 responses to the staff survey and the 41 responses to the pupils' survey.

Inspection team

Di Mullan, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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