

# Inspection of Marriotts School

Brittain Way, Stevenage, Hertfordshire, SG2 8UT

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Inspection dates: 10 and 11 November 2021

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Sixth-form provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

True to the school's motto, pupils at Marriotts School aim high, work hard and are kind. Pupils respond well to leaders' high expectations. There is a strong commitment to academic success and development of pupils' character. Pupils are well cared for. They have positive and respectful relationships with teachers and each other. Pupils behave consistently well. They learn in a calm and well-ordered environment.

Pupils study a broad curriculum. They achieve well in a range of subjects. Year 11 pupils and sixth-form students gain the knowledge they need to fulfil their potential. They progress successfully to further study, employment, or training.

The school offers many rich opportunities for pupils to develop their personal interests and responsibilities. Pupils play and compete in a wide range of sports and performing arts. They contribute well to the life of the school and have well-established opportunities to travel abroad. Students in the sixth form support younger pupils and help them become more confident.

Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They value difference in society. Pupils feel safe. They trust teachers to deal with any bullying effectively on the rare occasions it happens.

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

Leaders have designed a balanced curriculum which is well established. They continue to develop and strengthen what is taught, especially in the sixth form. More students, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are now going to university.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They identify those important aspects of each subject that pupils need to learn. Teachers carefully plan learning to ensure that it builds on what pupils already know. Pupils know what they are learning and the reasons why they are learning it. Pupils have many opportunities to practise and revisit their learning, which helps them to remember and improve over time. Teachers are keen to reduce the adult support pupils receive so that they may begin to use more complex knowledge by themselves. Teachers regularly check on pupils' learning. When they spot mistakes, teachers then help pupils to improve their work. They give pupils clear explanations. They show pupils what to do and how to do it.

Leaders emphasise the importance of reading across subjects. Pupils are encouraged to read often and from a range of global authors. Leaders identify that they need to provide more support for those pupils who have fallen behind with their reading. They are currently exploring an appropriate programme to help pupils learn to read fluently.

Teachers adapt their planning to ensure that pupils with SEND access the full curriculum. However, the needs for some pupils with SEND are not always identified precisely enough. This means that at times teachers do not adapt learning activities to help those pupils learn and remember new knowledge.

Leaders promote pupils' personal development well. Important themes such as healthy relationships and online safety are revisited and developed as pupils get older. In the sixth form, students explore more mature aspects of sexual health and the law. Pupils learn about other religions and their place in British society. The school has been innovative in valuing and supporting pupils with protected characteristics. Sixth-form students have been instrumental in establishing committees to raise awareness of difference. They support pupils and give them a place to talk and discuss. Pupils say this has helped improve their self-esteem.

Leaders have developed a coherent programme of careers advice and support. Leaders ensure that Year 11 pupils and sixth-form students receive impartial information about the options available at the end of their studies. This enables them to make the right choices about future careers and further study.

Teachers share and support leaders' clear vision for the school and its pupils. Parents are very supportive of leaders' aims. Leaders know what they need to do to improve the school further. Teachers find their workload reasonable and manageable. They appreciate the support given in developing their curriculum planning.

Governors understand the context and character of the school. They care about the school. They say 'it gets under [their] skin'. Governors are not always aware of the reasons behind some decisions taken by leadership. They do not explore precisely enough whether some actions to improve the quality of provision are making the difference leaders intend.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well trained to recognise safeguarding concerns. They swiftly identify pupils who need help or who may be at risk of abuse or harm. Staff pass on concerns promptly. Leaders investigate concerns and ensure pupils receive the support they need. When necessary, leaders will refer concerns to external safeguarding partners.

Leaders ensure that pupils learn about and can recognise a wide range of dangers and potential risks, both physically and online. Pupils know who to talk to if they have a concern.

Leaders' checks to make sure staff are suitable to work in the school are thorough.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Those responsible for governance do not always fully understand the reasons behind decisions taken by leaders. As a result of this, they do not fully explore whether systems in the school ensure the best outcomes for all pupils. Governors should hold leaders more firmly to account.
- There is not enough support for the few pupils who may have fallen behind with their reading. As a result of this, those pupils may not be able to access the curriculum as well as they should. Leaders need to introduce appropriate strategies, from Year 7, to ensure pupils catch up with their reading.
- Identification of the needs of some pupils with SEND is not precise enough. Teachers do not always therefore know the best way to support some pupils with SEND who are not in receipt of an education, health and care plan. Leaders need to provide teachers with more detailed and appropriate strategies to help those pupils achieve as well as possible.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	117534
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10200261
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,438
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	212
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Melany Knowles
<b>Headteacher</b>	Bethany Honor
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://marriotts.herts.sch.uk/">http://marriotts.herts.sch.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	19 October 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is larger than average.
- Most pupils are White British. Nearly a fifth of pupils are ethnic minority backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above average. The proportion of pupils with an education, care and health plan is average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding is above average.
- The school does make use of alternative provision for a small number of pupils.

## Information about this inspection

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

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, support staff and early career teachers, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into modern languages, English, mathematics, science, history and physical education. This included discussions with subject leaders, visit to lessons, meetings with staff and pupils, and scrutiny of pupils' work.
- Inspectors scrutinised the single central record and met with the leader for safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered 270 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey, 110 responses to Ofsted's staff survey, 130 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, together with 76 free-text responses from parents.

### **Inspection team**

Adam Cooke, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Liz Smith	Her Majesty's Inspector
Georgina Atkinson	Ofsted Inspector
Tony Bishop	Ofsted Inspector
Lesley Daniel	Ofsted Inspector

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