

Inspection of a good school: Madley Brook Community Primary School

At the Bronze Barrow, Cedar Drive, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28 1AR

Inspection dates:

5 and 6 July 2022

Outcome

Madley Brook Community Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Madley Brook is a friendly and happy school. Leaders ensure that kindness and thoughtfulness flow through all aspects of school life. The school is a calm and respectful environment where pupils feel safe. Pupils are proud to attend this school.

Pupils behave well throughout the school day. They are polite to each other and the staff. Outside pupils play enthusiastically in the open spaces. They enjoy playing on the new large wooden castle and the adventure playground.

Pupils are confident learners who work hard because leaders have high expectations for their learning and behaviour. Teachers challenge pupils to think carefully about what they are learning. Pupils feel confident in speaking to staff if they have any concerns. They say that bullying is rare and if it did happen, staff would deal with it immediately.

Pupils appreciate the rich opportunities that staff provide for them. Many pupils take on roles of responsibility, including 'value heroes' and 'eco warriors', which they take seriously. The school council led the 'Where in the World is Madley?' event. Pupils walked 25,000 miles in and out of school to raise money to help fund the school's Queen Elizabeth's 70th Jubilee celebration.

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

Leaders have planned a broad and ambitious curriculum for pupils. The curriculum is taught in a logical order. Leaders are very clear about the knowledge, skills and vocabulary they expect pupils to learn over time. Teachers select activities that help pupils remember essential knowledge and build on what they already know. For example, in computing lessons, pupils' knowledge of algorithms enables them to input the correct commands to make a character move on the screen.

The headteacher and deputy headteacher work closely with subject leaders, so they have a strong understanding of their subject and how pupils can access the curriculum

successfully. Some of this subject leadership is very effective. However, leaders rightly recognise that the quality of subject leadership is not yet consistent in all subjects.

Staff use assessment effectively in English and mathematics. In other subjects, assessment is less precise because the systems are newer and not fully established. Leaders are developing their thinking on the best way to assess pupils' understanding in all subjects.

When children join the early years, leaders ensure that reading is a high priority. Children take part in songs, stories and nursery rhymes, so they are immersed in rich language opportunities. Throughout the school, pupils have access to high-quality books, have stories read to them and visiting authors inspire them to read. Staff are ambitious for all pupils to develop a love of reading. If pupils struggle with their reading, they receive extra help. Pupils speak highly of the masked reader event, where they had to guess which staff were reading stories to them.

Leaders ensure that the teaching across the school enthuses and inspires pupils. Pupils have opportunities to discuss their learning to ensure that they understand what they are taught. In lessons, pupils are supportive of each other and work alongside their classmates in a cooperative and supportive manner.

Teachers plan activities to support pupils' learning. For example, in the early years, one child carefully counted shells to match the chalk numbers on the ground, while another child talked about a pirate treasure map, using the correct directional language. If any child struggles, they receive extra support to help them catch up.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well. Staff ensure that pupils take part in the full range of school activities. Teachers carefully adjust the curriculum and provide appropriate support. Consequently, these pupils develop the confidence to know and remember more across the curriculum. There is a well-planned nurture support programme to help pupils with their emotional needs. Pupils speak highly of the support. One child said, 'I enjoy going because it helps me feel happy and I can share my emotions.'

Leaders promote pupils' personal development effectively. They ensure that pupils understand the importance of strong values and being good citizens. Pupils understand the need to treat people equally. They have opportunities to develop their aspirations for life after Madley Brook, for example talking about their future careers. Leaders ensure that all pupils have access to well-chosen activities to support their wider development, including sports teams, arts events and cultural celebrations. Pupils enjoy attending a wide range of extra-curricular clubs.

Governors and leaders know the school well. They have a strong understanding of the school's strengths and the priorities for improvement. Staff feel valued in the school. They appreciate that leaders consider their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong safeguarding culture in the school. Leaders and governors ensure that safeguarding is their highest priority. Staff know what to do if they have a concern about a pupil. They understand how to look for signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. Appropriate checks are made to ensure that all adults are safe to work in school.

Pupils feel confident to speak with staff if they have any concerns. They learn how to keep safe, including using the internet, water safety, riding their bikes on the road and stranger danger.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The quality of subject leadership is not yet consistent in every subject. Consequently, not all subject leaders have the knowledge and expertise to ensure that their subject develops as quickly as some others. Leaders need to continue to strengthen subject leadership so that, across all subjects, judging pupils' understanding of the curriculum, evaluating teaching and learning and leading improvement are rigorous and secure.
- Leaders are in the initial stages of refining assessments in subjects other than English and mathematics. They do not precisely understand how well pupils are learning the curriculum over time. Leaders need to strengthen the current assessment arrangements so that they are more knowledgeable about the impact the curriculum is having on pupils' learning.

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 second section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Madley Brook Community School, to be good in November 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

Unique reference number	145648
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10238329
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	289
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Kirsten Robinson
Headteacher	Marianne Ray
Website	www.madleybrook.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The headteacher joined the school in January 2021.
- The school is part of the River Learning Trust.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school has a breakfast club operating on the site, which is managed by the school. There is an after-school club, which is managed by an outside provider.
- The school shares the site with a special school, but this is a separate 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 leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector met regularly with the headteacher. The inspector held a meeting with the chair of trustees and the local governing body, including the chair of governors. Meetings were also held with other school leaders and the director of education from the trust.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and computing. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire and free-text comments were considered. Responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff and pupils were also evaluated.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements in the school, the inspector spoke to members of staff and pupils. He met school leaders to discuss the school's policies and procedures. During these meetings, records were scrutinised, including those relating to the safer recruitment of staff. The inspector also spoke with pupils and staff to evaluate the school's safeguarding culture.

Inspection team

Darren Aisthorpe, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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