

# Inspection of a good school: Marshbrook First School

Teddesley Road, Penkridge, Stafford, Staffordshire ST19 5BA

---

Inspection dates:

6 July 2022

## Outcome

Marshbrook First School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Marshbrook is a welcoming and friendly school.

Pupils enjoy positive relationships with each other and the adults they work with. This helps pupils to feel safe. Bullying is rare and pupils are confident that adults will deal with any incidents quickly if it does happen. Pupils understand the school rules. They behave well during lessons, breaktimes and as they move around the school. Pupils are kind to each other and do their best to make sure no one is on their own during playtime.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils to achieve well. Leaders want pupils to experience an interesting curriculum and to build their knowledge in a broad range of subjects. Pupils enjoy the educational visits that are carefully matched to the topics they are learning.

Pupils can attend a variety of clubs including football, music and languages. They like the opportunities they have to take part in inter-school activities including sports competitions and a dance festival. Pupils contribute to what happens at school, for example through their roles as school councillor or as part of the internet safety committee. Pupils appreciate the beautiful outdoor space they have and make good use of the climbing equipment and trim trail.

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

Leaders have designed a well-sequenced curriculum that includes a broad range of subjects. They have thought carefully about the knowledge, skills and concepts that all pupils will learn. This begins in the early years, where children get off to a great start, and builds through to Year 4. In Nursery Year, the well-organised curriculum focuses on communication, personal and physical development. As children progress through the early years, teachers introduce content from more subjects. This includes reading, writing and mathematics. This ensures that children are well-prepared to move into key stage 1.

Teachers have high expectations of what pupils will know and remember. This is set out clearly on the recently introduced 'subject knowledge mats'. These are shared with pupils in key stages 1 and 2, and their parents. Leaders ensure that teachers use assessment to check what pupils have learned and plan opportunities to revisit learning. This means that pupils make strong progress in most subjects. A revised curriculum in a small number of subjects, including computing, is at an earlier stage of delivery. Leaders have firm plans to provide more training for staff to develop subject knowledge to meet the needs of all pupils in these subjects.

Reading is a priority right from when children join the school in Nursery Year. The youngest children listen to stories and rhymes that quickly become familiar favourites. Older pupils enjoy reading stories from a broad range of authors. Children have daily phonics lessons as soon as they start in the early years. Adults have good subject knowledge and make sure that pupils practice reading books matched to the sounds they know.

Leaders ensure that mathematical vocabulary and concepts are taught from Nursery Year onwards. Teachers have strong subject knowledge. Older pupils speak confidently about what they are learning and how what they had learned in the past was helping them now.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities get the support they need to study subjects alongside their classmates. Teachers know how to adapt lessons to meet the needs of pupils with additional needs.

Subject leaders have the right knowledge and experience to be able to lead their subjects well. They do have opportunities to find out how well their subjects are being implemented. However, these opportunities are not always organised well enough for them to build a complete picture of what is going well and what needs to get better.

Leaders make sure that pupils learn about different cultures and religions in the wider world outside of their village. Pupils are respectful of difference and say they everyone is welcome at their school. Pupils are keen to have extra responsibilities and are pleased to be voted onto the school council, and the 'eco' or internet safety committees.

Trustees and governors are proud of their role at the school. They know the school well and provide good support. This includes developing Nursery Year provision so that the environment is well resourced with expert staff and high-quality equipment. Staff are happy to work at the school. They feel valued and supported by leaders in all aspects of their work. They say that leaders are considerate of their workload.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff receive regular and up-to-date training about keeping pupils safe. They know how to report any concerns they have about a pupil's safety or well-being. Leaders know their families well and work with them to provide extra support if this is needed. Leaders challenge external agencies if they are not satisfied with the response they receive.

Leaders thoroughly check the suitability of staff before they start work at the school.

The curriculum includes opportunities to teach pupils about keeping themselves safe. This includes staying safe online, being aware of the risks that strangers can pose and knowing what a healthy relationship feels like.

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

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

- The curriculum has not had time to become fully embedded in a small number of foundation subjects. As a result, pupils are not able to build their knowledge as well as they might. Leaders should continue with their work to ensure that teachers have the training they need to implement the curriculum in all subjects with confidence and expertise.
- There are inconsistencies in how subject leaders monitor the effectiveness of the curriculum implementation. This means that sometimes subject leaders are unable to identify and address the specific aspects in the areas they lead on that need to be improved. Leaders should ensure that all subject leaders are able to carry out their roles more effectively so that they are able to further improve the quality of education that pupils receive.

## **Background**

When we have judged good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good/outstanding. 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, Marshbrook First School, to be good on 24 May 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	145378
<b>Local authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10241474
<b>Type of school</b>	First
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	145
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Mark Roberts
<b>Headteacher</b>	Dawn Spiers
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.marshbrook.staffs.sch.uk/">www.marshbrook.staffs.sch.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school joined the Penk Valley Multi-Academy Trust in April 2018.
- The school offers places in the nursery for 2-year-old children.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken this into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders including the special educational needs coordinator.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into reading, mathematics, and science. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors visited a sample of reading and mathematics lessons.
- The lead inspector visited the school's provision for 2- and 3-year-olds.
- The lead inspector held meetings with members of the local governing committee, including a trustee, and with the chief executive officer.

- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead and reviewed the single central record and safeguarding records. Inspectors talked to staff about their safeguarding training and to pupils about how safe they feel in school.

### **Inspection team**

Jo Evans, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Anne Potter

Ofsted 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](mailto: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/](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2022