

Inspection of a good school: Market Drayton Junior School

Market Drayton Junior School, Market Drayton Junior School, Alexandra Road, Market Drayton, Shropshire TF9 3HU

Inspection dates:

8 and 9 November 2022

Outcome

Market Drayton Junior School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Market Drayton Junior School is friendly and welcoming. Pupils share warm and trusting relationships with staff. Staff deal with any minor behaviour incidents quickly. Parents hold the school in high regard, and the strong sense of community. One parent commented, 'I have never been so happy with the learning and development of my children and the fantastic working partnerships with parents.'

Leaders are ambitious for pupils, including those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils are attentive and try their best in lessons. Experienced staff support pupils' well-being effectively. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about the regular educational visits offered by the school. In particular, pupils value the annual overnight residential that happens in Year 6, as this is an opportunity to further develop relationships with their teachers and friends.

Pupils get on well with each other. They say they feel safe in school and that bullying is rare. When it does happen, adults deal with it quickly and effectively. Leaders aim to develop the individual character of each pupil. They encourage pupils to take on leadership responsibilities in school. For example, pupils have joined groups that have helped their peers to feel safe, to look after the environment and to access more equipment at playtimes. Pupils speak passionately about the many opportunities to help, compete and represent the school in different sports.

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

Leaders have created a well-structured curriculum. This sets high expectations for all pupils, so that they achieve well. Leaders have thought carefully about how the curriculum in different subjects builds on what pupils already know. For example, in mathematics, leaders have made sure that the new learning pupils encounter builds upon the things they already know. Pupils make strong progress as a result.

Teachers regularly check how well pupils are learning in most subjects. This helps pupils to recall and remember knowledge from previous lessons. For example, in physical education (PE), teachers skilfully give feedback to pupils to improve their performance within lessons. However, assessment in some subjects does not yet allow pupils to deepen their understanding of some essential concepts and does not measure how much pupils know over time. Therefore, in some subjects, pupils do not always have a secure understanding upon which to build their future learning.

Reading is a priority at the school. Leaders have ensured that pupils have daily opportunities to practise vital reading skills. Daily story time, weekly library visits and welcoming reading areas across the school help to promote pupils' love of reading. Leaders have adopted a new phonics curriculum. It is rapidly bearing fruit. Teachers have secure subject knowledge in phonics and quickly identify pupils' misconceptions. Pupils' reading books are matched closely with the sounds pupils are learning. This helps pupils to read fluently. Pupils who need support to catch up are quickly identified and given the support they need to read as well as they ought.

Pupils with SEND are supported well. Staff make sure they are fully included in lessons and all aspects of school life. Teachers are well trained and successfully identify pupils' needs at an early stage. As a result, these pupils make strong progress, enjoy their learning and access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers.

The support leaders provide for pupils' personal development is a strength of the school. Leaders ensure that pupils have a clear awareness and appreciation of diversity. This is achieved through carefully planned assemblies, carried out by pupils and leaders. A carefully structured curriculum for pupils' personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education develops pupils' understanding of healthy relationships. As a result, pupils are clear about how to manage risks and keep themselves safe.

Trust senior leaders and governors provide excellent support for leaders and staff at the school. They hold leaders to account to continually improve the school. Staff are overwhelmingly positive and are proud to work at the school. Staff say that leaders are mindful of their workload. This helps staff to focus on providing the best education possible for the pupils in their care.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils feel safe in school. They know that there are trusted adults they can talk to if they have any concerns. Staff receive regular training, which helps them to identify when a pupil might be at risk from harm. Leaders hold regular meetings with all staff, in which concerns about pupils' welfare can be raised. There are clear processes in place for staff to log such concerns. Leaders ensure any concerns are addressed in a timely fashion.

Leaders know families well and understand the difficulties they may face.

Pupils learn about personal safety, including e-safety, through the PSHE and computing curriculums.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The assessment system is not fully developed in some subjects. As a result, teachers do not have precise enough information about how well pupils remember some key concepts or essential knowledge. Leaders should ensure that assessment provides teachers with the information they need to adapt the curriculum, close any gaps in knowledge, and to make sure that pupils' learning always builds on what they already know.

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 an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2017.

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.

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	145788
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	10241486
Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	356
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Allan Howells
Executive Headteacher	Samantha Scott
Website	www.marketdraytonjunior.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school converted to an academy and joined the Empower Trust since the previous inspection.
- The executive headteacher and head of school are new to their posts since the previous inspection.
- The school does not use any off-site 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 leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and PE. 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 heard pupils read.

- The inspector looked at samples of pupils' work in other subjects, including history and science.
- The inspector held meetings with senior leaders of the school, members of staff, pupils and parents. The inspector also met with the governing body and a representative from the trust.
- The inspector reviewed a wide range of safeguarding documents and records, including the school's single central record. He also talked to a range of parents, staff and pupils about safeguarding.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. He also took account of the responses to the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Max Vlahakis, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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