

Inspection of The March CofE Primary School

Claypit Lane, Westhampnett, Chichester, West Sussex PO18 0NU

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 March 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils benefit from an exceptionally well-planned enrichment curriculum. Staff make sure that all pupils have an opportunity to represent the school in sporting competitions. Most pupils take part in one or more of the varied clubs on offer. Many pupils have a leadership role, and these provide them with meaningful opportunities for character development.

There are high expectations of pupils. Leaders are ambitious for what pupils can do and pupils achieve well. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers adapt resources so that pupils with SEND can still achieve the same ambitious goals as other pupils in the class. This can happen because each pupil is known so well by the staff in the school.

Most pupils behave very well. They appreciate the calm and welcoming environment and feel safe. Bullying rarely happens and staff are quick to deal with it if it does occur. However, some pupils can be unkind and other pupils do not always feel that this is dealt with as well. This sometimes leaves them feeling unhappy. However, pupils enjoy school and are enthusiastic about their learning and the opportunities that they have to reach their potential.

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

Leaders have created a strong culture of reading. In Reception, children read with enthusiasm and increasing fluency. This strong foundation means that older pupils read with confidence and enjoyment. When pupils fall behind with reading, staff quickly identify the issue and put in place targeted support to help them catch up. This support has been effective. A similar approach to assessment and intervention is taken in mathematics and pupils make good progress towards ambitious end points.

Leaders have produced a well-designed curriculum in most subjects. They have considered what pupils need to learn and when they should learn it. However, in some subjects, there is still more work to be done in deciding what will be taught and the order in which it will be taught. Where the curriculum has been well planned, teachers set challenging work that leads to strong outcomes from pupils. However, sometimes, work is not challenging enough to meet the ambitions that leaders have for the pupils. Activities in early years are considered very carefully by leaders. Staff in Reception are very knowledgeable about the strengths and areas for development of each child. This allows leaders to carefully plan learning activities and then adapt them to meet the child's needs during the course of the day.

Teachers regularly check on what pupils have remembered. Leaders have created opportunities for pupils to revisit any gaps in their knowledge with their teachers. These checks of learning help staff to identify where pupils, including those with SEND, have specific learning needs. Leaders then work with teachers, parents and

the pupils to put in place plans to meet these needs. These plans are used by teachers, and monitored by leaders, very well. Staff, including those in Reception, have received training to support children with specific needs.

Learning is very rarely disrupted by pupils' behaviour and classrooms tend to be calm. However, when there is disruption to learning it is not always dealt with consistently by teachers. This means that the disruption continues for longer than it should. Staff teach pupils the importance of behaving well and the consequences of poor behaviour on others. There are warm and caring relationships between pupils and adults. Pupils have a positive attitude towards their learning and this is rewarded by staff. Leaders have taken steps to encourage high levels of attendance from pupils. Pupils are rarely absent from school.

Leaders have planned an excellent programme for personal development. Personal, social and health education is supported by trips, visitors and assemblies, and these are used to help develop pupils' understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues. Leaders make sure that this wider enrichment ties in carefully with what pupils learn in class. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain and have a good understanding of tolerance and equality. Leaders have also made sure that relationships, sex and health education is taught in an age-appropriate way and pupils, from Reception upwards, get the information they need at the right time for them. Opportunities for pupil leadership are exceptional and lead to a strong sense of community within the school.

The school is well led. Leaders are ambitious for their pupils and make sure that everyone is working towards those same ambitions. They are well supported in this by the multi-academy trust. Governors and trustees know the school very well and understand their role within it. Leaders have taken actions to manage staff workload. This allows staff to focus their time and energy on the things that will benefit pupils the most.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders provide thorough safeguarding training to everyone working in the school. Staff are well informed about how to identify pupils who may be at risk of harm. They are confident in how to report their concerns. Leaders are then rigorous in following up on this information and in ensuring that pupils get the appropriate help in a timely way. This includes working with other agencies. Procedures for safeguarding, including those for recruiting staff, are followed with care and attention.

Pupils are taught about keeping themselves safe, including about keeping safe online. This work begins in Reception and continues throughout the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Not enough thought has been given to the sequencing of the curriculum in some subjects. Pupils encounter important knowledge in one topic but then do not return to it again in later topics, and so it is forgotten. As a result, their knowledge of these subjects is not as strong as it should be. Leaders should ensure that they have considered why things should be taught in the order that they are, and how pupils can build on their prior knowledge as they go through the curriculum.
- The behaviour of pupils is not always dealt with in a consistent way by staff. As a result, some pupils and parents are concerned that unkind behaviour is not addressed, and this leaves some pupils feeling unhappy. Leaders should ensure that everyone in the school understands the approach to unkind behaviour and that the agreed processes are followed consistently.

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	146448
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10257083
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	210
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Archdeacon Luke Thomas Irvine-Capel
Headteacher	Nicky Metcalfe
Website	www.march.w-sussex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Diocese of Chichester Academy Trust.
- The school does not currently use alternative provision
- The school is a Church of England school. It is due its next Section 48 inspection in the next academic year.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with leaders, including the headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator and other senior leaders. The lead inspector also met with trustees, local governors, and officers of the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, computing and geography. For each deep dive, Inspectors 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 single central record was checked, and the inspector spoke to the designated safeguarding lead and members of the safeguarding team about their approaches to safeguarding. They also sampled case studies and documentation, and spoke with a range of staff and pupils about their knowledge of safeguarding.
- Inspectors met with a range of staff and considered their views through the confidential online staff survey.
- Inspectors met with pupils formally and informally around the school, in lessons and at playtime. Inspectors met with some parents and carers at the start of the school day and took account of responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey, as well as two emails sent to the inspection team.

Inspection team

Mark Enser, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Caroline Clarke

His Majesty's Inspector

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