

Inspection of an outstanding school: Montem Academy

Chalvey Grove, Slough, Berkshire SL1 2TE

Inspection dates:

28 February and 1 March 2023

Outcome

Montem Academy continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders, staff and trustees share exceptional expectations for pupils in this inspirational school. They believe that everyone can 'excel through pride and ambition'. Relationships are built on strong mutual respect and trust. Pupils are joyful. Behaviour is impeccable, and bullying almost never happens. Teachers always help pupils, and their families, with any worries.

Equality and diversity are celebrated daily. All pupils recognise themselves in books they read and inspirational figures they study. Pupils care deeply for their community. 'Eco ambassadors' take the lead on environmental action. 'Digital leaders' support their peers with technology.

Staff offer extensive extra-curricular opportunities. From cheerleading, touch-typing and board games, to boccia, cricket, netball and badminton, there is a free club for everyone. Leaders are passionate that nobody misses out. Pupils represent the school in an impressive range of events, including festivals for pupils with disabilities.

Personal development is exemplary; leaders deliver a 'childhood promise' to ensure that all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, experience trips to the seaside, theatre and London to see Christmas lights. The choir loves performing at Windsor Castle. Pupils glow with excitement when describing camping and residential trips. Parents say this school 'goes above and beyond, truly making a difference to the community.'

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

Children make a strong start in early years, listening and working with sustained concentration. Beginning in nursery, children learn sounds and mathematical skills with superb support from caring and knowledgeable staff. Reading is highly valued. Phonics

teaching is precise and well organised in small groups. Assessment is sharp, ensuring that everyone keeps up. Staff give effective support, such as one-to-one or group reading sessions, to help pupils excel. Pupils enjoy 'phonics breakfast club', eating healthy food while working on their sounds. Pupils achieve significantly above the national average in phonics. Pupils love books and learn to be fluent and analytical readers.

The mathematics curriculum is well planned and ambitious. Work in books is impressive, with pupils mastering concepts and solving problems confidently. Pupils' writing demonstrates creativity, applying adventurous vocabulary and ways to engage the reader. Non-fiction pieces, such as persuasive letters to the Prime Minister, are well planned and edited. Showing real pride, pupils 'publish' work with ornate front covers, using techniques such as screen printing. Art around the school is stunning, including displays promoting the school's extensive 'eco ambassador' work. Corridors feature pupils' inspiring efforts to paint like Banksy, Van Gogh and Roma artists. There are role models for everyone.

Pupils know and remember their learning in history. They understand timelines and make connections between different invaders of Britain, such as the Romans and Vikings. They develop skills as historians, such as evaluating the reliability of sources of evidence. In computing, pupils learn to code impressively by, for example, programming interactive games.

The curriculum is designed to help pupils understand the world. Every day begins with 'citizenship' lessons, where pupils are taught about equality, environmental issues and healthy living. Using strong subject knowledge and shared expertise across the school, teachers skilfully plan vocabulary and key knowledge for pupils to master.

Staff provide excellent support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders assess pupils effectively in order to identify learning needs such as dyslexia. Families are grateful for clear communication about support their children receive. Lessons are adapted to help pupils with visual impairment to achieve highly with the help of Braille. Smart adaptations ensure that pupils using wheelchairs succeed across the whole curriculum. Pupils with SEND proudly represent the school at events. Staff have high aspirations for all.

Behaviour is exemplary. The exceptional standards established in early years are upheld as pupils move through the school. Pupils are polite, kind and respectful. Lessons are not disrupted. Staff provide nurture activities and resources to support any pupils who need help to manage their behaviour or emotions.

Pupils' broader development is important to leaders. Pupils love helping others through a range of 'leadership' opportunities. For example, 'art leaders' deliver ceramics workshops to staff and younger pupils. The breadth of inclusive extra-curricular options is superb. Many pupils attend several clubs every week, always for little or no cost. Disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND are highly represented. Pupils show respect for differences, celebrating all faiths and types of family throughout the school.

Leaders are inspiring. The principal is highly regarded, showing tireless dedication to improve all aspects of school life. Leaders provide strong support for staff. Well-being is high, and workload is well managed, including for teachers early in their careers. Trustees and governors understand and care deeply about the school community. All leaders share strong ambition for all. As a result, pupils are thriving in this highly inclusive and exemplary school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff know and understand procedures for keeping children safe. Leaders frequently update staff training. No concern is too small, and every worry is always followed up. Trustees and governors provide strong support and challenge. This helps to ensure that everyone fulfils their duties. The single central record is updated and checked with diligence.

The designated safeguarding leader and family link worker provide exceptional support for families. They host coffee mornings and help parents access specialist services when needed. Leaders work tirelessly to find extra help. Well-planned lessons and assemblies help pupils to understand online safety and healthy relationships.

Background

When we have judged outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. 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 outstanding in November 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.

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	140335
Local authority	Slough
Inspection number	10240588
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	899
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Muralee Nair
Principal	Ann Probert
Website	www.montem.academy
Date of previous inspection	23 November 2016

Information about this school

- This school is part of the Park Federation Academy Trust.
- The school currently uses no alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors discussed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the principal, deputy principal, vice principals, special educational needs and disabilities coordinator, teachers and support staff.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors studied documents and records, including the school's single central record and child protection referrals. Inspectors spoke with the designated safeguarding leaders, staff, governors and pupils.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, physical education, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited lessons, spoke to pupils, and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors also evaluated pupils' work in history, English and computing.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils read and observed catch-up interventions to evaluate how staff provide extra support to pupils.
- The lead inspector met three members of the local governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The lead inspector met with the chief executive officer and the chair of trustees.
- Inspectors analysed responses to the staff survey and spoke to staff about their views of the school.
- Inspectors evaluated responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire and the additional free-text responses.
- Inspectors met with a range of pupils to discuss their views about the school and talked to pupils during social times and in lessons.

Inspection team

Scott Reece, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Deirdre Crutchley

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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