

Inspection of a good school: Madginford Primary School

Egremont Road, Bearsted, Maidstone, Kent ME15 8LH

Inspection dates:

19 and 20 April 2023

Outcome

Madginford Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils in this welcoming school feel happy and well cared for. Pupils have positive relationships with their teachers. They say that their teachers are kind and help them to do their best. Strong relationships help pupils to feel safe. Pupils are confident to report any concerns directly or to use the 'worry boxes'. Pupils know that kindness is important and valued. This helps to ensure that bullying is rare. Any incidents are dealt with quickly and effectively by staff.

Leaders have clear expectations for how pupils should behave. Most pupils respond well to this. The school has an orderly environment. Pupils respond quickly to instructions when moving around the classrooms or coming in from breaktimes. This helps learning to flow and the school day to run smoothly. When problems do occur, such as recent disagreements over spaces for playing football, pupils help leaders to find solutions. Pupils feel that their opinions are valued and considered through the school council, as it reviews key policies alongside staff.

Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. They enjoy celebrating their achievements through recognitions such as the 'Proud Peacock' awards. This motivates pupils to keep trying their best and to do well.

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

Leaders provide a high-quality education for pupils across the school. This is built around the concepts of curiosity, challenge and connectivity. Subject leaders have identified the key knowledge that pupils should know and remember in each subject. This means that teachers know precisely what content pupils should be taught. Subject leaders have thought carefully about how to organise the curriculum so that pupils' knowledge builds in a logical order from the early years to Year 6.

Largely, teachers have a clear understanding of how pupils' learning links to what they have learned previously and what they will learn in the future. This means that teachers can design learning that builds effectively on what pupils already know and can do. This helps pupils to develop secure knowledge. The individual needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified. These pupils receive additional support. However, sometimes, the help provided is not linked closely enough to what they know and can do. This can hamper their progress and ability to fully access the curriculum.

Leaders have prioritised reading. Pupils learn to read using a well-structured programme. Effective staff training ensures that this programme is taught well. Children learn phonics from the start of the Reception Year. Regular checks help teachers to know exactly which sounds pupils know and to identify any pupils who start to fall behind. These pupils are given the support they need to catch up quickly. Pupils' reading books closely match the sounds they have learned. This helps them to become confident readers.

Pupils enjoy reading. They develop regular reading habits and can discuss their favourite authors and book preferences. However, teachers do not always design reading activities that challenge and deepen pupils' thinking about texts. Leaders have recognised the need to improve pupils' understanding of what they read. Leaders have recently introduced a new approach to teaching reading to address this. However, this is still in the early stages of development.

The mathematics curriculum engages and challenges pupils well. Teachers routinely check what pupils have learned so that they can identify and address misconceptions quickly. Teachers offer carefully targeted support to pupils who struggle with their learning. Pupils, including those with SEND, learn well in mathematics.

Most pupils behave well in lessons. This positively supports learning. Pupils are respectful to their teachers and to each other. They are eager to participate in lessons and share ideas. Children in the early years settle well into school routines.

The provision for pupils' personal development is strong. Pupils learn a wealth of information that prepares them well for life in modern Britain. For example, each class learns about inspirational people from across different cultures and historical periods. The school's pastoral team supports the emotional and mental well-being of pupils, as well as their personal development. This helps pupils who struggle to come into school to settle quickly and happily into the day.

Governors are highly committed to the school. Together with leaders, they are dedicated to ensuring that pupils receive a high-quality education. Most staff feel proud to work at the school. They are positive about the training and support they are given to help them to deliver the curriculum effectively for pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff and governors receive regular safeguarding training. As a result, staff are knowledgeable about their safeguarding responsibilities, and they know how to identify pupils who may be at risk of harm. Leaders work with a range of external agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils and their families access any specialist help they need.

Leaders ensure that pupils learn important information about how to keep themselves safe. Identified issues are addressed both individually and through the curriculum. For example, the computing curriculum has been adapted to provide more information about staying safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Processes to assess, plan, implement and review provision for pupils with SEND are not consistently well developed. This means that barriers to learning are not always fully addressed, and some pupils with SEND do not achieve as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that support for all pupils with SEND is tightly aligned to their needs and reviewed regularly so that pupils can achieve well across the curriculum.
- The new approach to reading is at a variety of stages of implementation. Sometimes, the teaching of reading is not yet sufficiently well adapted to ensure pupils explore and then understand what they are reading. Leaders should continue to provide training and support for staff in implementing the new approach to reading effectively.

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 June 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	118488
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10241689
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	643
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Toby Butler
Headteacher	Amanda Woolcombe
Website	www.madingfordprimaryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	7 and 8 June 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the lead inspector met regularly with school leaders. The lead inspector also met with representatives from the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector listened to pupils read to an adult from the school.

- Safeguarding records were reviewed, including the single central record and appointment procedures. Inspectors spoke to staff about safeguarding and spoke to pupils about the support they have in understanding how to keep safe.
- The inspectors reviewed responses to Ofsted's parent, pupil and staff surveys.
- The inspectors talked to staff, to gather their views about the school, including about their workload and well-being. They met with several groups of pupils, as well as speaking to pupils during lessons, at lunchtime and during a tour of the school.

Inspection team

Deborah Gordon, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Catherine Hylands

Ofsted Inspector

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