

Inspection of a good school: Marland Hill Community Primary School

Roch Mills Crescent, Off Roch Valley Way, Rochdale, Lancashire OL11 4QW

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 July 2023

Outcome

Marland Hill Community Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to be part of this diverse school community. They enjoy learning about each other's cultures and religions. They spoke positively about how staff encourage them to treat everybody as they would like to be treated themselves.

Pupils feel happy and safe in the school. Those pupils who are part of the specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) (specially resourced provision) enjoy learning and playing alongside their peers. If pupils are unkind to each other, or when bullying happens, leaders act quickly and decisively to resolve it.

Pupils, including the children in the early years, have a real appetite for learning. They are eager to get involved in lessons. When pupils behave well, or try hard with their learning, they earn reward points to spend in the school shop. This motivates them to do their best. Leaders have high expectations of pupils' conduct and achievement. Pupils rise to meet these expectations.

Older pupils take on responsibilities, for example they can be elected to the student council. Other pupils spoke positively about the actions that these pupils have taken to improve their school experience, for example by providing sports equipment for them to use at breaktimes.

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

Leaders have designed a curriculum that is broad and ambitious for all pupils. They have thought carefully about how that curriculum reflects pupils' own experiences while also encouraging them to become curious about the wider world.

Subject leaders have identified the knowledge that they want pupils to acquire. Some subject leaders have done this in consultation with the early years staff. Together, they ensure that the children in the early years build a secure foundation of knowledge.

However, in some subjects, leaders have not thought carefully about how learning should build logically from the early years into Year 1 and beyond. In these subjects, the early years staff are not clear enough about the precise knowledge that children should have to ensure that they are well prepared for key stage 1.

Teachers have strong knowledge of the different subjects that they teach. Typically, they understand how pupils' new learning should build on what they already know. Teachers frequently check pupils' understanding. If teachers identify misconceptions, they adapt their teaching to address them. This helps pupils to achieve well.

Leaders prioritise reading. For example, pupils enjoy participating in the weekly 'star books' challenge. Leaders have a sharp focus on developing pupils' vocabulary. This helps pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, to build rich subject-specific vocabularies.

In the early years, leaders provide an environment that is rich in language. Children enjoy retelling the stories that they have heard. From the start of the Reception Year, they begin to learn phonics. Staff teach the phonics programme effectively. Pupils practise reading with books that match the sounds that they know. This helps them to learn to read confidently and fluently. Staff are quick to identify any pupils who are struggling. Staff ensure that these pupils quickly receive the help that they need to catch up with their peers.

Leaders have robust processes in place for identifying any additional needs that pupils may have. Leaders ensure that staff receive detailed information about how to give these pupils access to the curriculum. Pupils in the specially resourced provision benefit from expert support. Staff carefully tailor this to pupils' individual needs. As they move through the school, these pupils spend increasing amounts of time learning in the classroom alongside their peers. They are actively involved in the wider life of the school. For example, they are proud to take on roles such as sports leaders. Pupils with SEND achieve well.

Pupils, including children in the early years, behave sensibly in and around the school. Teachers cultivate calm and orderly classroom environments. For example, they use non-verbal methods effectively to gain pupils' attention. Staff are alert to small indications that pupils might become distracted during lessons. Should this happen, they act swiftly to refocus pupils on their learning.

Leaders support pupils' personal development well. Pupils learn about the importance of keeping physically active and how to look after their bodies. For example, they learn first aid. Leaders have thought carefully about how they can enrich the curriculum through trips and visits. For example, pupils spoke enthusiastically about undertaking a design project at another local school.

Governors know the school well. They support leaders effectively in refining the quality of education that they provide. Most staff feel that leaders have due consideration for their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that all adults, including governors, understand that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility. Staff receive frequent '7-minute briefings' which help them to keep their safeguarding knowledge up to date. Leaders closely monitor the most vulnerable pupils. They use robust systems and processes to ensure that they keep these pupils safe. Leaders work well with external professionals to secure appropriate and timely support for the pupils and families who need it.

Pupils learn about safeguarding through the curriculum. For example, they can describe actions that they should take to keep themselves safe online. They know who to speak to if they have any worries.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, leaders and early years staff have not thought carefully enough about what children need to learn in the Nursery and Reception classes. This means that, in those subjects, children are not as well prepared for their key stage 1 learning as they should be. Senior leaders should ensure that subject leaders and staff in the early years are clear about the knowledge that children should have in order to get off to a flying start in key stage 1.

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 May 2018.

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	105778
Local authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	10291391
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	461
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Rosemary Nunwick
Headteacher	Alex Pridgeon
Website	www.marlandhillprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	9 and 10 May 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND. This provides for hearing-impaired pupils from the Reception Year to Year 6. There are currently 10 pupils using this provision. All these pupils have an education, health and care plan. All places are commissioned through the local authority.
- The governing body provides a breakfast club for pupils.
- School leaders do not make use of any 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 her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector spoke with the headteacher, other leaders and staff.
- The inspector spoke with some members of the governing body.
- The inspector spoke to a representative of the local authority.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. She 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. She observed some pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- The inspector spoke to pupils about their experience of school. She also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes.
- The inspector visited the school's specially resourced provision.
- The inspector visited the breakfast club run by school leaders.
- The inspector checked the school's safeguarding policies and procedures, including the school's single central record. She met with leaders, staff and pupils to check on the effectiveness of safeguarding in the school.
- The inspector reviewed a wide range of evidence, including documents relating to school improvement, curriculum documentation and records of governing body minutes.
- The inspector considered the responses shared through Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. She also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Sally Rix, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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