

Inspection of a good school: Manor Hill First School

Manor Rise, Walton, Stone, Staffordshire ST15 0HY

Inspection date: 14 September 2023

Outcome

Manor Hill First School continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Mrs Jessica Roden. This school is part of The Creative Learning Partnership Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Mr Samuel Compton, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Mr Robert Owen.

What is it like to attend this school?

Manor Hill First School is a caring school where pupils are happy and safe. Parents and carers are very positive about the school. One parent summed up the views of many when they said, 'This is more than a school: it is a community where children and families are supported and cared for.'

Pupils are proud to attend their school. They behave well in lessons and at playtimes. Pupils can explain what bullying is. They say that bullying sometimes happens, but adults will deal with it quickly.

The school has high expectations of all pupils. Staff want all pupils at the school, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to achieve their very best.

Pupils enjoy school and feel well supported. They can clearly articulate how the school's core values of exploration, resilience, creativity and collaboration help them to learn. They understand the importance of these values. Pupils can participate in a wide range of experiences that feature on the 'wheel of champion opportunities'. These include litter picking, meeting an inspirational person and visiting a theatre. Pupils also enjoy attending clubs such as cookery and dance, and value opportunities to help their local community.

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

The school is aspirational for all pupils' learning and personal development. Leaders have spent a considerable amount of time creating a curriculum that meets the needs of the school. They have thought carefully about the progression of skills and knowledge in each subject so that the curriculum builds on what pupils already know, this is particularly

evident in mathematics. However, some staff are not always clear about the best ways to deliver the planned curriculum. When this is the case, activities chosen do not always enable pupils to learn and remember as well as they could. This means that sometimes the curriculum does not always have the strong impact that leaders intend.

There is a caring and nurturing ethos in early years. Relationships between adults and children are especially strong. One parent commented that 'the teachers go above and beyond to help the children settle and grow'. Staff successfully develop children's independence. For instance, staff encourage the children to take responsibility for their belongings as soon as they are able.

The school prioritises teaching pupils to read. Children in early years enjoy listening to stories and joining in with songs and rhymes. Leaders have selected high-quality texts for teachers to use in lessons. Staff encourage pupils to read regularly and are quick to spot any pupils who need extra help to keep up. This support is quickly put in place and carefully monitored to check it is having a positive impact. As soon as children start in Reception, they begin learning phonics. A new phonics programme has been introduced over the past year and a half. All staff have received training in the teaching of phonics. However, leaders recognise that there is more to do to ensure all staff are expert in teaching phonics.

There is an effective, well-planned offer for pupils' wider development. Leaders carefully plan opportunities for all pupils to ensure that they are being well prepared for life in the world of work and modern Britain. The school makes sure that pupils learn about different faiths other than their own. Pupils understand that there are many different faiths and beliefs and respect this. They told inspectors that it is important to be friendly to everyone, whatever their belief or background. Pupils learn about fundamental British values and have a good understanding of concepts such as democracy. They are currently in the process of voting for their school councillors.

The school is tenacious in securing the right support for pupils. Staff know pupils very well and are quick to pick up on any concerns. Adults identify pupils with SEND quickly and accurately. They involve external agencies when relevant. Leaders are ambitious for these pupils to learn the full curriculum.

Staff work closely together and support each other well. They are reflective and thoughtful about their work. They also work collaboratively with colleagues across the trust in a variety of ways. Staff appreciate having this time to collaborate and share expertise. They say that leaders consider their well-being and work-life balance. The school has experienced rapid growth in pupil numbers in recent years and will continue to grow in the future. Leaders are managing this well. The school engages with effective support from The Creative Learning Partnership Trust.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Not all staff are as expert in teaching phonics as leaders would like. As a result of this, there is some variability in how well the early reading curriculum is delivered. This means that some pupils do not make as much progress as they could with their reading. The school should ensure that all staff receive the guidance they need to teach phonics effectively.
- Occasionally, some staff do not use activities that help all pupils to learn the curriculum. As a result, some pupils do not remember as much as they could. Leaders should ensure that staff provide activities which support pupils to remember more across the curriculum.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Manor Hill First School, to be good in September 2012.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years,

looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	146918
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10290661
Type of school	First
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	178
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Robert Owen
Headteacher/Principal	Jessica Roden
Website	www.manorhillfirst.co.uk
Date(s) of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, Manor Hill First School has become part of The Creative Learning Partnership Trust, a multi-academy trust. It converted to become an academy in June 2019.
- The school operates a before- and after-school club each day that is run by the school.
- The school Nursery has provision for two-year-olds.
- The school makes use of one registered alternative provider.

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.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other leaders.
- Inspectors spoke to the trust's chief executive officer, chair of governors and chair of trustees.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and history. Inspection activities in these subjects included lesson visits, discussions with staff and pupils,

meeting with subject leaders, and work scrutiny. An inspector also observed pupils reading.

- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents, including those related to safeguarding arrangements, behaviour and attendance. Inspectors also reviewed the school's evaluation of its own performance and the school's development plans.
- Inspectors talked to staff about their role in keeping pupils safe.
- Inspectors held informal and formal discussions with pupils and observed lunchtime.
- Inspectors reviewed responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including additional free-text comments. They also took account of responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Emma Gater, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Barry Yeadsley

His Majesty's Inspector

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