

# Inspection of a good school: Moulsham Junior School

Princes Road, Chelmsford, Essex CM2 9DG

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Inspection dates:

14 and 15 November 2023

## Outcome

Moulsham Junior School continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Marie Staley. The school is the only school in a single academy trust, Moulsham Junior School, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Mike Faulconbridge.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils embody the 'Moulsham rights' in all aspects of their life in school. These are the right to learn, to be safe and to respect.

Pupils respond very well to the high expectations of learning and behaviour placed upon them by the school. They talk excitedly about their learning activities both in and out of school. Pupils therefore learn and achieve well in most subjects.

Pupils feel safe in school and attend regularly. The safe culture of the school means they are confident to raise any concerns to adults in school. Pupils are highly aware of everyone's right to respect through the strong focus on diversity and inclusion in their learning. Accordingly, pupils show respect in their behaviour towards each other and adults.

There are many opportunities for pupils to extend their learning beyond the classroom, for example visits to local castles and a visit by a pop-up planetarium. The majority of pupils benefit from the various clubs that are on offer. Pupils can apply for a wide range of leadership roles such as head boy and girl and school councillors.

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

The school has developed an ambitious curriculum. It is broad and appropriately sequenced to ensure that pupils build up secure knowledge and skills over time. Teachers have the deep subject knowledge that enables them to deliver engaging lessons to pupils. As a result, pupils achieve well in most subjects.

The school prioritises pupils becoming confident and fluent readers. Pupils study a diverse and increasingly sophisticated range of books at school. Those pupils who need to catch up in reading are quickly supported to do so. Pupils' progress in applying their reading skills is precisely checked. Therefore pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, achieve highly in reading.

Across other subjects, teachers assess pupils' progress regularly and precisely. They provide oral and written feedback to pupils. Teachers also encourage pupils to reflect on and refine their work. However, in mathematics pupils do not always have enough opportunities to apply and practise their reasoning skills in lessons. This means that some pupils, especially those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), do not achieve as highly as they could in mathematics.

The school has trained staff to effectively identify the needs of pupils with SEND. Leaders secure appropriate support from external agencies. Regular reviews of pupils' support plans ensure they precisely outline the support that pupils with SEND need to learn. Staff provide this in a timely way in lessons. This enables pupils with SEND to access the same learning as their peers.

Leaders at all levels promote the behaviours within the school motto of 'sharing, supporting, striving, succeeding'. They set high expectations of pupils' behaviour, and this shows within pupils' respectful attitudes to learning and towards each other. Pupils are keen to learn, and their attendance is high. Pupils also learn about personal characteristics of success, for example the resilience and bravery of historical figures. This helps inspire pupils to develop these characteristics.

The school's work on promoting inclusivity and diversity is a strength. The diversity wall compiled by pupils in the canteen exemplifies their understanding of respect for all. Similarly, pupils have many opportunities to discuss and debate moral and ethical issues. This helps develop their awareness of wider issues outside of their community.

Pupils are proud of the leadership roles they undertake, including well-being ambassadors, subject champions and peer mediators. Pupils are proactive in the community, for example establishing a community pantry for both food and books.

School leaders have listened to staff views on workload and responded accordingly. Staff say that leaders are very sensitive to their well-being needs.

The board of governors plays an active role in school life. Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They hold school leaders to account effectively.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils have not yet memorised or understood the key mathematical knowledge required to solve complex and novel problems. Leaders must ensure that teachers check that pupils are secure in the basics of mathematics and that pupils can recall and apply this knowledge easily when needed.

## 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 April 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](#)' 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	137971
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10295047
<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	702
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Mike Faulconbridge
<b>Headteacher</b>	Marie Staley
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.moulsham-jun.essex.sch.uk">www.moulsham-jun.essex.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	24 and 25 April 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school converted to become an academy within a single academy trust, Moulsham Junior School, in April 2012.
- The school has also recently opened an onsite provision for key stage 3 pupils to support their transition to secondary school. This provision houses eight pupils on a temporary basis and is funded by the local authority.
- The school currently uses one alternative provider.
- There is a separate onsite provider of out-of-school care for children.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, special educational needs coordinator (SENCo), members of the senior leadership team and subject leaders.

- The lead inspector met with the chair of the board of trustees and members of the local governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and art. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and outside during social times.
- Inspectors viewed a range of the school's documentation provided at the start of the inspection, including the school improvement plan and minutes from meetings of the local governing body.
- Inspectors considered 133 responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, including 163 free-text comments. Inspectors met with staff and considered responses to Ofsted's online staff survey. They also considered responses to Ofsted's online pupil survey.

### **Inspection team**

Rowena Simmons, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Nicola Shadbolt

Ofsted Inspector

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