

Inspection of Mary Elton Primary School

Holland Road, Clevedon, North Somerset, Somerset BS21 7SX

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 March 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is Thomas Newell. This school is part of Futura Learning Partnership, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Andrea Arlidge, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Malcolm Broad.

What is it like to attend this school?

Mary Elton Primary School is a safe, friendly school where staff care deeply for the well-being of pupils. Through the curriculum, pupils learn strong social skills. Consequently, they are kind and respectful towards each other. They form close, nurturing relationships with staff. In the Reception Year, children learn the routines of school well. They learn to take turns and share. Older pupils behave well in lessons and around the school site. Pupils attend school regularly because the school works hard to ensure that pupils enjoy learning and feel well supported.

Pupils learn about the importance of democracy and free speech. For example, pupils elect house captains to represent them. Pupils develop leadership skills through the many opportunities open to them. Digital leaders, for instance, lead assemblies about how to navigate the internet safely. Mini police help others to keep themselves safe. Pupils enrich their learning through organised trips and clubs.

Most pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive effective support to help them learn well. However, some pupils with complex SEND do not receive the bespoke support they require to flourish.

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

The school has worked diligently and with urgency to improve the quality of education that pupils receive. Together with trust and school leaders, staff have transformed the curriculum and the effectiveness of teaching and learning. As a result, despite the weak published outcomes achieved by pupils in 2023, current pupils, including most pupils with SEND, learn well.

Children in Reception Year learn to read successfully. Staff are knowledgeable about how to teach the early reading curriculum. This supports children to make links between letters and the sounds they make. Pupils, and children in Reception, are eager readers. They listen to stories and read a breadth of texts. For example, pupils in Year 4 are enthused by reading about the impact of historical events on the lives of families. Pupils learn to consider texts knowledgeably and write well.

The curriculum is typically well structured and supports pupils to build increasingly complex knowledge. Some subjects in the curriculum are more developed than others. For example, pupils learn about computing in depth due to the very well constructed curriculum and high-quality teaching. Pupils are thus knowledgeable about the digital world and know how to keep themselves safe. Overall, teachers have the expertise they need to teach the curriculum effectively. Staff check pupils' understanding frequently and address any significant gaps in their knowledge. However, in some subjects, teaching does not extend and deepen pupils' knowledge so that they excel.

Children in Reception Year are well supported. They learn to extend their understanding of the world through play. In addition, they develop strong

knowledge about number, reading and writing. Teachers are knowledgeable about child development and have adapted the curriculum with success. Therefore, children thrive in the setting. Children are enthusiastic about learning. For example, children enjoyed writing simple sentences about their imaginary creature based on the text 'The Gruffalo' by Julia Donaldson. However, some children with complex SEND do not receive the tailored support they require.

Pupils' personal, social and emotional development are priorities for school leaders. Pupils learn about the world around them through the curriculum and through well-planned trips and visitors to the school. These complement and enrich pupils' learning. For example, pupils visited the recycling centre to learn more about it. Many pupils join clubs, such as cookery club, where older pupils mentor younger pupils.

Governance is strong. Governors and trust leaders provide both challenge and support in equal measure. Most parents are positive about the transformation of the school, but leaders have not yet fully communicated the impact of the changes to some. Staff are very positive about their work at the school. They value the changes to the curriculum and the ongoing training provided by the trust to ensure that pupils learn well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The needs of some pupils with SEND are not met well. Consequently, some pupils with complex SEND do not learn as well as leaders intend. The school and the trust must ensure that these pupils receive the support they need to learn with confidence and success.
- In some subjects, teachers do not extend pupils' knowledge. This limits the extent to which pupils can demonstrate in-depth subject knowledge. The school and the trust should ensure that pupils deepen their subject understanding so that they are well prepared for their next steps.

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	143991
Local authority	North Somerset
Inspection number	10322306
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	373
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Malcolm Broad
CEO of the trust	Andrea Arlidge
Headteacher	Thomas Newell
Website	www.maryeltonschool.org.uk/
Dates of previous inspection	4 and 5 March 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There is a breakfast club and after-school club for pupils who attend the school.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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 held discussions with the headteacher and members of the leadership team. They also held discussions with governors.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, early reading, mathematics, computing and physical education. In each subject, inspectors met with senior and curriculum leaders, talked to pupils, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and looked at pupils' books.
- An inspector listened to pupils from Years 1 to 3 read to an adult.
- An inspector met with the special educational needs coordinator to consider the quality of education for pupils with SEND.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 reviewed behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents who responded to the confidential questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View. They evaluated the views of staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Susan Aykin, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Andrew Lovett

Ofsted Inspector

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