

# Inspection of Markyate Village School and Nursery

Cavendish Road, Markyate, St Albans, Hertfordshire AL3 8PT

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Inspection dates:	28 and 29 January 2025
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils are proud to attend this friendly and welcoming school. The school sets ambitious expectations for pupils. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils work hard in lessons, enjoy learning and achieve well.

Pupils feel safe and are well cared for. Relationships between pupils and staff are positive. Pupils know the adults they can speak to if they ever feel worried. The school checks carefully that pupils are ready to learn.

Behaviour in lessons and around the school is respectful and calm. Most pupils display excellent attitudes to learning. At social times, pupils get along well with one another. They play a range of sports and enjoy games such as chess harmoniously together.

Pupils eagerly take on roles of responsibility and develop their leadership skills. Prefects and sports captains take pride in their roles representing the school, while 'active travel ambassadors' help to keep other pupils safe and active. Pupils have a range of opportunities to develop their talents and interests. Sports, music and the arts are all well catered for. Residential trips broaden pupils' horizons. Every pupil gets these same opportunities to develop many new skills.

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

The school has designed a well-thought-out curriculum which begins in early years. The knowledge and vocabulary that pupils need to learn are clearly identified. In some subjects, this is very well established. Other areas of the curriculum are at an earlier stage of implementation.

Children in early years settle well into school routines. They build positive relationships with adults. Adults interact with children in a meaningful way, which means their learning is well supported. The early years curriculum identifies the key knowledge that children need to secure to be successful in Year 1. As a result, children in early years achieve well and are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Early reading is taught effectively. Trained staff teach the school's chosen phonics programme using their strong subject knowledge. This helps pupils to learn their sounds and be able to apply these when they read independently. The school checks how well pupils are progressing and puts in extra help for any pupil who falls behind. This ensures pupils become confident, fluent readers.

The school's approach to teaching writing is less well developed. While pupils write regularly, the expectations in terms of how letters are formed and sentences constructed are not always clear or consistent. As a result, some pupils have developed errors in the way they write. This means that some pupils do not write with the necessary fluency and accuracy across different curriculum subjects to demonstrate what they have learned.

The school skilfully develops staff's understanding of the teaching approaches that will help pupils learn best. Mostly, teachers revisit previous learning with pupils and present new knowledge effectively. Pupils learn to connect new subject content to what they already understand. Pupils develop a depth of knowledge over time. However, sometimes, the school does not ensure that staff match their teaching well to its curriculum. Sometimes the way new content is introduced to pupils is not clear and the activity pupils complete does not support them to remember the key learning. On these occasions, pupils do not learn the knowledge and vocabulary that the school intends.

Support for pupils with SEND is a strength. The school identifies the needs of these pupils accurately. It makes the adaptations needed to break down any barriers to pupils' learning. Many pupils with SEND access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers successfully. As a result, pupils with SEND achieve well.

The school sets high standards for pupils' behaviour. Its behaviour policy has recently been revisited to ensure a shared understanding and consistency in approach. This is working well. Pupils' learning in classrooms proceeds without disruption.

A thorough programme of personal development is provided. Pupils learn about different relationships, how to keep themselves healthy, and personal safety. Pupils develop a strong sense of respect and tolerance. They can discuss the importance of learning about different cultures and beliefs. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

The governing body is heavily involved in the school. It offers strong support and challenge to school leaders. Staff feel valued and appreciated by school leaders. They know their well-being and workload are considered when changes are made. Leaders, staff and governors are proud of their school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- The expectations of pupils' writing across the curriculum are not consistent. This means that some pupils do not write with the fluency and accuracy required to demonstrate their learning in an effective way. The school should give pupils clearer expectations to help them to write effectively across the whole curriculum.
- On occasion, the school does not ensure that the teaching of the curriculum makes the intended learning as clear as it should be. This means pupils do not always secure the intended core knowledge as well as they might. The school should continue to support staff to ensure what pupils need to learn and remember is at the forefront of teaching across the curriculum.

## 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>	117127
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10378463
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	221
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Victoria Horsnall
<b>Headteacher</b>	Anna Page
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.markyate.herts.sch.uk">www.markyate.herts.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	5 and 6 December 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The headteacher took up their post in September 2024.
- The school runs its own breakfast club provision.
- The school uses one registered provider of alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, subject leaders, staff, members of the governing body, and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography and religious education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also listened to pupils read with a familiar member of staff.
- 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 a range of documents, including behaviour logs, attendance records, pupil records, records of governing body meetings and school development plans.
- The inspection team considered the views of parents through responses to Ofsted Parent View, and conversations held with parents during the inspection.
- Inspectors gathered the views of pupils and staff through Ofsted's surveys, as well as discussions conducted throughout the inspection.

### **Inspection team**

Jonny Wallace, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Georgina Nutton

Ofsted Inspector

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