

Inspection of good school: Marus Bridge Primary School

Kelvin Grove, Marus Bridge, Wigan, Lancashire WN3 6SP

Inspection dates: 17–18 September 2019

Outcome

Marus Bridge Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils and staff are very proud of this happy and successful school. Pupils describe the school as 'amazing'. They love their lessons and enjoy the wide range of trips and visits that their teachers plan for them. For example, pupils talked with enthusiasm about a trip to Chester as part of their learning in history.

Pupils know that their teachers want them to achieve well. They told me that they get lots of extra help if they need it. This includes support for pupils' well-being.

Leaders make sure that all pupils enjoy a very wide range of interesting experiences during their time at school. Staff have planned an exciting 'Bridge Builders' curriculum programme. This includes trips to theatres, orienteering and contributing to local charities. Pupils described how these opportunities help them learn and grow in confidence and get them ready for secondary school.

In lessons and around school, pupils behave very well. They are extremely well mannered and welcoming. Pupils said that they feel safe in school and that bullying is very rare. When it does happen, pupils told me that their teachers are quick to sort it out.

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

Leaders have made sure that all pupils receive a broad and interesting curriculum. They leave the school well prepared for their next stage of education. Teachers plan work that develops pupils' knowledge and skills across different subjects. For example, in mathematics, pupils spend lots of time practising mental arithmetic skills and written calculations. This means that pupils become skilled, accurate and confident in their work. They achieve highly.

Pupils really enjoy reading. This is because teachers share a wide range of interesting books and novels with their classes. Across the curriculum, staff check that children understand the meaning of tricky words. Teachers give pupils who find reading difficult

lots of extra practice by ensuring that they read with an adult every day in school. However, in the Reception and key stage 1 classes, teachers use some different approaches to teach pupils new sounds. This is sometimes confusing for younger pupils who are struggling to read fluently. Some teachers have not had recent training in how to teach phonics.

In history, pupils can remember important facts about the events that they have studied. Year 5 pupils spoke enthusiastically about what they had learned about Ancient Egypt and about the Romans. Leaders have further improved the history curriculum plans to help pupils remember even more key facts about each topic. Teachers are beginning to deliver the new curriculum as intended. However, leaders need to make more checks on what is being taught. This is so that they can ensure that pupils make stronger connections between the different topics that they are studying. Pupils are, however, becoming more confident in ordering historical events on a timeline.

Teachers make detailed and regular checks on how well pupils are learning. This helps teachers to spot any pupils that need extra support. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers give these pupils the right support to help them close any gaps in their learning.

In the Reception classes, children get off to a flying start. Children are happy, well settled and ready to learn. They listen carefully to their teachers and are excited about their learning. This is because teachers plan a wide range of activities that children really enjoy. For example, in mathematics, children explore counting and numbers in different and fun ways, including by singing and playing. Teachers ask lots of questions to check that children are keeping up with their learning. They give parents and carers plenty of useful information about how they can help their children with their learning at home.

In classes and around school, pupils are kind and considerate to others. It is rare for pupils to interrupt lessons by misbehaving. The school's pastoral team provides a range of support. This includes helping pupils behave well and developing their social skills.

A strength of the school is the wide range of opportunities that teachers give pupils to help them learn about the wider world. Pupils learn about different religions, such as Islam and Hinduism. Through experiences such as the choir, and signing at a local special school, pupils understand how to care for others.

Leaders and governors make sure that the school is a happy and harmonious community. All feel valued. Staff are quick to support each other in their teaching. Leaders ensure that staff have a good work–life balance. Staff get lots of opportunities for training and development. For example, teachers within the trust are helping staff to develop their expertise in teaching Spanish.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders give staff regular training and updates. This means everyone knows how to check for signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. Leaders log all concerns and take the right actions when necessary. Staff work closely with other agencies and professionals. This helps pupils get the support that they need. Leaders make the relevant checks on staff to ensure that they pose no threat to pupils' safety and well-being.

Staff teach pupils about the risks that they might face in their everyday lives, including when using technology. Pupils know whom to go to if they are worried about anything.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have planned and implemented a deep and rich curriculum across different subjects. In history, leaders have made further improvements to help pupils to develop more secure knowledge and understanding. Leaders need to ensure that the content of the school's newly improved history curricular plan is delivered by staff as intended. Leaders also need to check that the revised plan is having the intended impact on further strengthening pupils' knowledge and understanding in history.
- At present, there are some inconsistencies in teaching phonics. This is because some staff have not received recent training in delivering phonics. Therefore, leaders need to ensure that a consistent approach to phonics is put in place that enables all pupils, including those falling behind, to learn to read accurately and fluently.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Marus Bridge Primary School, to be good on 18–19 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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	143498
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	10110969
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	405
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Andy Wilson
Headteacher	Michael Gaskill
Website	www.marusbridgeprimaryschool.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This is the school's first inspection since it opened on the 1 October 2016.

Information about this inspection

- I met with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher.
- History, mathematics and reading were considered as part of this inspection. For each of these subjects, inspection activities included discussions with leaders, visits to lessons, discussions with teachers, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils about their learning. In reading, an inspector also observed a member of staff listening to pupils read.
- I held meetings with five governors, including the chair of the local governing board, the chief executive officer of the trust, the coordinator of the provision for pupils with SEND and the school's pastoral manager.
- I checked the school's safeguarding policies and procedures and the school's single central record. I met with leaders, staff and pupils to check how effective safeguarding is in school.

- I met with parents at the school gate to seek their views. I also considered 94 responses to Parent View, Ofsted’s online questionnaire for parents, including 64 written comments. I also considered two written submissions from parents.
- During the inspection, I met with groups of pupils from Year 3 to Year 6 and observed lunchtimes and playtimes.
- I examined a range of documents. These included the school’s development plans and self-evaluation documents, minutes of governing body meetings and safeguarding documentation.

Inspection team

Elizabeth Stevens, lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

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