

Inspection of Marlborough Infant School

Redvers Buller Road, Aldershot, Hampshire GU11 2HR

Inspection dates: 5–6 November 2019

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Marlborough is a small, happy and successful school. It has been transformed since its previous inspection by a very effective leadership team, led by a dynamic and dedicated headteacher. There are high expectations for all pupils, whatever their background and notwithstanding any extra needs they may have.

Teachers make lessons memorable and pupils are keen to learn. Pupils behave well throughout the school day. They get on well with each other at all times. Bullying is not an issue for pupils because staff quickly deal with any behaviour problems.

Children's learning is particularly strong in the Reception class. The learning environment is stimulating and well resourced. Teaching staff respond imaginatively to children's interests by providing activities that fully engage them. Children rapidly develop positive attitudes towards learning.

A large number of pupils come from service families. Leaders have developed many school approaches specifically to help these pupils. For example, pupils swiftly receive emotional support if they need it. Leaders also ensure that pupils learn to read as quickly as possible. As a result, any pupil who has to leave the school early has already made strong progress in learning to read.

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

Teaching staff view reading as key to successful learning in all other subjects. Consequently, much time is devoted to teaching reading. Initially, teachers focus on teaching phonics. Pupils practise new sounds frequently until they know them well. Teaching staff quickly give pupils extra support if they need to catch up. This ensures that pupils make good progress in their phonics skills. As pupils get older, there is an increasing focus on teaching pupils to understand what they are reading. Teachers help pupils to understand what they are reading less frequently.

Although there is a focus on reading, writing and mathematics, pupils of all ages learn a wide range of subjects well. Leaders have thought carefully about what they want pupils to learn and when. Learning is broken down into small progressive steps in all subjects. Learning is particularly effective when pupils are able to revisit previous learning regularly.

Teachers adjust what they teach to match the needs of their class. For example, in a recent geography topic in Year 2, pupils learned about Nepal because several pupils' families originally came from this country. In this way, pupils learn about a range of cultures.

Because of effective teaching, pupils learn well. They can usually remember much of what they are taught. Occasionally, tasks set by teachers do not provide the right level of challenge. Nevertheless, over time, pupils of all abilities learn well.

Outcomes in national assessments last year at least matched the average achieved in all schools.

Teachers quickly and accurately identify any additional learning needs that pupils may have. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive extra help, often from capable learning support assistants. This allows them to learn well in all subjects alongside their classmates.

Pupils' learning in lessons is enhanced through termly trips. These are thoughtfully linked to particular areas of learning. There is a wide range of well-attended after-school clubs. The choir is particularly popular.

Pupils behave well throughout the school day. This is because they understand the school's expectations and have a say in devising class rules. Relationships between pupils and teaching staff are positive and nurturing. Pupils enjoy their lessons, particularly when they include practical work or make links between different subject areas. Sometimes, pupils are over-reliant on adults for support and time is lost while they wait for help.

The Reception classroom and outside area are always buzzing with productive activity. Although the children have only been in school a few weeks, they are deeply and meaningfully engaged in their learning throughout the day. Teaching staff expertly provide them with activities chosen to respond to their interests. They then skilfully discuss these with the children, ensuring that they learn as much as possible from the activities. Children develop their skills and knowledge extremely well in all areas of learning.

Leaders and governors have an insightful understanding of their school. Leaders rapidly improve any areas of weakness and build helpfully on emerging strengths. The school benefits greatly from its many links with other schools, especially its partnership school. Teachers learn from effective practice in other schools. Pupils make much better progress as a result. Leaders involve parents and carers in all aspects of their children's learning. For example, parents have many opportunities to visit the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff take their safeguarding responsibilities very seriously. They know the most likely risks that their pupils might face and are particularly alert to these risks. Staff are well trained to keep pupils safe. The school's safeguarding procedures work well when they are needed.

The school is a safe place for all pupils. This fact is recognised by both pupils and their parents. Pupils can name an adult they would talk to in school if they were worried about anything.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The teaching of phonics is effective and pupils learn how to decode words well. However, leaders rightly recognise that, for reading standards to improve further, there needs to be a greater focus on comprehension skills. Therefore, leaders should ensure that comprehension skills are taught consistently well alongside phonics skills as pupils learn to read.
- Pupils generally have a positive attitude to their learning and are keen to achieve the best they can. However, on occasions, for example when they have finished the task set in lessons or are finding the task too challenging, pupils can lose focus while they wait for an adult to help them. Leaders should seek to develop pupils' independence so that they can make effective use of all the time in lessons and achieve the highest standards of which they are capable.

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're 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	116143
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10111111
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 8
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	105
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Neil Bridger
Headteacher	David England
Website	www.marlborough.hants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4–6 July 2017

Information about this school

- Immediately after the previous inspection, the school formed a partnership with another local school, Wellington Primary School. The headteacher leads both schools and several other senior leaders work across both schools. Each school in the partnership currently has its own governing body, although the chair of the governing body is the same at both schools.
- This infant school currently has a Year 3 class, but this will not be retained from September 2020.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science and history. This included meeting with senior leaders and subject leaders, visiting lessons for all classes, discussing learning with teachers, talking to pupils from different classes and looking at their work. The lead inspector also heard some pupils read.
- We met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, special educational needs coordinator, the early years leader and seven governors (including the chair of the

governing body). The lead inspector also met with a group of support staff and spoke to a representative from the local authority on the phone.

- We looked at the school's records of safeguarding checks and how safeguarding concerns are handled. We spoke to staff about how pupils are kept safe and to pupils about whether they felt safe.
- We observed and talked to pupils at lunchtime, both in the hall and outside.
- We looked at a range of school documentation and carefully examined the school's website.
- There were 15 responses to the online staff survey, 23 responses to the online pupil survey and 26 responses to Ofsted's Parent View survey, including 15 written comments. We took all these responses into account during the inspection. An inspector also spoke informally to some parents at the school's parents' evening.

Inspection team

Chris Donovan, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Robert Howell

Ofsted Inspector

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