

Inspection of a good school: Martley C of E Primary School

Martley, Worcester, Worcestershire WR6 6QA

Inspection date:

22 November 2023

Outcome

Martley C of E Primary School continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Lucy Cox. This school is part of the Diocese of Worcester Multi Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Claire Davies, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Alan Soper. There is also an executive headteacher, Elizabeth Whetham, who is responsible for this school and one other.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils show a thirst for learning. They are thoughtful, engaged learners who enjoy discussing what they know and remember. These traits start in the early years, where children play well with each other. They concentrate on the task in hand and love sharing what they are learning through their talk and actions.

The school is ambitious in bringing the trust's values 'to love, to learn and to serve' to life. Pupils readily show their care for each other. They like that they can help and serve the school and the wider community. Recently, more pupils achieved the expected standards in English and mathematics by the end of key stage 2.

Pupils show maturity and a deep understanding of being a unique individual within a diverse world. The school's five core values known as 'the 5 Cs' are visible throughout staff's and pupils' words and actions. Pupils rightly say that there are many opportunities to be a leader.

Pupils know right from wrong. They behave well in lessons. They enjoy the freedom of space and physical exercise at playtimes. Pupils have a clear understanding of what behaviour and safe, healthy relationships should look like. Older pupils are positive role models in all they do for the younger pupils.

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

The trust has been instrumental in supporting the school through a period of adjustment. This support has been targeted, appropriate and effective. The trust and the school have managed staffing changes well. There is now stability across the school. Staff sing the praises of trust and school leaders who provide them with support and development opportunities.

The school's curriculum has been carefully considered and organised. It takes account of the mixed-age class structure. Key content is taught, revisited and spirals around in an upwards and deepening manner. This is especially important given the mixed-age classes. The structure and sequence of the curriculum supports teachers to know the starting points and plan the journey through a unit of learning. The school is in the early stages of checking what is working well across subjects.

The school has set out the starting points of learning from pre-school through to Year 6. Staff share a strong sense of knowing what should be taught, when and how. They bring clarity to what this looks like at the different ages and stages within their class. However, middle leaders do not have a deep enough understanding of how learning in the early years underpins the next steps in key stages 1 and 2.

Teachers enable pupils to revisit their prior learning. Pupils like the 'flashback fact' quizzes. These help them to remember their learning from earlier times. Older pupils explain how their previous learning about fractions in mathematics is helping them now. Doing mathematics 'the Martley way' is second nature to staff and pupils. Younger children in pre-school use words they have learned to describe the colours and changes of autumn. Pupils show pride and care in their learning and their work. Errors and misconceptions are addressed.

The school has given great thought to the texts used to support the curriculum. Not only do these texts strengthen learning, but they also expose pupils to the diverse world in which we live. Reading is central to the curriculum. The school has clear expectations about pupils' learning in phonics. Staff deliver phonics sessions effectively. Pupils learn to read well. For the very few who need a little extra help, this is quickly identified and given. They soon begin to catch up. Pupils enjoy reading. This enjoyment begins, and is nurtured, within pre-school. It grows throughout school life. By the time pupils reach Year 6, they achieve strong outcomes in reading. Pupils use their reading knowledge to help them write effectively. They say 'reading allows me to use my imagination'.

The school has strengthened its identification of and provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These are effective. Staff in the early years are quick to note when a child needs extra help. They involve the right people at the right time, including parents and carers. This attention to detail continues through school. Pupils with SEND access the full curriculum and achieve well.

Pupils have many opportunities to live out the school values beyond the classroom. The roving choir perform to residents in the community. Pupils plant trees for the future and make decisions on which local, national and global charities they wish to support. They

show pride in the various leadership roles they take on across school life. Many parents are positive about the support, opportunities and education their child receives.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school is in the process of developing systems for monitoring subjects across the curriculum. As yet, leaders are not fully aware of what needs to be improved to enhance the teaching of the curriculum. The school should complete the rollout of its monitoring plan so that strengths can be recognised and shared, and areas for development identified and addressed, including in the early years.
- Due to staffing changes, the school has had limited opportunity to ensure that all middle leaders know and understand the place of their subject within the early years. This means that there are occasions when interactions and vocabulary used in the early years are not as precise or effective as they could be. The school should ensure middle leaders know the foundations of their subjects and how best to ensure all staff in the early years support meaningful learning and interactions across the curriculum.

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 predecessor school, Martley C of E Primary School, to be good in May 2017.

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 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	147499
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10294683
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	135
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Alan Soper
Headteacher	Lucy Cox
Website	www.martleyceprimaryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school joined the Diocese of Worcester Multi Academy Trust in December 2019.
- The school makes use of one registered alternative provision.
- The executive headteacher joined the school in January 2023.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Worcester. The last section 48 inspection took place in November 2016. Section 48 inspections were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They restarted in September 2021. The next inspection will be within eight years of the last section 48 inspection.

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher, head of school, curriculum leaders and the special educational needs coordinator.

- The lead inspector spoke with three members of the local academy board, including the chairperson.
- The lead inspector spoke with two representatives of the trust board.
- During the inspection, the inspectors carried out deep dives into these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects, including science and physical education.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, around the school and at lunchtime. Inspectors also spoke to pupils about behaviour.
- 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.
- The inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. They also considered the online staff survey.
- An inspector talked to parents at the school gate.

Inspection team

Kirsty Foulkes, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Susan Hughes

Ofsted Inspector

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