

# Marlborough School

Ferndale Road, Falmouth, Cornwall TR11 4HU

## Inspection dates

17–18 April 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Teaching does not consider the needs of pupils enough. In some cases, pupils unnecessarily repeat learning from the previous academic year.
- The proportion of pupils working at expectations for their age and the higher standard is too variable. In some year groups, this proportion has decreased over time.
- Leaders have not monitored the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the school. They have failed to recognise inconsistencies which have slowed pupils' progress.
- Since the last inspection, pupils' outcomes have declined and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment has worsened.
- Teaching fails to address misconceptions. Basic errors remain unchallenged and are repeated over time. Consequently, progress slows.
- In mathematics, pupils have limited opportunities to develop their reasoning and problem-solving skills. Pupils' workbooks reflect an over-reliance on developing number skills.
- Expectations of pupils are inconsistent. In some classes, pupils attain well and make strong progress. In others, expectations are low and progress stalls.
- Governors are not monitoring their areas of responsibility, particularly pupils' outcomes. This has led to a lack of awareness of school performance.
- Leadership does not use pupil premium funding strategically. A lack of planning has failed to recognise barriers to learning and actions to overcome these lack precision.
- Pupils have limited opportunities to develop and apply their writing skills. Furthermore, pupils' handwriting is underdeveloped in some classes.

### The school has the following strengths

- Children in Reception get off to a flying start, and the provision effectively meets their needs. As a result, children make strong progress.
- Pupils behave well. They demonstrate an eagerness to learn and appreciate opportunities to contribute to the school through the pupil parliament.

## Full report

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

- Improve the impact and effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels, including governance, by making sure that:
  - governors have a rigorous and timely approach to challenging and supporting leaders, while ensuring regular monitoring of all aspects of school performance
  - through robust and regular monitoring, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is consistently strong and improves pupils' progress
  - decisions made to improve aspects of school performance are strategic, well informed, based on needs of current pupils and are effectively monitored for impact
  - monitoring of current pupils' progress is refined and, where needed, effective interventions are implemented to improve pupils' performance.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
  - teachers consider assessment information and plan activities to meet the needs of all pupils
  - teaching in mathematics promotes a rounded approach to mathematical understanding, particularly reasoning and problem-solving, across the whole mathematics curriculum
  - pupils have opportunities to apply the skills they are learning in writing so that they develop stamina and resilience in writing
  - teaching takes account of prior attainment and builds on prior learning, in particular at the beginning of key stages 1 and 2, so that pupils make strong progress
  - teachers raise expectations of what pupils can achieve, particularly in handwriting and presentation
  - teachers provide more challenge for all pupils, particularly the most able, so that a greater proportion are working at expectations for their age and at the higher standard.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Since the last inspection, the school's performance has deteriorated. In 2015 and 2016, the school had a coasting school element. While performance in 2017 did improve, leaders have not sustained these improvements. Leaders have not recognised what is necessary to improve the school's performance and have relied on external reviews in providing strategic direction. Leaders have failed to improve the school's performance significantly enough.
- There is a distinct lack of monitoring. When leaders launch the school development at the beginning of the academic year, they do not check on its impact until the end of the academic year. Leaders do not check or know how effective this plan has been on improving school performance. The school development plan is too reliant on historical performance rather than that of current cohorts of pupils. It fails to recognise what the school needs in order to improve, and lacks precision. As a result, standards are inconsistent and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is variable.
- Leaders have not ensured that funding to support disadvantaged pupils is spent strategically. There is no pupil premium report to outline how funding will support these pupils and help them overcome barriers. This is a clear oversight. An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken to improve this specific area of leadership and management.
- Leaders have given most of their attention to year groups where pupils' outcomes are published, particularly at the end of key stages 1 and 2. They have failed to tackle poor teaching elsewhere. This has resulted in inconsistent pupils' progress and the need to catch up at the end of each key stage, which could easily be avoided. This lack of strategic vision has resulted in extra pressure on teachers who teach in these particular year groups.
- Middle leaders have little opportunity to monitor standards in their specific subject areas. They have not identified the weaknesses in teaching, learning and assessment or pupils' outcomes. Leaders acknowledge that this must change and recognise how, through a lack of monitoring, they have been unable to bring about improvements. In short, they do not have an accurate awareness or understanding of standards in their subject areas.
- Leaders have attempted to allow access to a broad and balanced curriculum. However, while the intent and implementation are clear to leaders, the impact is minimal. Leaders pride themselves on pupils being engaged with wider curriculum opportunities such as 'Wonderful Wednesdays'; however, the impact on improving pupils' knowledge in these areas lacks precision. It is not clear how these sessions ensure that pupils are working at expectations for their age across the curriculum.
- Leaders ensure that funding to support pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is well utilised. Leaders have a clear overview of the needs of pupils and effective support is in place to promote pupils' progress. The inclusion leader has a good overview of the support for these pupils and can demonstrate how her actions are successful.

- Leaders have ensured that the sport premium is applied effectively. The plan considers developing sustainability of actions and how it will increase pupils' participation in sporting activity. Pupils enjoy the sporting opportunities available to them: an example of positive attitudes is pupils playing tennis during the school's 'Wonderful Wednesday'.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governors have failed to effectively monitor the school's performance. Since the last inspection, standards have declined but actions to address this have been ineffective. Governors are not in agreement about how much monitoring should take place. This oversight has resulted in the safeguarding policy published on the school website being out of date and gaps in the single central register going unnoticed.
- Governors do not know how effective the school's development plan has been on improving school performance. They wait until outcomes are published at the end of the academic year to judge its effectiveness. As a result, they do not know about inconsistencies in teaching, learning and assessment and the decline in pupils' performance and have failed to challenge leaders about the school's performance.
- Due to a lack of effectiveness, a governance review should be undertaken. This is particularly pertinent while the governing body goes through a period of change and the governing body seeks to appoint of a new chair of governors.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- While the appointment process of staff is thorough, leaders and governors have overlooked some administrative aspects of safeguarding. As a result, aspects of the single central register had to be corrected during the inspection. Furthermore, leaders have failed to ensure that the school's most recent safeguarding policy is available on the school's website. However, apart from these elements of safeguarding compliance and procedure, other aspects of safeguarding meet requirements.
- Pupils feel safe and are safe in school. Leaders have ensured that staff across the school are well trained in identifying potential risks and concerns about pupils. Risk assessments are thorough and effective in minimising potential risk. Furthermore, where adults have concerns about pupils, they act swiftly to pass these on to one of the three safeguarding leaders across the school.
- Where concerns warrant the involvement of external agencies, these concerns are passed on without delay and are proportionate to the risk posed. Through careful and precise analysis, the priorities for safeguarding are well informed and also consider pupil voice, which further raises the profile of safeguarding across the school.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

### **Requires improvement**

- Teaching, learning and assessment fail to consistently meet the needs of all pupils. Regardless of pupils' starting points, teaching fails to consider what pupils can or cannot do. The level of challenge is not sufficient enough to ensure that pupils make strong progress. Consequently, teaching does not challenge pupils of all abilities and

some pupils find work too easy.

- Mathematics teaching is too focused on developing pupils' number knowledge. Pupils' workbooks show pages of simple number sentences such as addition and subtraction but pupils rarely have opportunities to develop their reasoning and problem-solving. This narrowing of the mathematics curriculum restricts pupils' understanding and fails to ensure that pupils develop the skills necessary to work at expectations for their age.
- Expectations of what pupils can achieve vary too much across the school. In some classes, pupils make strong progress, but this is too inconsistent. Pupils make basic errors which are accepted as correct or remain unnoticed. This results in these errors being repeated over time and becoming embedded. An example of this, was where pupils are reversing their numbers or mixing up the order of digits within a number. This resulted in incorrect answers and pupils' uncertainty about how to rectify their work.
- Teaching does not consistently provide opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills. While there are pockets of strong practice across the school, in many classes the expectations of what pupils produce in these lessons is low. As a result, pupils' writing skills are underdeveloped, presentation is poor and handwriting does not reflect the standards expected for their age.
- Teaching does not effectively consider pupils' previous learning. Where pupils have previously found something difficult, there is little attempt to help move learning on. In the same classes, pupils who have previously found the learning too easy are not challenged sufficiently enough to promote progress. Teaching sequences fail to consistently consider what pupils can or cannot already do.
- Where teaching is strongest, predominantly at the end of each key stage, there is heightened awareness of pupils' prior attainment and prior learning. Furthermore, teachers carefully design activities to meet the needs of pupils. Teachers in these classes have to ensure that pupils 'catch up', which has resulted in greater focus on end-of-key-stage assessments and how pupils are prepared for these.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Through the pupil parliament, pupils have an opportunity to contribute to the school vision. They are grateful for these opportunities and believe that their impact stretches far and wide. An example of this is how they are currently acting to repair the castle construction in the playground.
- Pupils are confident in lessons, they are keen to share their ideas, listen to opinions of their peers and demonstrate a willingness to learn. Pupils' attitudes to learning are generally positive, and more so where learning captures their imagination and engages them.
- In lessons, pupils develop their understanding of the local community as well as debating current issues such as conflict in the world. Pupils contribute to these sessions

with a mature and sensitive outlook.

- Pupils talk confidently about how they are encouraged to stay safe and maintain a healthy lifestyle. They appreciate the high quality school meals available to them and understand the role of different food groups and how they benefit the human body. Concerning staying safe online, pupils have a strong understanding of e-safety and could share key concepts related to using the internet safely.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils conduct themselves well throughout the day. They are polite and welcoming to visitors and their peers. Pupils are confident to share what they like about the school and are overwhelmingly proud of being part of what one pupil called 'one big happy family'.
- Historically, attendance rates have been above national averages. Throughout 2017, attendance rates declined but still remained in line with national averages. Current attendance rates show that while attendance has not greatly improved, there are some mitigating factors which influence attendance rates. School leaders acknowledge that current attendance could be further improved.
- Pupils are confident that bullying does not take place. Although key stage 1 pupils are unsure about bullying, they describe a safe setting. All pupils state that while behavioural incidences may occur, adults swiftly deal with these and pupils are confident that bullying does not take place in their school.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- Outcomes for current pupils are too variable. Where teaching is strongest, pupils make strong progress and develop a wide range of skills, knowledge and understanding over the course of the academic year. However, this is inconsistent from class to class. As a result, progress fluctuates and has resulted in the school leaders needing to make short-term measures to improve outcomes by the end of key stage 2.
- In 2015 and 2016, pupils made poor progress. While this did improve in 2017, it did not represent the progress characteristic of an outstanding school. Leaders have failed to consider current pupils when making decisions about school improvement, which has limited the impact of their actions. Consequently, although outcomes improved, leaders have not sustained this or spread their impact across all year groups.
- Pupils do not consistently read widely and often. While pupils have regular access to reading sessions, these lack precision and often the activities on offer have little focus on reading. This is particularly the case for pupils who are working independently. Furthermore, while pupils have opportunities to read at home and school, there are many pupils who do not engage in this. In short, reading opportunities vary in quality and do not ensure access for all.
- Pupils do not have consistent opportunities to develop their writing skills. In some classes, pupils develop their skills effectively and progress is evident. However, in other classes, there are limited writing opportunities in favour of activities which fail to meet their needs. Furthermore, fluctuating expectations of pupils have resulted in weak

presentation and poor handwriting. In short, the inconsistent expectations in writing have led to poor progress over time and pupils' workbooks vary widely in quality.

- The proportion of pupils working at the higher standards has not been sustained over time. While pupils were previously working at this level, this proportion has declined over time. Pupils are not challenged in lessons and therefore make insufficient progress to maintain this.
- In mathematics, pupils do not develop a broad understanding across the mathematics curriculum. Pupils have limited experience of developing their reasoning and problem-solving skills. In some classes, positive progress made in the previous year is quickly undone as the work does not meet their needs. Consequently, progress is inconsistent and fluctuates from class to class.
- Disadvantaged pupils make similar progress to their peers, which is inconsistent and varies from class to class. Leaders have not considered the barriers to learning for these pupils, nor how funding will be used to support them. Due to a lack of strategy, disadvantaged pupils have not had the support they are entitled to.
- Current pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make strong progress from their starting points. Their individual needs are carefully considered and activities meet their needs. Evidence in books shows that these pupils make strong progress and activities challenge them sufficiently.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- The curriculum offer is rich and varied. Children engage in a range of activities and can demonstrate 'sticking' with these activities. With careful guidance, children develop their skills in areas that are most suitable for them to make progress. The learning process considers children's level of need and ability. Subsequently, activities closely align to a key thread and consider children's progress at all times.
- Assessment information shows that children from all starting points make strong progress during the reception year. Learning journeys for each child reflect the bespoke curriculum on offer, according to their needs. Learning journeys are unique and capture each step as the children move through their Reception Year.
- Children are at the heart of learning in the Reception class. Each day, the children pose questions such as 'How do you measure when the ruler runs out?' These questions are reflected in the provision and provoke activities which attempt to answer their questions. Themes are closely linked, such as 'London', and they provoke curiosity and make learning relevant to the children across the provision.
- The learning environment is welcoming and stimulating for children. The environment is designed carefully to enable children to make progress and allow effective access to the high-quality activities on offer. The leader regularly tracks children's progress and makes measured steps to meet the needs of children. Tracking informs the learning and the provision closely reflects this and supports high-quality learning.
- Adults are well skilled in supporting and challenging children: they effectively draw out understanding and support independence. Children work well with all adults and relationships are a clear strength. The leader of the Reception class has high

expectations, which are effectively shared across all adults.

- Statutory checks are complete, such as paediatric first aid; and staff-to-pupil ratios are suitable for keeping children safe. Children behave well across the provision: they patiently take turns when participating in activities, consider each other's viewpoints and make conscientious decisions about activities they take part in.
- Leaders engage parents in the learning process as they recognise this as an area which needs development. As a result, parents are welcome into the provision on a daily basis.
- Children in Reception get off to a flying start. Sadly, this is not maintained as they leave the Reception class. While there are transition opportunities for these children as they move into Year 1, they are not precise enough. As a result, some of the learning in key stage 1 is easier than what children have experienced in the Reception Year.



## School details

Unique reference number	111978
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10033168

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	217
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Helen Turner
Headteacher	Richard Gambier
Telephone number	01326 314636
Website	<a href="http://www.marlborough.cornwall.sch.uk">www.marlborough.cornwall.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:head@marlborough.cornwall.sch.uk">head@marlborough.cornwall.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	27–28 March 2014

## Information about this school

- The school is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the school's safeguarding policy and the school's use of the pupil premium.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been significant changes to teaching staff and the structure of leadership has also changed.
- The school had coasting elements in 2015 and 2016 due to poor progress. The school avoided coasting school status through improved performance in 2017.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for support through pupil premium funding has decreased since the last inspection and is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils identified as requiring SEN support is below national averages.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors met with representatives from the governing body
- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in each class. Inspectors also scrutinised a range of pupils' workbooks from Years 1 to 6.
- Inspectors met with pupils from key stages 1 and 2.
- Inspectors took account of the views of 28 parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding documentation and the school's single central register. Furthermore, inspectors reviewed the school's safeguarding policies, procedures and culture to ascertain whether safeguarding was effective.
- Inspectors considered a range of documentation, including external reviews of school performance, the school's evaluations of its own performance and the current school development plan.

## Inspection team

Nathan Kemp, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Stephen Lee

Her Majesty's Inspector

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