

Inspection of Woodlands Primary School

Eddisbury Road, Whitby, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire CH66 2JT

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 January 2023

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders and teachers want all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to be successful. The school's exciting and ambitious curriculum is helping pupils to know, remember and understand more. Pupils enjoy learning and achieve well.

Pupils at Woodlands Primary School look forward to coming to school. They are polite and courteous to each other and staff. This respectful culture starts in the early years, where the children kindly share equipment with each other.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils behave well in lessons, on corridors and in the playground. Pupils told inspectors that staff always help to resolve any fallings-out, including any bullying incidents. They feel happy and safe at school.

Leaders encourage pupils to look after their mental and physical health. Pupils said there is always a trusted adult who they can talk to if they have any worries. Pupils appreciate the range of support available, including 'Gus', the school's therapy dog. Pupils enjoy the extra-curricular clubs and wider curriculum opportunities available. Older pupils enjoy taking on leadership responsibilities, such as road safety officers and reading buddies.

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

Since the previous inspection, leaders have thought carefully about the content and sequencing of the school's curriculum. The curriculum is broad and ambitious. It reflects the needs of the pupils and the school's context. This has contributed to significant improvements in the quality of education.

Curriculum leaders have identified the knowledge that they want pupils to learn and the order in which this knowledge should be taught. This ensures that pupils build on what they already know and can do. Teachers have benefited from training and support to develop their subject knowledge. This enables them to deliver the different subject curriculums as intended. Pupils achieve well.

In most subjects, leaders' curriculum thinking begins with the knowledge required by children in the early years. However, this is not the case in all subjects. This means that in one or two subjects, some children are not as ready as they could be for the curriculum in key stage 1.

Teachers use leaders' assessment systems well. This helps teachers to recognise and resolve any gaps or misconceptions in pupils' learning. Moreover, this gives leaders and teachers an accurate understanding of the progress that pupils are making. However, in a very few subjects, leaders' systems to check on pupils' learning are in their infancy.

Leaders have prioritised the teaching of reading. They have trained all staff to be early reading experts. Children learn phonics from their first day in the Reception Year. Staff identify those children struggling to learn to read. They put support in place so that these pupils can catch up with their classmates. Staff ensure that reading books are carefully matched to the sounds that the pupils know. Pupils learn to read confidently and fluently. Pupils were keen to tell inspectors about the books that they like to read.

Staff quickly identify any pupils with SEND. Leaders ensure that they put appropriate support in place for pupils with SEND. Teachers adapt how they deliver the curriculum so that these pupils can achieve well.

Leaders have made attendance at school a high priority. However, some pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils who speak English as an additional language, miss school too frequently. This means that these pupils have gaps in their learning. In school, pupils behave well and there is little disruption to learning.

Leaders plan plentiful opportunities to promote pupils' personal development. This is a real strength of the school. Pupils have a good understanding of different cultures and religions. Pupils respect each other's views and have a good understanding of equality. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to discover and develop their talents and interests, particularly in sports and music.

Governors have a comprehensive view of the school's effectiveness. They support and challenge leaders to improve the school. Leaders and governors are considerate of the workload and well-being of staff. Staff talked positively about the strong culture of teamwork in the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders know their safeguarding responsibilities well. They have ensured there is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. Governors understand their role in supporting the school's safeguarding systems and procedures.

Leaders ensure that staff receive regular and appropriate training so that they know how to keep pupils safe. Staff are vigilant and identify any concerns quickly. Leaders respond to concerns in a timely manner to ensure that pupils and their families receive the help and support that they need.

Leaders make sure that teaching pupils to stay safe is part of the curriculum. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in the wider community and online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In one or two subjects, leaders have not determined the important knowledge that children need to be taught in the early years. This means that some children are not as well prepared for the key stage 1 curriculum as they could be. Leaders should ensure that subject curriculums set out what children need to be taught across the early years so that they are ready for the demands of key stage 1.
- Some pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and some pupils who speak English as an additional language, are persistently absent from school. These pupils miss out on important learning when they are absent from school. Leaders should take the appropriate action to ensure that all pupils attend school regularly.

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](#)' 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	135136
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	10256084
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	514
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chairs of governing body	Chris Marchant and David Hardick
Headteacher	Victoria Carr
Website	www.woodlands.cheshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 May 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other senior leaders.
- Inspectors met with representatives of the governing body, including the chairs of governors. They also met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, history, geography and science. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. An inspector also listened to pupils read.

- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school. They spoke with pupils to gather their views about behaviour and safeguarding in their school.
- Inspectors examined a range of safeguarding documents. They made checks on staff recruitment and spoke with staff to check how well they understood their safeguarding responsibilities. Inspectors also explored the staff's views about their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors reviewed parents' and carers' responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also took account of responses to Ofsted's online staff and pupil questionnaires.

Inspection team

Bev Dolman, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
David Woodhouse	Ofsted Inspector
Liz Davidson	Ofsted Inspector

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