

Orrets Meadow School

Chapelhill Road, Moreton, Wirral, Merseyside CH46 9QQ

Inspection dates

10–11 October 2017

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The headteacher and governors have created a culture where only the best will do. Their vision and determination has ensured that the school has improved further during a period when pupils' needs have become more complex and diverse.
- Leaders have ensured that all members of the school community subscribe to the school's ethos and aims. Pupils pledge to support the school's simple but profound values of being nice, working hard and never giving up.
- Leaders have an intimate knowledge of the school's effectiveness. Their plans to improve the school are ambitious and meticulous.
- Staff form a dynamic and cohesive team. They are exceptionally motivated and keen to contribute to improvements.
- Teachers and other adults have the highest expectations of what pupils can achieve. Teachers use their comprehensive understanding of pupils' needs to ensure that pupils of all abilities complete work that challenges and motivates them.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced and inspiring. Leaders regularly review its effectiveness to ensure that pupils are fully prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils' behaviour is impeccable. They are friendly, considerate and hugely appreciative of the school's work.
- Pupils make outstanding progress across the full curriculum during their time at the school. This is because of the high-quality teaching they receive and the relentless focus on equipping pupils with the skills to overcome their barriers to learning.
- Pupils make remarkable progress in their reading and writing. They also make consistently fast progress in mathematics, although the gains they make are not quite as dramatic as they are in English.
- Pupils benefit from exceptional opportunities for their personal development. Leaders have ensured that physical education and activities to promote emotional well-being assume a central role within the curriculum.
- Pupils' enjoyment of learning is palpable. They feel safe at school and greatly value their relationships with adults.
- Pupils are rarely absent from school and attendance figures are well above the national average for all schools.
- Leaders have recently introduced systems to track the social and emotional development of pupils. These systems will enable them to measure how much progress is being made in these key areas.
- Parents are hugely appreciative of the school's work. Many parents feel that the school has transformed the lives of their children and the wider family.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Embed new systems for tracking pupils' social and emotional development so leaders have a clear strategic overview of how much progress is made over time in these important areas.
- Accelerate the progress that pupils make in mathematics even further to ensure that progress is as impressive as it is in reading and writing.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher is unwavering in her ambition for all pupils to succeed at Orrets Meadow. Her drive, and that of the senior leadership team, has created a culture where only the very best education will do. Leaders ensure that pupils receive high-quality teaching within a caring, supportive and nurturing environment.
- The headteacher is assured and positive. Her leadership is a source of unity to staff, pupils and parents. Under her guidance, all members of the community work in unison to ensure that the school's aim to 'raise the aspirations of every child and give them the confidence to fulfil their potential' remains at the heart of all the school does.
- Leadership is highly effective at all levels. Leaders share an intimate and nuanced understanding of the school's effectiveness. Leaders' plans to improve the school are robust, precise and ambitious.
- Leaders are considerate of the well-being of staff. To reflect this, leaders have ensured that ongoing work to promote emotional and mental health is aimed at supporting staff as well as pupils.
- Middle leadership has gone from strength to strength. The headteacher firmly believes that 'everyone is a leader', and this has resulted in the dynamic distribution of leadership throughout the school. Middle leaders are fully involved in monitoring, tracking, training and planning for improvement in their respective areas. They benefit from extensive training that enables them to excel in their roles.
- Leaders' nurturing of pupils' ability to take a lead in the school's work is a real strength. The vast majority of pupils benefit from opportunities to lead in different official capacities. For example, there is a pupils' leadership team, a school council and a system of house captains. These opportunities make a significant contribution to pupils' excellent personal development and their preparation for life in Modern Britain.
- Leaders' work to liaise with parents is exemplary. The home-school link worker acts as a focal point for the school's work on parental engagement. Her work is greatly valued by parents, who are overwhelmed with gratitude for what the school has done for their children. For example, one parent summed up the views of many when she described how she 'will forever hold the school and its staff in my heart; it has totally transformed the lives of everyone in the family and for that I will be truly grateful forever.'
- Leaders have ensured that there are highly effective systems in place for sharing good practice, within the school and with other schools. Leaders evaluate the quality of teaching at the school thoroughly and perceptively. They use the knowledge they glean from monitoring standards to facilitate the sharing of good practice. As a result, continual improvements are made to the quality of teaching across the school.
- Leaders' systems for managing the performance of staff are highly effective. Members of staff agree ambitious personal targets that align with whole-school priorities and their own interests and developmental needs. The development of non-teaching staff is seen as equally important. As a result, all members of staff are committed to developing their own practice and contributing to wider improvements across the

school.

- Leaders clearly understand the barriers to achievement faced by disadvantaged pupils. Leaders' use of the pupil premium is creative, resourceful and highly effective. The money is spent on directly removing potential barriers to achievement and leaders can demonstrate how the funding has had a positive impact on attendance, behaviour, achievement, parental engagement and the number of referrals made to external agencies.
- Leaders use effectively the primary physical education and sport funding as part of a far-reaching plan to prioritise pupils' physical well-being. Leaders have used the funding creatively to ensure that the premium has led to sustainable improvements. All pupils, whatever their sporting ability, benefit from the funding and the school's strategy is heralded as an example of excellent practice within the local area. Furthermore, the school was named 'primary school of the year' in the 2016 Merseyside sports awards to celebrate the breadth and inclusivity of the school's work in this area.
- Pupils benefit from a curriculum that is broad, balanced and exciting. The curriculum inspires pupils to develop a love of learning and this helps to secure exceptional rates of engagement and progress. Leaders' development of the broader curriculum is given high priority, and subject leaders champion their subjects with passion and unwavering commitment. Leaders have prioritised a consistent focus on learning about the local area and pupils learn about different 'wonders of Wirral' as they move through the school.
- The formal curriculum is augmented by an extensive range of opportunities for enrichment and extra-curricular learning. Almost all pupils participate in regular clubs and activities, such as cycling, football, journalism, art, drama and computing. Pupils also enjoy frequent trips and visits. For example, pupils visit Chester Zoo and Spaceport, and Year 6 pupils take part in a residential trip that focuses on different outdoor pursuits. The breadth of these experiences strengthens pupils' enjoyment of learning and increases their commitment to being the best they can be.
- The school's work to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is exemplary. Leaders have ensured that the promotion of British values thread throughout the curriculum and play a pivotal role in helping pupils to develop into tolerant and deeply respectful citizens. For example, pupils benefit from a plethora of opportunities to learn about other cultures, such as through their correspondence with 'pen pals' in Burkina Faso.

Governance of the school

- Governors are passionate in their support of the school. They have worked in tandem with leaders to guide the school expertly during a transitional phase when the needs of pupils have become more complex and diverse. They have enlarged the senior leadership team to ensure that the additional needs of pupils are met and they have ensured that the school's values continue to remain at the heart of its work.
- Governors rigorously hold leaders to account for all aspects of the school's performance. They test out the validity of the information they are provided with by leaders. For example, as part of the 'adopt a class' initiative, governors visit their 'adopted' class each

half term to gain first-hand insights into the progress that pupils are making. As a result, they have a strong and secure understanding of the school's effectiveness.

- Governors understand that a great deal of the school's work is worthy of dissemination. As a result, they are exploring different options for how the school can extend further its work to support other schools without compromising the high-quality of education received by pupils at Orrets Meadow.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective because the governors and headteacher have established a culture in which all staff take their safeguarding responsibilities seriously. One teacher typified the attitudes of the staff when he described the importance of safeguarding as being 'top of the agenda'.
- Staff are extremely vigilant to any changes in the mood or presentation of pupils. They understand the safeguarding risks that potentially pose a greater threat to pupils with particular special education needs and/or disabilities. When staff do have concerns, they record and communicate these quickly and appropriately.
- Leadership of safeguarding is strong and the school works effectively with a range of external agencies to ensure that pupils are safe and well cared for.
- The school has ensured that pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. For example, the school holds regular e-safety days to equip pupils with the knowledge and understanding of how to keep safe when online and the school council promotes an anti-bullying campaign which helps pupils to keep themselves safe from bullying and exploitation. Furthermore, the school's 'taking care of ourselves' week acts as a focal point for work on a range of safety issues, from road and fire safety to the dangers of smoking.
- Leaders are skilled at working in partnership with parents to ensure that pupils are well looked after. The school provides regular workshops for parents to develop their ability to support their children effectively. Many of these relate directly to matters of safety, such as promoting e-safety in the home and sleep management.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teachers and support staff possess excellent subject knowledge and have a detailed understanding of pupils' abilities. This enables them to set high expectations and plan interesting lessons that challenge pupils and inspires their curiosity. As a result of highly effective teaching, pupils make outstanding progress across the curriculum.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are exceptionally skilled at supporting every pupil to overcome the individual challenges they face when learning.
- Adults question pupils skilfully to assess their understanding and challenge them to refine and develop their ideas.
- Teaching captures pupils' interest and fires their curiosity. Pupils often experience a sense of awe and wonder when learning. For example, when pupils were learning about the composition of blood by constructing their own model from different

coloured sweets.

- Teachers and other adults model new concepts clearly. They explain new information and ideas with precision and in a manner that sustains pupils' interest and understanding. As a result, pupils acquire knowledge and skills at a consistently fast pace.
- Teachers have high expectations of what the most able pupils can achieve. They ensure that these pupils make fast progress from their starting points by consistently providing them with work that challenges them to make rapid gains in their learning.
- Leaders attach great significance to the teaching of phonics throughout the school. The teaching of phonics is precise and methodical and this helps to plug gaps in pupils' understanding.
- The teaching of reading is highly effective. Pupils are encouraged to read widely and often. Pupils develop a love of reading and can talk confidently about their favourite authors and genres. Upon joining the school, the majority of pupils quickly become confident and fluent readers. As a result, pupils gain exposure to a world of literature that many believed they would never be able to access.
- Pupils benefit from a remarkable array of specific daily interventions, which pinpoint barriers to achievement and take clear action to remedy difficulties in learning. For example, inspectors observed sessions aimed to develop pupils' fine motor skills and memory skills. The impact of these interventions is evaluated carefully and assessment information is used to inform future plans.
- Teachers and other adults carefully assess what pupils can and cannot do. This enables them to address pupils' misconceptions effectively and ensure that every pupil is provided with an appropriate amount of challenge to maintain momentum in their learning.
- Teachers set homework that consolidates pupils' learning and develops their independence. Pupils are proud of the work they produce away from school and are keen to please their teachers.
- Pupils exhibit outstanding attitudes to learning. They are responsive to the school's work on resilience and understand the traits of effective learning. Consequently, pupils' confidence and attitude to learning makes a huge contribution to the outstanding progress they make at Orrets Meadow. This was summed up by one pupil, who told the inspector, 'In my old school I couldn't read or write, but now I can do all sorts!'

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Leaders recognise that many pupils who join the school suffer from low self-esteem and poor confidence. As a result, leaders have prioritised the implementation of strategies that boost pupils' sense of self-worth and instil within them the belief that they can become successful learners. Staff ensure that pupils routinely experience success and a broad suite of mechanisms have been introduced to celebrate pupils'

achievements.

- Leaders have ensured that pupils have a clear understanding of what it means to be a successful learner. Pupils are encouraged to be positive when they approach challenges and are resilient when they find things difficult. As a result, pupils blossom into confident, determined and independent learners.
- Pupils are encouraged to discuss and debate controversial topics in a balanced and sensitive manner. For example, pupils have discussed whether immortality is a good thing. Teachers and other adults are skilled at supporting pupils to evaluate the significance of different arguments so pupils can arrive at balanced independent judgements.
- The school's work to support pupils when they leave the school are highly effective. Pupils visit their future secondary school several times during Year 6. Pupils are also encouraged to attend a summer school that provides them with intensive support for making the step up to secondary school. Leaders work closely with target schools to ensure that pupils continue to receive high levels of support. As a result, the majority of pupils who leave Orrets Meadow make a flying start to life at secondary school.
- The school has ensured that the virtues of healthy living are relentlessly promoted. The importance of physical activity is routinely championed and staff ensure that those pupils who are less willing to participate in extra-curricular activities are sensitively encouraged to get involved.
- The school's work to promote emotional well-being makes a strong contribution to pupils' overall health. All pupils are taught a structured curriculum that supports them to maintain their mental well-being. In addition, targeted pupils receive intensive and personalised support to help them regulate their emotions. As a result, pupils are settled and happy at the school.
- Pupils are very clear about how to stay safe, both in and out of school, because of the very clear guidance they receive. For example, pupils told the inspection team how they reduce risk when on the internet.
- The overwhelming majority of pupils are adamant that bullying does not happen at the school. The small minority who indicated that it does happen occasionally have total faith in school staff to sort out any issues. The school council has played an important role in ensuring that pupils have a sound understanding of what bullying is, and the different forms it can take.
- Leaders' records indicate that prejudicial and discriminatory language is never heard at the school. This is partly because of the school's proactive approach to promoting equalities. For example, the school has worked with Tranmere Rovers Football Club to explore different aspects of racism in football.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding and their manners are flawless.
- Pupils enjoy respectful and positive relationships with adults and each other. Pupils are keen to live up to adults' high expectations. As a result, their conduct is almost always impeccable.
- Leaders have ensured that the classroom environment is happy, calm and purposeful.

They have introduced new procedures for encouraging positive behaviour, which have led to a dramatic reduction in the number of incidents of poor behaviour. Low-level disruption is now extremely rare, and incidents of more serious misbehaviour are virtually non-existent.

- Leaders have ensured that staff are skilled in supporting pupils with social, emotional and behaviour difficulties. Staff are adept at creating the essential conditions for these pupils to thrive. For example, the introduction of 'sensory circuits' has played an important role in getting pupils ready to learn.
- Pupils' behaviour at break and lunchtimes is also excellent. Pupils interact well with staff, and are very responsive to established routines. Pupils play with each other in an inclusive and friendly manner.
- Leaders' actions have ensured that attendance has continued to improve. Leaders employ a broad and creative range of strategies to ensure that no pupils are disadvantaged by regular absence. The home-school link worker ensures that the school goes the extra mile to ensure that all pupils are punctual and attend regularly. As a result, rates of absence are consistently well below the average for all schools and the proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school is tiny.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- From starting points that are well below average, pupils at Orrets Meadow make consistently rapid progress in all subjects.
- The majority of pupils join the school having made little or no progress in the immediate preceding years. Given this context, the amount of progress made by pupils is staggering.
- Pupils' work in all subjects demonstrates the rapid progress they make. Quite often, the work being produced near the end of an academic year is unrecognisable from that produced near the start. Pupils' writing shows dramatic improvements in accuracy, depth and fluency. Pupils confidently complete work in mathematics that would have seemed impossible only months earlier.
- Pupils make particularly fast progress in their reading and writing. Pupils also make rapid gains in mathematics. However, there is a minor difference in the amount of progress made in English and mathematics. In particular, a small number of pupils find it difficult to apply their mathematical understanding to different situations. As a result, their performance in summative assessments does not accurately reflect the excellent progress they have made in the subject. Leaders are acutely aware of this and have made it a priority in their current plans to improve the school.
- Leaders' own information indicates that pupils make outstanding progress across the curriculum. Leaders set high expectations for the minimum amount of progress pupils should make in a term. Teachers and pupils relish these high expectations and many pupils make the equivalent of several years' progress in a single academic year.
- Leaders go to great lengths to ensure that their assessment of pupils' abilities is accurate. They moderate work with local special and mainstream schools. As a result, the school's own data is accurate and robust. Leaders' tracking of pupils' progress is highly effective, and their systems have been shared with other special schools in the

local authority as an example of excellent practice.

- Leaders have ensured that all groups of pupils, including the disadvantaged, make excellent progress. There are no discernible differences in the amount of progress made by pupils with different prior attainment because teaching is effectively personalised and the school's aspirational ethos captures all pupils.
- Leaders regularly assess pupils' progress in subjects beyond English and mathematics. This information convincingly demonstrates that pupils make outstanding progress across the full curriculum.
- It is testament to the school's work that the large majority of pupils transfer to mainstream secondary schools at the end of Year 6. Many no longer require an education, health and care plan because of the progress they have made. Consequently, pupils are extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Leaders have recently introduced systems to capture the development of pupils' social and emotional skills. The emerging data confirms the very positive impression created by more ephemeral and anecdotal evidence. Leaders are keen to embed these systems so they can carefully measure the progress over time that pupils make in these important areas.

School details

Unique reference number	105140
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	10036755

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	76
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Patten
Headteacher	Carolyn Duncan
Telephone number	0151 678 8070
Website	http://orrets-meadow.eschools.co.uk
Email address	schooloffice@orretsmeadow.wirral.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	14–15 May 2012

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- All pupils who attend the school have an education, health and care plan. Since the previous inspection the school has catered for pupils who have a broader range of special educational needs and/or disabilities. The majority of pupils have additional needs relating to speech, language and communication. An increasing proportion of pupils have autism spectrum disorder and/or social, emotional and behaviour difficulties.
- Admissions to the school are controlled by the local authority.
- In 2014, the school started to accept pupils in key stage 1. There are currently a small number of pupils in Year 2. The majority of pupils join the school during key stage 2 and transfer to mainstream secondary schools at the end of Year 6. Occasionally, a pupil will spend Year 7 at the school.

- The school is a much smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of boys is much higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below average. There are currently no pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well above the national average.
- The school provides an outreach service to schools within the local authority. The school currently supports over 70 local schools with training, assessment and advice services for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors undertook observations of learning in all classes. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during playtime and at lunchtime.
- Pupils' work across a range of subjects was scrutinised.
- Meetings were held with leaders and governors. Inspectors also met with a representative from the local authority and the school improvement partner.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including the school's plans for improvement, self-evaluation and information about pupils' achievement and leaders' monitoring records.
- Inspectors looked at safeguarding information and documents relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors met with parents informally at the start and end of the school day and considered 39 responses to the online, Parent View, questionnaire. Inspectors also considered 24 comments made by parents on Ofsted's free-text service. Inspectors also took account of 54 pupils' responses to the online questionnaire and 22 responses from members of staff to the online questionnaire.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils, including the school council. They also talked informally with pupils about the school. They heard pupils read.
- Inspectors looked at information on the school's website.

Inspection team

Will Smith, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Elaine White

Ofsted Inspector

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