

Inspection of Black Horse Hill Infant School

Saughall Massie Road, West Kirby, Wirral, Merseyside CH48 6DR

Inspection dates: 11–12 February 2020

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at the school are happy. Leaders and staff know each individual pupil well and make sure that pupils feel safe. They speak kindly with pupils. Pupils attend school regularly, arrive punctually and are keen to learn.

Pupils enjoy their daily activities, as well as special learning weeks such as reading week. Because of the help of their parents and carers and staff, they love books and reading. Many pupils are articulate. They are proud of their school.

Pupils learn to speak Mandarin. Those pupils with whom I spoke were delighted when I asked them, 'How are you?' in this language. They replied with accuracy and confidence in Mandarin. Pupils are inquisitive about the world. They understand that recycling is important. They help to protect their local beach at West Kirby from plastic pollution.

Pupils behave well. They settle quickly and calmly in classrooms. They move along corridors sensibly. Pupils told us that when other pupils are unkind to them that staff resolve problems quickly. Pupils are polite and respectful towards one another, staff and visitors. However, pupils do not achieve as well as they should in early years and in key stage 1. Pupils do not learn enough about the diversity of people and communities in modern Britain. These weaknesses are because leaders do not organise some of the pupils' learning carefully enough. Leaders and staff do not always have high enough expectations of what pupils should achieve.

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

In some units of work, staff identify the crucial knowledge that they want pupils to learn. They emphasise this information when teaching the curriculum. This helps some children to remember essential new words from stories. Pupils remember the definitions of words such as algorithm in computing. They use a range of language to describe the geographical features of the local landscape, including Hilbre Island in the Dee Estuary. Staff give reasonable support to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to help them to learn.

However, leaders, governors and staff are unclear about what they intend pupils to learn in some subjects. Teachers do not plan some units of the curriculum in enough detail to identify the key learning for pupils. These weaknesses mean that some children in early years and pupils key stage 1 do not learn new knowledge in a logical order. They do not remember their previous learning well or understand vital information in enough depth. Some children and pupils do not achieve as well as they should, including disadvantaged children.

Leaders recognised that pupils' achievement in mathematics in 2019 in key stage 1 wasn't good enough. Leaders have improved the mathematics curriculum this year.

These improvements are having a positive impact on current pupils' learning, including for children in early years.

Pupils talk about books and stories with confidence. They want to read. Even so, not all children and pupils read well enough. Some staff give children access to a narrow range of books. The reading area for pupils in some classrooms is unattractive. Not all teachers organise the curriculum for reading well or expect enough of pupils' progress in phonics. As with other subjects, the school's curriculum for phonics and reading should be better planned from Nursery to Year 2.

In classrooms, pupils listen and try their best in activities. They act responsibly. Disruptions to pupils' learning by other pupils are minimal and short lived.

Leaders and staff give pupils a reasonable range of opportunities to build their personal skills and abilities. Pupils learn to respect people who may be different from themselves. Yet leaders and staff do not plan for pupils' personal development as well as they should. Pupils do not learn enough about the diverse world of modern Britain.

Leaders treat each pupil equally. For instance, they include each child with SEND and each disadvantaged pupil fully in the life of the school. Even so, governors do not know enough about their legal duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Staff enjoy working at the school. They said that leaders carefully consider staff workload. Recently, leaders have encouraged teachers to want to change the work of the school for the better. Even so, some of leaders' checks on the quality of the curriculum are not thorough. Leaders' knowledge of how the school plans and provides for pupils' personal development should be better.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that staff know government guidance on safeguarding pupils. Staff are vigilant and keep a close check on the well-being of pupils at the school. Pupils know that they can approach staff with any worries that they may have. Leaders and staff act properly to protect pupils from harm. Leaders carefully review their work to safeguard pupils. They seek ways to improve the work of the school. Staff teach pupils about staying safe, for example about safe online behaviour.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils do not always learn new knowledge in depth. They do not learn some knowledge in the order that they should. These weaknesses hold back pupils' learning. Leaders, governors and staff should be clear what they intend pupils to learn from Nursery to Year 2 in each subject, including phonics, and for pupils'

personal development. Leaders should double-check that staff plan and teach pupils all the knowledge that they need. These improvements will mean that pupils learn and achieve well across subjects, become fluent, capable readers and are fully ready for life in modern Britain.

- Governors are unclear about their duties under the Equality Act 2010. This means that they are unable to challenge leaders enough about the work of the school. Governors should develop their knowledge about their legal responsibilities. Then they can make certain that the school does as much as it can to promote equality.

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 are the school and you are 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	105027
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	10110164
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	190
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jenny Horner
Headteacher	Julie Morris
Website	www.blackhorsehillinfant.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	11–12 October 2006, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher are new to their roles since the previous inspection.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

- We spoke with some parents on the playground. There were no responses from parents to Ofsted's online survey Parent View. We considered information from a recent school survey of parents' views.
- I spoke with six governors, including the chair. I spoke by telephone with a representative of the local authority.
- We spoke with leaders, staff, parents and pupils about the school's work to protect pupils from harm. We checked examples of leaders' records about the safeguarding of pupils.
- We did deep dives in reading, mathematics, science and geography. We met with leaders, reviewed curriculum plans, visited some lessons, spoke with some pupils

and looked at examples of pupils' work. I listened to some pupils from Year 1 and Year 2 reading to staff. I reviewed the range and quality of fiction and non-fiction books available for children and considered the quality of reading areas in pupils' classrooms.

- We considered information about the school's curriculum in computing and history, spoke with pupils and met with leaders of these subjects.
- We spoke with leaders and considered school documents about SEND, behaviour, support for disadvantaged pupils and the school's provision for pupils' personal development.

Inspection team

Tim Vaughan, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Julie Brown

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