

Inspection of a good school: Newton-le-Willows Primary School

Sanderling Road, Newton-le-Willows, Merseyside WA12 9UF

Inspection dates:

22 and 23 September 2021

Outcome

Newton-le-Willows Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to school. From the moment they arrive each morning, pupils are welcomed by the staff, who greet them by name. The positive relationships that pupils have with each other, and with the adults in school, help pupils to feel happy and safe. They know that staff care about them. Pupils are confident that if they reported any concerns, staff would support them.

Pupils know that the adults in school expect them to do their best. Pupils can explain the importance of their 'STRIVE' school values and how they encourage them to do well. Pupils enjoy learning and they work hard in their lessons.

Pupils behave well. They understand that it is important to treat everyone with respect. Pupils told inspectors that they would not stand by if someone else was being treated unfairly. They said that bullying rarely happens but that when it does, the adults in school will deal with it quickly.

Pupils are keen to take on responsibilities such as school ambassadors and science leaders. Pupils enjoy the trips on offer and they are excited about the visits that leaders have planned for the coming term.

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

Leaders have designed a curriculum which is ambitious for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders have identified the important knowledge that they want pupils, including children in the early years, to learn. Leaders have ordered this knowledge carefully so that pupils can build on earlier learning. Leaders have provided subject leaders with high-quality training to develop their curriculum expertise. Leaders' curriculum plans provide clear guidance for teachers across subjects. In most subjects, teachers check regularly how well pupils learn and remember important knowledge.

Teachers present information clearly and provide regular opportunities for pupils to practise and remember what they have learned before. Pupils explained to inspectors that revisiting earlier learning helps them to be successful when they move on to new content. For instance, in mathematics, pupils' secure knowledge of multiplication facts helps them when learning to calculate fractions and percentages of amounts. Pupils achieve well across the curriculum and by the end of Year 6, they are well equipped to make a strong start in secondary school.

Children in the early years benefit from a calm and encouraging atmosphere. They enjoy singing songs and reciting rhymes. Staff read to the children every day and help them to listen attentively.

Leaders place high importance on ensuring that all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND, can read. Pupils have daily phonics sessions from the start of the Reception Year. All staff are trained to deliver a carefully planned programme which clearly identifies the sounds that pupils should learn and when. Pupils practise their reading often, using books that match precisely with the sounds they know. This helps them to learn to read confidently and fluently. Leaders make sure that, when needed, pupils receive extra support to catch up.

Older pupils are enthusiastic about the books that their teachers read to them. They have a wide knowledge of authors. Pupils enjoy reading books to deepen their knowledge of the topics they are studying and to broaden their vocabulary. However, occasionally, the complex vocabulary in some of these texts makes it too difficult for some pupils to make sense of what they are reading.

Pupils take pride in their learning. Their lessons are rarely disrupted by poor behaviour. The special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator (SENCo) ensures that, when needed, pupils with SEND get extra support with their learning, behaviour or emotional well-being. For example, many pupils who struggled to manage their own behaviour in the past are now thriving because of the effective support that staff have put in place.

Leaders provide pupils with many opportunities to learn about the world in which they live. Pupils learn about how to stay physically and mentally healthy. They understand and respect people's differences and they are delighted to support a range of charities.

Governors are ambitious for the school. They ensure that they are well informed about the quality of education for pupils and they hold leaders to account effectively. Staff appreciate that governors and leaders are considerate of their workload and their well-being. Staff are proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff receive regular safeguarding training. This means they remain alert to the signs that may indicate that a pupil is at risk. Staff are aware of the procedures for reporting concerns. They understand that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

The knowledgeable members of the pastoral team use their expertise to plan programmes of support both in school and with a wide range of outside agencies. This approach ensures that pupils and their families benefit from effective support when needed.

Pupils have many opportunities to learn how to keep themselves safe, including how to stay safe online and understanding the features of healthy relationships.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- On occasion, teachers do not ensure that pupils know the meaning of more demanding vocabulary in some texts. This makes it difficult for pupils to understand the content and make sense of what they are reading. Leaders should ensure that teachers support pupils effectively to develop their understanding of more challenging vocabulary across subjects.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2016.

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.

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	104775
Local authority	St Helens
Inspection number	10194073
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	601
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Gary Limb
Headteacher	Lauren Chisnall
Website	http://www.newton.st-helens.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 November 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, there have been considerable changes to the school's senior leadership team. A new headteacher, deputy headteacher and three assistant headteachers have been appointed in the past two years.
- A new chair of governors has been appointed since the last inspection.
- The school makes use of the registered alternative provider 'PACE', a pupil referral unit in the local authority of St Helens.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school has received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team. The lead inspector had a discussion on the telephone with a representative of St Helens local authority and met online with seven members of the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, reviewed

curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, met with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and reviewed samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors met with members of the school safeguarding team, including the designated safeguarding lead, and reviewed a range of documentation about safeguarding, including school employment checks.
- Inspectors considered the 38 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. They also considered the 33 responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff and the 73 responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils.

Inspection team

Janette Walker, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jean Tarry

Ofsted Inspector

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