

Inspection of a good school: Poulton Lancelyn Primary School

Venables Drive, Bebington, Wirral, Merseyside CH63 9LY

Inspection dates:

28 and 29 September 2021

Outcome

Poulton Lancelyn Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils have nothing but praise for this school. They are happy and safe. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can and should achieve in their learning.

Pupils said that bullying is uncommon in school. They do not hesitate to report any instances of unkindness or bullying should it occur. Pupils said that staff act quickly to ensure that those involved understand the impact of their actions on their peers. Any issues are resolved quickly and effectively.

Pupils behave well and try their best. Pupils' behaviour reflects teachers' high expectations. Lessons and social times are calm and orderly. Pupils listen carefully to each other, and to adults. They follow instructions immediately. During the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers ensured that most pupils continued to learn across the whole of the curriculum.

Pupils enjoy learning. In most subjects, pupils achieve well. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils told the inspector that in this school, everyone understands their rights and responsibilities. These include the rights to be respected, to have a good education and to have fun. Pupils accept each other, regardless of any differences. They benefit from a wide range of after-school and lunchtime clubs, which are very popular.

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

In most subjects, leaders have planned the curriculum very well. Learning is suitably demanding, with ambitious expectations which align with the national curriculum. However, in a minority of subjects, leaders are still in the process of making minor alterations to their plans. They are refining exactly what is taught so that teachers afford pupils even more opportunity to develop a rich body of subject knowledge. As a result of leaders' detailed planning, pupils across the school progress well through the curriculum.

Children in the early years also achieve well. Teachers in the early years skilfully use their knowledge of how young children learn. They reflect on what children have already achieved before joining the school in order to plan an ambitious programme of learning. From the start of the Reception Year, children build up their vocabulary and engage in learning activities that prepare them well for the demands of Year 1.

Subject leaders are experts in their areas of responsibility. Leaders and teachers have benefited from significant training. This has given them the skills to select the most appropriate activities to teach new knowledge, including to children in the early years. The impact of ongoing teacher training is clearly evident in pupils' work. For example, pupils recall prior knowledge and learning with fluency and accuracy. Pupils benefit from the subject-specific training that their teachers receive. Pupils learn with confidence.

Leaders prioritise reading from the start of the Reception Year. Leaders ensure that teachers receive considerable, appropriate training in how to teach phonics. The daily phonics sessions are delivered effectively. Most pupils progress well through the phonics programme. Teachers choose books carefully to match pupils' reading ability. Pupils read with increasing accuracy, fluency and expression. However, a small number of pupils are behind in reading due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Leaders have detailed and well-funded plans to help these pupils to catch up quickly.

All teaching staff understand their role in fostering a love of reading in their pupils. With infectious enthusiasm, they read stories to pupils every day. Leaders have provided spaces so that pupils in each year group can read frequently for pleasure from a wide variety of appropriate books. Pupils spoke excitedly about their favourite authors and books.

Leaders accurately identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Support for these pupils is strong. Pupils across the school, including those who are disadvantaged and those with SEND, make good progress through the curriculum in most subjects. Teachers give pupils with SEND frequent opportunities to revisit and build on their previous learning.

Teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour inside and outside classrooms are high. They rarely need to apply sanctions. Pupils value the rewards that teachers give them for positive behaviour. In lessons, pupils listen with sustained concentration. They learn without disruption.

Leaders and teachers ensure that the school's personal development curriculum teaches pupils to appreciate and respect the natural world around them. Teachers broaden pupils' horizons through a wide range of cultural visits and the opportunity to learn from visiting speakers to the school. Staff help pupils to develop resilience, confidence and positivity in the face of difficulty.

Leaders, including governors and trustees, support staff well. Teachers appreciate the time that leaders give them to reflect and plan, as well as to manage their areas of

responsibility. Teachers said that the new assessment system has lightened their workload, while still allowing them to assess pupils accurately and frequently.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The headteacher, and highly qualified and experienced governors, foster a very strong culture of safeguarding, which permeates all aspects of school life. Leaders ensure that staff carry out regular safeguarding training so that they know how to spot if a pupil is in difficulty.

Leaders' policies are up to date and meet statutory requirements. Staff carry out and record all safeguarding procedures efficiently. Leaders welcome regular monitoring of safeguarding by the multi-academy trust (MAT) and other external agencies. Staff work well with parents and carers, and external agencies, to ensure that pupils and their families receive the timely help that they need.

Teachers and pastoral staff make sure that pupils are safe and that they know how to keep themselves safe from harm, including on the internet.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a minority of foundation subjects, leaders are in the process of revising some aspects of their curriculum plans. This is because previous plans did not allow pupils to build up enough subject-specific knowledge to excel in their learning. Leaders should ensure that teachers embed the new and improved curriculum plans for these subjects. This is so that pupils deepen their knowledge equally well across all areas of the curriculum.

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 a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school to be good in May 2015.

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	143503
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	10200768
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	430
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jane Owens
Headteacher	Mrs Claire Arnold
Website	www.poultonlancelyn.wirral.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Poulton Lancelyn Primary School became part of Oak Trees Multi-Academy Trust in June 2017.
- When its predecessor school was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection of the school since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the special educational needs coordinator.
- The inspector also spoke with the chair of the board of trustees, the chief executive officer of the MAT, the director of school improvement for the MAT and members of the local governing body.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics and history. This involved discussions with subject leaders and teachers, as well as talking to pupils about their work. The inspector visited lessons in these subjects and looked at curriculum plans and pupils' work. The inspector heard younger pupils reading to their teachers.
- The inspector also looked at curriculum plans and examples of pupils' work in other subjects.
- The inspector analysed the school's records of recruitment checks on staff. The inspector spoke to staff and leaders about the school's procedures and systems for safeguarding pupils. The inspector also discussed with staff and pupils how the school teaches pupils to keep themselves safe, including when on the internet.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms and at social times.
- The inspector considered the 75 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. This included the 77 responses received via the free-text facility. The inspector also reviewed the 27 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff and the 98 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for pupils.

Inspection team

Liz Kelly, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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