

Inspection of a good school: Etchells Primary School

East Avenue, Heald Green, Cheadle, Cheshire SK8 3DL

Inspection dates:

12 and 13 October 2021

Outcome

Etchells Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy to be in school. They feel safe and well-cared-for. They enjoy learning about the wider world and different cultures. Pupils are proud of the diversity in their school. They make sure that everyone is included in all activities, both in class and during playtimes.

Pupils benefit from well-trained staff. Staff know how to make sure that pupils feel confident in trying out new things and overcoming challenges. Teachers capture pupils' interests. Pupils focus well on their learning in lessons. Leaders expect everyone to achieve well. Pupils, including those with complex special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), said that staff help them to get better at learning. Pupils progress well across the curriculum.

Leaders support pupils to develop healthy lifestyles. Pupils love being physically active. They talked with enthusiasm about the many new skills that they have learned together in their outdoor wooded areas, such as filtering water or building shelters.

Pupils behave well around school. They are kind to each other. Bullying is not tolerated. A small minority of parents and carers feel that staff do not resolve their concerns about bullying quickly enough. However, all pupils and parents who spoke with the inspector said that staff listen to them and sort out any problems, including bullying.

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

Leaders and governors have considered carefully what is in the 'Etchells curriculum'. They make sure that the curriculum enables pupils, whatever their ability, to build up a wide range of knowledge. This includes those in the specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND (specially resourced provision).

Leaders ensure that pupils acquire new knowledge in the right order. As a result, most pupils have a secure understanding of the topics and concepts that they are studying.

Leaders are equally successful in enabling pupils to make connections across different subjects within the curriculum. These connections help pupils to deepen their knowledge about what they have learned. Pupils are also skilled in applying new knowledge to unfamiliar contexts. Overall, pupils, including children in the early years, achieve well at Etchells Primary School.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, leaders had highly effective systems in place to check that the curriculum was delivered as intended. More recently, these checks have not been carried out as diligently by leaders due to the impact of the pandemic. Consequently, leaders do not have a full appreciation of how well some of the wider curriculum subjects are being taught. Leaders are in the process of reintroducing these checks. Added to this, leaders are still in the process of setting out precisely what children are expected to know in a small number of the areas of learning in the early years.

Pupils apply their reading knowledge well. The teaching of reading, and developing a love of reading, are high priorities across the school. Leaders make sure that teachers and other staff are well trained to support pupils in learning to read. Most pupils enjoy reading. They read regularly at school and at home.

All staff use the school's phonics programme consistently well. All pupils, including pupils with complex SEND, develop strong phonics knowledge. Most children start to learn phonics by the time they begin the Reception Year. As in other areas of the curriculum, teachers check pupils' phonics knowledge carefully. Teachers use this information to plan the next steps in pupils' learning. They put additional support in place for any pupil, should they start to fall behind. Teachers make sure that the books that pupils read help them to practise the sounds that they have learned. Pupils quickly become fluent and accurate readers.

Leaders provide expert support to help staff identify and meet the needs of pupils with SEND. Staff enable pupils with complex SEND in the specially resourced provision to learn with increasing independence. This enables all pupils, including those with SEND, to learn with their friends in class, whatever their ability.

All pupils benefit from the high-quality experiences that leaders plan to enhance pupils' wider development. Pupils are eagerly awaiting the restart of the wide range of clubs and trips that they enjoyed prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. They strive to live out the school's core values. They said that these values help them to develop strong personal qualities. Pupils enjoy opportunities to reflect on important issues, such as the impact of pollution or deforestation on the world. Teachers encourage pupils to express their own thoughts about faith or injustice.

Pupils enjoy following the 'Bee' rules. These simple but effective rules encourage pupils to be considerate of others. Pupils love to earn rewards, such as wearing slippers or having extra time for their favourite activity. Most are much too busy enjoying their learning to distract each other.

Leaders and governors think carefully about the workload and well-being of staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors ensure that pupils are safe, including when online. They also ensure that there are appropriate measures in place to protect and support pupils with complex SEND and/or medical needs. Staff are well trained, including those who need to carry out more intimate care for some pupils.

Staff are vigilant. They make effective use of the clear and robust reporting systems that are in place. They ensure that pupils know how to keep themselves safe. Staff diligently notify leaders when they notice a potential safeguarding risk. Leaders take swift and effective action to ensure that the most vulnerable pupils receive the support that they need.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not checked how well pupils are learning in some of the foundation subjects with the same rigour that they did prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, leaders do not know how well some of the wider curriculum subjects are being implemented. Leaders need to reinstate regular and robust checks to ensure that the curriculum is delivered effectively right across the school.
- Leaders' curriculum plans are in the process of being refined. This is because some leaders and teachers do not know precisely enough the knowledge that children must learn in a minority of the areas of learning in the early years. Leaders need to continue to refine their curriculum plans in the remaining areas of learning. This is to ensure that there is greater clarity about what children in the early years are expected to know and remember.

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 September 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	106045
Local authority	Stockport
Inspection number	10200065
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	403
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Hamayoun Choudry
Headteacher	Cathy Beddows
Website	www.etchells.stockport.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	20 and 21 September 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with complex SEND. This resource provision caters for eight primary-aged pupils and was oversubscribed at the time of the inspection.
- All pupils in the specially resourced provision have an education, health and care plan. Most pupils in this specially resourced provision access the majority of their learning in the main part of the school. They access specialist support, such as therapy, in the specially resourced provision.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been some changes to key roles. There is a new chair of governors, a new assistant headteacher and a new special educational needs coordinator (SENCo).
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection that the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The impact of the pandemic was discussed with the headteacher. This was taken into account by the inspector in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspector spoke with the headteacher and other leaders in the school, including the SENCo. She also spoke with a group of governors, including the chair of governors. The inspector also spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector looked at a range of documentation for safeguarding, including: the school's central record of staff and visitors; staff training records; records of safeguarding; and samples of the records kept on individual pupils.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, religious education and design and technology. She talked with the curriculum leaders of these subject areas. The inspector also visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work, held discussions with teachers and talked with pupils.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes. She watched pupils as they moved around the school. The inspector also spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school.
- The inspector looked at the 90 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online parent survey, and the 58 free-text responses from parents to find out their views of the school. She also considered the 25 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire. There were insufficient responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire to analyse.

Inspection team

Claire Cropper, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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