

Inspection of The Prescott School

Knowsley Park Lane, Prescott, Liverpool, Merseyside L34 3NB

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 October 2021

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Inadequate

What is it like to attend this school?

All staff and most pupils feel that the school is moving forward in a positive direction. Pupils said that they are expected to work hard and to be respectful of each other. Leaders have recently improved the range of clubs and sports activities that pupils can attend after school.

Most pupils are happy at this school. Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe. Teachers have fostered positive relationships with pupils. Most pupils get along well with each other. Pupils said that incidents of bullying are rare. They feel confident that staff deal with any incidents that do occur. Pupils know whom they can talk with about any worries that they may have.

Leaders have raised their expectations of how pupils behave in school. Pupils' behaviour during breaktimes and when moving between lessons is generally calm. Most pupils have positive attitudes to learning. That said, there remain a small minority of pupils who do not respond positively to the new behaviour policy. Pupils reported that there are some lessons where learning is disrupted.

Pupils' achievement is stronger than it was at the previous inspection. However, it is still not good enough. Over time, weaknesses in curriculum planning in some subjects have left pupils with significant gaps in their knowledge.

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

Leaders, the chief executive officer (CEO) and governors are ambitious for all pupils. Together with staff, they are making a positive difference to many aspects of the school. Improvements are clear in the quality of education, pupils' behaviour and the personal development curriculum.

All pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), study a broad range of subjects in key stage 3. Leaders have made changes to the range of courses that pupils can choose in key stage 4. More pupils are studying a language to GCSE. Consequently, an increasing proportion of pupils are studying the suite of subjects that make up the English Baccalaureate.

Leaders of some subjects have thought carefully about what pupils need to know and when this content should be taught. Pupils have opportunities to revisit content so that they can build their knowledge and understanding. Most teachers use their subject knowledge well to provide clear explanations. However, the quality of planning across other subjects is uneven. This means that pupils have gaps in their learning in these subjects. Some teachers do not check carefully that pupils understand what they have learned before moving on to new learning. This means that gaps in pupils' knowledge are not spotted quickly enough.

Leaders have taken action to improve the identification of the needs of pupils with SEND. Leaders have recently provided teachers with more information and training

on how to support these pupils more effectively. However, the needs of some pupils with SEND are not being met during lessons. This stops these pupils from accessing the curriculum. It hinders their progress and limits their achievement.

Leaders' work to support pupils who struggle to read is at an early stage of development. Leaders have produced resources to develop pupils' comprehension skills. However, pupils have limited opportunities to read for pleasure. Pupils who find reading difficult are not supported well enough to catch up quickly.

Leaders have introduced clear routines for lessons and breaktimes. Pupils and staff agree that behaviour is getting better and disruption to lessons is reduced. However, a small number of pupils struggle to meet the high expectations of leaders and staff. Temporary exclusions from school are currently high.

The personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum is well planned. Pupils have opportunities to learn about healthy relationships, mental health and British values. They are tolerant of differences between people. Pupils from Year 8 receive careers advice and guidance. Leaders organise careers events for pupils, which include representatives from apprenticeships. Almost all pupils move on to education, training or employment. However, the careers programme is not as effective for younger pupils. This means that they are not as well informed about their next steps as they could be.

Staff enjoy working at the school. They feel that leaders are considerate of their workload. The CEO and governors know the school well. They have provided effective challenge and support to leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have regular safeguarding training. They know how to recognise the possible signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. Staff and leaders act quickly when concerns arise. Leaders work well with external agencies and the local authority to help and support vulnerable pupils. They ensure that pupils who attend alternative provision are safe. Leaders ensure that pupils learn how to stay safe. For example, pupils learn about online safety, gang culture and knife crime. Leaders have raised pupils' awareness of the risks of sexual harassment and sexual violence.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some subject leaders have not thought carefully enough about what pupils should learn and in what order. Consequently, some pupils are not achieving well. Subject leaders should ensure that all curriculum plans identify key knowledge

and the order in which subject content should be taught so that pupils learn more over time.

- Leaders' work to support pupils who are at the early stages of learning to read is in its infancy. This impedes pupils' ability to become fluent and confident readers who develop a love of reading. Leaders should ensure that training for staff, together with promoting reading for pleasure, helps early readers to catch up and read with increasing fluency and confidence.
- Some pupils with SEND are not being supported well in their classes. This means that they cannot access the curriculum or achieve as well as they should. Senior leaders should ensure that subject leaders and teachers adapt the delivery of the curriculum so that pupils with SEND can access subject curriculums effectively. Leaders should also make sure that staff are suitably trained in subject-specific approaches to meet the needs of these pupils.
- In some lessons, and at social times, some pupils do not behave as well as they should. Incidents of low-level disruption in lessons hinders pupils' learning. Leaders should ensure that staff are more consistent in their application of the behaviour policy to improve the learning culture in classrooms.
- The careers programme for younger pupils is not as effective as it is for those in Years 10 and 11. As a result, pupils are not as well informed as they could be about the range of careers opportunities available to them. Leaders should ensure that the programme all pupils receive is of equal quality so that they can all have a greater sense of their potential career pathway.

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	142798
Local authority	Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Inspection number	10184639
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	844
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Helen Stevenson
Principal	Jamie Jardine (Executive Principal)
Website	www.prescotschool.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	11 and 12 September 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The current head of school was appointed in June 2021. There have been several changes to senior leadership and staffing since the previous inspection.
- The school uses three alternative providers for a small number of pupils.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause. This means that pupils in Years 8 to 13 receive information about the full range of education and training options open to them. This includes opportunities for a range of education and training providers to speak to pupils about technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

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

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors spoke with the executive principal, head of school, other senior leaders, subject leaders, staff, members of the local governing body, the CEO of the Heath Family Trust and the trust's adviser for pupils with SEND. Inspectors held telephone calls with a representative of the local authority and with representatives of three alternative providers.
- Inspectors spoke to many pupils about their experience of school and their views on behaviour and bullying. Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes.
- Inspectors checked the school's safeguarding policies and procedures and the school's single central record. Inspectors met with leaders, staff and pupils to check how effective safeguarding is in the school.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of evidence, including the school's self-evaluation document, action planning documents and records of pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and responses to the pupil survey and staff survey.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in art and design, English, science and mathematics. Inspectors met with staff, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and spoke with them about their learning. In addition, inspectors reviewed the curriculum planning for geography, history and PSHE.

Inspection team

Ahmed Marikar, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Tuesday Humby	Ofsted Inspector
Christine Veitch	Ofsted Inspector
Des Callaghan	Ofsted Inspector
David Roberts	Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2021