

Inspection of Halton Lodge Primary School

Grangeway, Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 5LU

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 September 2021

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Halton Lodge is a happy and welcoming school. Pupils feel safe and well looked after. They trust staff to do what is right for them. Pupils who spoke to inspectors said that bullying happens from time to time. They said that this does not worry them because staff are really good at sorting problems out.

Pupils behave well. They work hard in lessons. They enjoy the exercise sessions that are held in the hall each morning. Pupils also enjoy the after-school clubs and residential visits that leaders provide.

Pupils develop a strong sense of equality and justice. Older pupils sometimes engage in heated debates about topical issues during lessons, but they are respectful of each other's views. Pupils learn to value difference and see it as a positive aspect of their lives. They enjoy the extra responsibilities that they are given, such as serving on the school council.

Despite these positive features, there are weaknesses in the school's curriculum. Leaders have made improvements to the reading and mathematics curriculums. However, leaders' expectations of what pupils can achieve in other subjects are too low. As a result, the quality of education is not good enough and pupils struggle to remember what they have learned.

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

Although this school has many strengths, leaders have not ensured that pupils benefit from a well-planned, well-sequenced curriculum. Leaders have made recent improvements to the curriculums for mathematics and reading. However, plans in many other subjects lack detail about what teachers are expected to teach and what knowledge pupils are expected to acquire. As a result, pupils often engage in activities that are unrelated to their previous learning. This prevents them from building on their knowledge and remembering more.

Weaknesses in the school's curriculum limit the progress that pupils make. This includes those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff use assessment well to identify the needs of pupils with SEND and provide effective support in helping these pupils to work through the reading and mathematics curriculums. Caring and knowledgeable support staff use a wide range of strategies to support the personal development of these pupils.

Leaders have prioritised the teaching of reading. Staff have been well trained to deliver the phonics programme. They ensure that pupils practise their reading regularly at school and at home. They also make sure that the books that pupils read are matched to their reading ability. Teachers use assessment information well to track pupils' reading progress and they are quick to identify any pupils who are falling behind. They support these pupils well and ensure that they develop the confidence and skills that they need to become confident, competent readers.

Leaders have also made improvements to the mathematics curriculum. They have provided training for staff and raised expectations of what pupils can achieve in this subject. This is helping to address a legacy of underperformance in mathematics. Recent teacher assessments have shown that some older pupils still have gaps in their knowledge. However, staff are providing additional support to help them catch up. For younger pupils, the new curriculum is helping to build a more solid foundation for their learning in mathematics.

The leadership of other subjects is not as effective. Some subject leaders are new to their role. They have not been given enough guidance about how to carry out their roles effectively. For example, they have not been told when or how to check whether pupils across the school are learning what they should in each curriculum area. This means that leaders, including governors, do not have a well-informed understanding of how well the curriculum is supporting pupils' learning across subjects.

Children get off to a good start in the early years. The well-planned curriculum helps to ensure that learning is sequential and purposeful. Children quickly learn to follow routines and develop good attitudes to learning. Staff are skilled in modelling behaviour and language. They use assessment strategies effectively to check how well children are progressing across all areas of learning. The early years curriculum ensures that children are well prepared for Year 1.

Staff are committed to supporting pupils' emotional well-being. They provide strong pastoral support for all pupils, including those who attend the specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND. Pupils learn how to be respectful and responsible. They develop good attitudes to learning and behave well, during lessons and at breaktimes.

Staff are proud to work at Halton Lodge. They feel well supported. They said that leaders are considerate of their workload. Parents and carers are supportive of school leaders and appreciative of the care and support that staff provide for their children each day.

Governors are committed to supporting the school. However, they are not aware of the weaknesses in the quality of education that is currently being provided.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are vigilant and fully aware of the school's policies and procedures for safeguarding pupils. They know how to spot possible signs of abuse. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. They know that they can speak to a member of staff if they have any concerns or worries. Leaders also work closely with external agencies to provide support for any families who need extra help.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Curriculum planning for many subjects, other than reading and mathematics, lack detail. They do not help teachers to know precisely what pupils need to learn in order to be ready for the next year group. This stops pupils from knowing and remembering more over time. Leaders need to review the curriculum for these subjects. They should ensure that the planning identifies the key knowledge that pupils must know and the order in which they will learn this content.
- Some subject leaders do not have the skills or expertise to fulfil their roles effectively. This means that subject curriculums are not improving and staff are not receiving appropriate training or support. Senior leaders need to provide better support for subject leaders so that they are able to contribute to the development of well-sequenced curriculums.
- Senior leaders do not have a good enough understanding of how well pupils are gaining essential knowledge as they learn the curriculum. They need to ensure that appropriate checks are made on how well pupils are developing the knowledge that they need in each subject.
- Governors are not aware of the weaknesses in the school's curriculum. They have not held leaders to account for the quality of education that the school is providing. This has contributed to the weaknesses in leadership at the school. Governors need support in developing their knowledge and understanding of the school's curriculum to ensure that they remain well informed about the progress that leaders are making in improving the quality of education.

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	111229
Local authority	Halton
Inspection number	10204400
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Jones
Headteacher	Anthony Hilldrup
Website	http://haltonlodge.haltonschoools.info/
Date of previous inspection	15 September 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, there has been considerable turbulence in staffing. 10 new teachers have been appointed during this period, including a new deputy headteacher.
- The school manages a specially resourced provision for six pupils with SEND on behalf of the local authority. At the time of this inspection, five pupils were attending full time.
- The school runs a breakfast club and several after-school clubs.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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.

- During this inspection, inspectors met with the headteacher and other members of the leadership team, including the leader for SEND.
- Inspectors held meetings with teachers, support staff and subject leaders.
- The lead inspector had a telephone discussion with three governors. He also spoke to a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils about their experience of school. They also observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and during breaktimes.
- Inspectors visited the early years classroom, met with the early years leader, and checked curriculum planning in the early years.
- The lead inspector examined records related to safeguarding. He also met with the designated safeguarding lead to discuss how pupils are kept safe.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, geography and religious education. As part of this process, they met with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with pupils and looked at examples of pupils' work. Inspectors looked at curriculum plans and teachers' timetables in other subjects. The lead inspector also listened to pupils reading.
- Inspectors considered the 18 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. They also looked at the 24 responses to the staff survey and the 24 responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Paul Tomkow, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Michelle Joyce

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