

Inspection of Elworth Hall Primary School

Lawton Way, Elworth, Sandbach, Cheshire CW11 1TE

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 October 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?

Pupils enjoy their time at Elworth Hall Primary School. They make lots of friends. They benefit from positive relationships with each other and with staff. They said that they feel safe and happy. Pupils are welcoming, well-mannered and polite.

Pupils told inspectors that the staff in the school are caring and will help them if they have any worries. Pupils are confident that staff will quickly sort out any issues, including those related to bullying.

Pupils behave well around the school. They are willing to work hard in lessons. However, they do not achieve as well as they should because leaders and staff do not have high enough expectations of what they can achieve.

Pupils are proud of the difference that they make by raising funds for local charities. They were keen to talk about the sports competitions and performances that they have taken part in. Pupils are excited about the forthcoming residential visits and the return to a wider range of after-school clubs that leaders have planned for them.

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

Leaders are in the process of improving the curriculum to ensure that it is ambitious for all pupils, including those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, in most subjects, curriculum plans are at an early stage of development. Until recently, the curriculum plans for pupils in Year 1 to Year 6 have not been ambitious enough. This has prevented pupils from receiving a high-quality education and achieving as well as they should by the end of Year 6.

Many subject leaders have been appointed recently. They have benefited from appropriate training to develop their curriculum expertise. This has helped them to decide what pupils should be able to do by the end of each year. Subject leaders have started to identify the important knowledge that pupils need to learn and in what order they should gain this knowledge. However, these changes are fairly new in many subjects. At this point in time, it is too early to see if they are having a positive enough impact on pupils' learning.

Some subject curriculums are more advanced. This means that teachers have clear guidance about the important content that pupils need to know and remember. For example, in mathematics, improvements in curriculum planning are starting to have a positive impact on how well pupils achieve in this subject.

In the early years, leaders have planned a curriculum that ensures children make a strong start in the Reception class. There is a sharp focus on developing children's spoken language and vocabulary. Teachers skilfully ensure that children learn sounds and the letters that they represent as soon as they join the school. They have many opportunities to practise what they have been taught so that they gain a secure understanding across different areas of learning. Through their warm

encouragement, staff ensure that children in the early years try their best and achieve well. This means that children are well prepared for the challenges of Year 1.

Leaders have not ensured that teachers capitalise on the positive start that children make in the early years. This is particularly the case in reading. Some teachers have not had the training that they need in order to deliver the early reading curriculum effectively. Sometimes, the books that they select for younger pupils to read are not well matched to the sounds that pupils are learning in class. In addition, some pupils do not practise their reading often enough to become sufficiently fluent and accurate. This delays the development of their comprehension skills. Leaders do not do enough to motivate pupils to read more widely.

Leaders have ensured that there are effective systems in place to identify the needs of pupils with SEND. This group of pupils benefit from appropriate support from staff. However, weaknesses in the planning and delivery of subject curriculums prevent pupils with SEND from achieving as well as they should.

Pupils have many opportunities to prepare them for life in modern Britain. They learn about people's differences such as their culture, faith and families. Pupils demonstrate a mature approach to discussions about their rights and responsibilities. They understand that everyone should be treated with respect.

Most pupils respond positively to their learning. However, a small number of pupils are not able to regulate their own behaviour. This has a negative impact on their learning.

Leaders and governors have focused on ensuring that pupils enjoy their learning. However, governors have not made sure that leaders are held to account for the quality of education that pupils receive. This has resulted in a delay in leaders' actions to improve pupils' achievement, particularly in reading.

Parents and carers hold the school in high regard. They are supportive of the staff and they value the approachability of school leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders arrange regular and appropriate training for staff so that they can remain alert to the signs that might indicate that a pupil is at risk from harm. This includes peer-on-peer abuse.

Leaders have a clear oversight of the challenges faced by vulnerable pupils and their families. Leaders work well with a range of other agencies to access the help that these pupils and their families need.

Through learning about online safety and healthy relationships, pupils develop their understanding of how to keep themselves safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not ensured that some staff are appropriately trained to deliver the reading curriculum. As a result, some pupils do not become fluent and proficient readers as quickly as they should. This also affects their comprehension skills. Leaders must ensure that staff are appropriately trained to develop pupils' reading skills and knowledge. They should also ensure that staff are well equipped to promote a love of reading among all pupils.
- In several subjects, leaders have not identified the important knowledge that they want pupils to learn, or the order that pupils need to learn subject content. Leaders must ensure that all curriculum plans outline precisely the knowledge that leaders want pupils to learn.
- Governors have not held leaders to account well enough for pupils' achievement across the curriculum. This has contributed to a delay in leaders ensuring an ambitious curriculum is delivered by well-trained staff. Governors should ensure that they consider pupils' learning with the same care and attention that they afford pupils' personal development and well-being.
- On occasion, a few pupils struggle to regulate their own behaviour. Sometimes, this prevents them from learning. Leaders should ensure that these pupils are supported well to manage their own behaviour.

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	111163
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	10204397
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	206
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Iain McKnight
Headteacher	Emma Clark
Website	www.elworthhall.cheshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 and 15 June 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the school's previous inspection, a new headteacher and senior leadership team have been appointed.
- There has been a significant increase in the number of pupils on roll since the previous inspection.
- The school makes use of one registered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

The 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 the inspection, inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other members of staff. They also spoke with pupils, both formally and informally, about their work. The lead inspector met with the chair of the governing body and had a

telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority. Inspectors also visited the alternative provision setting used by the school.

- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation in relation to safeguarding, including the checks undertaken by leaders when recruiting staff.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and those responses to Ofsted's online staff survey. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, science and history. This included discussions with subject leaders, visits to lessons, reviewing pupil's work, discussions with teachers and discussions with pupils. The lead inspector observed pupils reading to a trusted adult. Inspectors also reviewed curriculum plans and pupils' work in several other subjects.

Inspection team

Janette Walker, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Christine Howard

Ofsted Inspector

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