

Inspection of a good school: Woodlands Primary School

Hollybank Road, Birkenhead, Merseyside CH41 2SY

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 May 2022

Outcome

Woodlands Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this nurturing and caring school. Everyone feels welcome here. The school has a diverse community that represents many cultures. Pupils show respect for each other. They get on well together, regardless of their differences.

Leaders and staff are highly ambitious for the achievement of all pupils. Leaders have established clearly understood routines. Classrooms are therefore calm places for pupils to learn in.

Teachers have high expectations for behaviour, based around the school's motto of 'respect, responsibility and resilience'. Pupils behave well. They said that their teachers act quickly and successfully to resolve any bullying.

Pupils feel safe. They trust staff to look after them. Pupils show care and concern for each other. Leaders support pupils' social, emotional and mental health needs effectively. Members of the school's pastoral team have created a space in school where, when needed, some pupils can learn in smaller groups.

Older pupils enjoy supporting younger ones, for example through their roles as reading ambassadors. Pupils enjoy the range of trips and after-school clubs that leaders provide. They learn about different faiths when they celebrate religious festivals. Through the curriculum, pupils learn about fundamental British values.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum. This curriculum makes clear the important knowledge and vocabulary that leaders most want pupils to learn in each subject. Leaders have ensured that pupils' learning builds on their prior knowledge as they move through the school. Pupils' understanding develops in well-ordered steps. Leaders have made sure that the knowledge children gain in the early years provides

secure foundations for their future learning. Pupils learn and achieve well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

The teaching of phonics begins when children start in the early years. Teachers develop children's early reading through activities which provide a repetition of sounds and words, such as those found in songs and rhymes. Leaders make sure that children and pupils learn phonics in a well-ordered manner. Any children or pupils who need help to keep up with their phonics learning are identified quickly. By the end of key stage 1, most pupils can read confidently.

Teachers provide lots of opportunities for pupils to read or to listen to stories. This improves their knowledge and understanding of vocabulary. In key stage 2, the reading curriculum helps pupils to develop their understanding of a wide range of texts. Older pupils read fluently. They talk with enthusiasm about the books they have read.

Teachers make checks on pupils' learning. This helps them to identify which pupils need more help or guidance. In most subjects, leaders gather a range of information about pupils' learning. This provides leaders with a clear understanding of how the curriculum helps pupils to build up their knowledge successfully. In a few subjects, leaders' work to gather this information is less well developed. This prevents leaders from understanding how well pupils remember their learning in these subjects over time.

Leaders and staff identify quickly those pupils who may have SEND. Leaders ensure that staff receive training to help these pupils to access the curriculum. Leaders involve parents and carers in the reviews of their children's progress. Effective liaison with outside agencies ensures that those pupils who need more specialist support get it promptly.

Children in the early years quickly adapt to the clear routines that help them work and play safely and purposefully. Pupils across the rest of the school behave well. They listen carefully in class and are well behaved around school. They concentrate on their learning and do not disturb others with any poor behaviour. Pupils are keen to do their best.

Pupils enjoy the many opportunities available to them for their wider development. Leaders provide a wide range of after-school clubs and lunchtime activities. Pupils learn how to keep themselves fit and healthy. They understand fairness and they know that everyone is equal.

Staff talked positively about the strong and supportive relationships that exist in the school. They know that leaders will consider their workload when new initiatives are being introduced. They said that they are proud to work at the school.

Governors know the school well. They ask leaders challenging questions to understand how well the curriculum is helping pupils to know more and remember more.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that all staff have appropriate safeguarding training. Staff know how to recognise when a pupil might be at risk from harm. Staff understand how to follow the safeguarding procedures in order to report any concerns they may have.

Leaders' relationships with a wide variety of outside agencies and the local authority are strong. This helps leaders to provide appropriate, timely support for pupils and their families.

Through the curriculum, pupils learn about personal safety, including when they work online. Visitors to the school, such as local community police officers, talk to pupils about how to keep themselves safe. Some pupils have been trained as anti-bullying ambassadors. These pupils are proud of their roles in caring for younger pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, leaders' work to gather information on the impact of the curriculums is at an early stage. This means that these subject leaders do not have a clear enough understanding of what pupils know and remember. Leaders should ensure that, in all subjects, they gather the information they need to check that the curriculum is helping pupils to build up their knowledge securely over time.

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 November 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	104990
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	10204419
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	333
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Val Maher
Headteacher	Jacquie Fleetwood
Website	www.woodlandswirral.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	1 and 2 November 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector spoke with the headteacher, the deputy headteachers, the curriculum leader, the special educational needs coordinator and other members of staff. He also spoke with a group of governors and with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector looked at a range of documents and spoke with leaders and staff about safeguarding.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. He talked with 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 some pupils reading to staff.

- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in class and as they moved around school. He observed pupils in the dining hall and playing outside at lunchtime.
- The inspector spoke with a group of pupils about their experiences at school.
- The inspector looked at the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. He also met with parents before school to find out their views of the school. The inspector also considered the responses to Ofsted's pupil and staff surveys.

Inspection team

Ian Shackleton, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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