

Inspection of a good school: Moss Bury Primary School and Nursery

Webb Rise, Stevenage, Hertfordshire, SG1 5PA

Inspection dates:

20 and 21 July 2022

Outcome

Moss Bury Primary School and Nursery continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at this nurturing and friendly school, where everyone looks after each other. Adults are on hand to help pupils if they need it. Pupils make use of 'worry monster jars' to share any concerns. This helps them to feel safe at school.

Pupils behave well. They are polite and courteous, such as holding doors open to let others pass. Teachers expect pupils to listen and work hard in class. Leaders are ambitious for all pupils and want them to do their best. Pupils are keen and willing learners.

Pupils enjoy earning tokens for the 'mossy race'. Pupils receive these tokens for their achievements and demonstrating positive behaviour. Pupils say that bullying is rare. Staff deal with it quickly if it happens.

Pupils' welcome opportunities to build their skills of independence and resilience. Pupils complete home learning tasks through their 'mossy explorer' scheme. Pupils enjoy learning and having a positive impact on the environment and their locality.

Many parents would recommend the school to others. They say that children thrive in a 'warm and wonderful environment', where 'teachers are hard-working and care for the children.'

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

Leaders have created a curriculum where the programmes of study are well considered. Pupils build new learning on what they have learned before. For example, in mathematics, pupils skilfully use their previously learned knowledge of rotation to work out different types of angles. Leaders are clear about what they want pupils to know by the end of each year group and by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6.

Most subject leaders have a secure understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They carefully identify what is working well for pupils and how pupils learn. Some subject leaders are newer to their leadership role. They do not have sufficient knowledge to support teachers to teach all curriculum plans effectively. Leaders are providing training, so that all teachers can lead their subjects well.

Teachers present information clearly. They provide frequent opportunities for pupils to recap their recent prior learning. Teachers identify pupils who struggle in their learning. Many adults are skilful at addressing gaps in pupils' knowledge. A few staff are less effective in tackling pupils' misunderstandings. This is because in a small number of subjects, such as history, the curriculum is new. In these subjects some teachers do not have secure enough knowledge of what they need to teach.

Leaders place a high priority on the teaching of reading. Children begin to learn phonics as soon as they start school. All staff have received the training to teach phonics consistently well. Teachers make effective use of assessment, ensuring that teaching is well matched to pupils' needs. Leaders swiftly identify those pupils who find learning to read more challenging. They provide these pupils with extra support to help them to become accurate and fluent readers. Reading books are carefully matched to help pupils practise the sounds that they know.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), including those who attend the specialist provision, receive effective support. Leaders provide teachers and staff with suitable training to support pupils with SEND. Teachers plan learning that meets the needs of all pupils and builds pupils' knowledge successfully.

Pupils are proud about the different roles they have in school. Through taking on these responsibilities, pupils grow in their understanding of community and citizenship. Pupils are helped to develop their friendships and social skills through being well-being ambassadors and peer mentors. Through weekly assemblies, pupils learn about important values, such as kindness and respect.

Staff work together well. They appreciate the ways in which leaders and governors help them manage their workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a strong culture of safeguarding. All staff understand the part they play in helping to keep pupils safe. Regular training provides staff with the information they need to act upon any concerns. Leaders work tenaciously to find the right support for vulnerable pupils and their families. Leaders and governors have well-organised systems in place for the recruitment of new staff.

Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe out of school and when online. Pupils know who to speak to if they have any worries.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some subject plans are in the early stages of being taught. A few staff do not have the subject expertise to deliver leaders' curriculum intentions effectively. This means that a small number of pupils are not building a secure knowledge of these subjects. Pupils' misunderstandings are not readily addressed. Leaders should ensure that all staff receive the training they need to teach the curriculum plans well.
- A few subject leaders are new to their leadership roles. They have not developed the knowledge and skills to fulfil their new roles effectively. They do not understand how well teachers deliver programmes of study nor how well pupils are building their knowledge. Leaders should provide the support and training new subject leaders require to monitor and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the subjects they lead.

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 second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 2013.

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	117269
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10211328
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	265
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Vivien Marshall
Headteacher	Michael Dean
Website	www.mossbury.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	1 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The current headteacher was appointed to the substantive post in February 2019. In September 2020, an acting headteacher was appointed to cover a period of absence of the substantive headteacher. The acting headteacher has continued in this role for two days a week during the headteacher's continuing absence
- The school is responsible for the management of a specialist deaf provision.
- The school does not make use of any 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 their evaluation of the school.

- The inspector carried out deep dives into early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons where they were being taught, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector spoke to the headteacher, the acting headteacher and other members of the school's leadership team. The lead inspector spoke to four members of the governing body, including the chair. The lead inspector held a discussion with the school's chosen school improvement partner.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents about safeguarding, including the employment checks undertaken when staff are appointed, the school development plan and self-evaluation document.
- The inspector considered 46 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, as well as 41 free-text comments. The inspector also reviewed 31 responses to the staff questionnaire and 105 responses to the pupil survey. The inspector spoke to pupils during both lessons and breaktimes.

Inspection team

Steve Mellors, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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