

Inspection of a good school: Pikemere School

Pikemere Road, Alsager, Cheshire ST7 2SW

Inspection dates:

21 and 22 September 2022

Outcome

Pikemere School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pikemere Primary School is a place where everyone is valued. Pupils, including children in the early years, love to come to school each day. Leaders expect pupils to work hard and to achieve well. Pupils rise eagerly to teachers' high expectations of them.

Pupils are confident that should any bullying occur, staff will take it seriously and deal with it effectively. Staff quickly forge strong relationships with pupils. This helps pupils to feel safe and happy. Pupils behave well.

Pupils value the roles that they take on in school. Younger pupils look forward to the opportunity to take on special responsibilities, such as becoming the treasurer or chair of the school council in Year 6. Pupils understand the importance of helping others. They regularly organise events such as coffee mornings and cake sales to raise money for charities that are important to them.

Pupils experience an engaging curriculum. They relish the varied activities that leaders provide beyond the school day. Pupils spoke animatedly about representing the school in cross-country competitions and as part of the school choir.

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

Despite the recent turbulence in senior leadership, leaders have continued to develop their curriculum at pace. Leaders and staff have worked together to design a well-thought-out curriculum that prepares pupils fully for the next stage of their education. Subject leaders have highlighted the important knowledge that pupils will learn from the early years to Year 6. They have broken this intended learning down into the smaller building blocks of knowledge that pupils need to have secured before they move on to new learning. This supports pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to tackle new learning confidently.

Leaders make sure that staff have the necessary knowledge to be able to deliver the curriculum successfully. Teachers use assessment methods consistently well to identify and address pupils' misconceptions in most subjects.

Most subject leaders check that teachers are delivering their curriculums in the way that they intend. This helps pupils to make strong progress through the curriculum. However, a few subject leaders have not had the opportunity to check how well their curriculums are helping pupils to learn. Assessment strategies are not as well developed in these subjects to enable teachers to check on how well pupils have learned the curriculum. This means that, on occasions, pupils move on to new learning before they have embedded previously taught concepts securely.

Leaders and staff have placed reading at the heart of the curriculum. Pupils, including children in the early years, benefit from a wealth of stories and books which staff avidly share with them. Older pupils talked about their reading with enthusiasm.

Staff deliver the school's phonics programme well. Children in the Reception class and pupils in key stage 1 practise reading with books that match the sounds that they have learned in class. This helps them to develop into confident readers. Staff identify any pupils who may be in danger of falling behind with their reading swiftly. Staff support these pupils well so that they keep up with their peers.

Children in the early years thrive in a warm and nurturing environment. Staff make sure that pupils are well supported and encouraged to do their best every day. Pupils, including those with SEND, get along well with each other. Pupils can concentrate in lessons and learn without disruption.

Leaders identify any pupils with SEND accurately and quickly. Leaders and staff engage well with external services to make sure that these pupils receive appropriate and timely support. This means that most pupils with SEND learn the same curriculum as their peers. These pupils are fully involved in different aspects of school life.

Pupils are tolerant and treat each other with respect. Younger pupils learn about festivals and celebrations, such as Chinese New Year. Older pupils have a secure awareness of religions such as Christianity. However, some pupils are not as confident when talking about faiths and cultures which are different to their own.

Pupils appreciate the varied trips and visits that leaders provide. Year 6 pupils proudly talked about taking part in the 'art of brilliance' festival which supported pupils to develop a positive mindset. Pupils also know that it is important to eat healthily and to exercise regularly.

Governors and trustees have a secure oversight of the school. They support and challenge leaders effectively. Leaders, including governors and trustees, consider the well-being and workload of staff in the decisions that they make.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are highly trained in many different aspects of safeguarding. They know what to do if they have any concerns about pupils' welfare or safety. Leaders and staff take swift action to protect pupils in their care. Leaders support pupils and their families well.

Through the curriculum, pupils are taught about keeping themselves safe. Older pupils very much value their role as members of the e-safety committee. They wear their badges with pride. Older pupils take their responsibilities for helping to teach other pupils about internet safety seriously. Pupils also learn about road safety and the dangers of talking to strangers.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, leaders have not checked that their curriculums are being delivered effectively. This means that they do not have enough knowledge about how well pupils are learning the curriculum. Leaders should ensure that, in these subjects, systems are in place to check that pupils are learning the curriculum well.
- Some older pupils have not developed a secure understanding of other cultures and traditions. This sometimes hinders their growing knowledge of the world around them. Leaders should ensure that pupils deepen their understanding of different faiths and cultures so that they are fully prepared for life in modern Britain.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Pikemere School, to be good in June 2015.

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.

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 | 145036 |
| Local authority | Cheshire East |
| Inspection number | 10241415 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy converter |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 252 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of governing body | Kerry Hulson |
| Headteacher | Anthony Hughes |
| Website | www.pikemereschool.com |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- Pikemere Primary School converted to become an academy school in April 2018. When its predecessor school, Pikemere School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- Since the last inspection, the school has become part of the Chancery Multi-Academy Trust.
- The headteacher took up his position at the beginning of this school year.
- Leaders provide a breakfast club and an after-school club.
- Leaders do 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 her evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector held meetings with senior leaders, middle leaders and class teachers.

- The inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority. She met with governors, including the chair of the governing board. The inspector also met with the chief executive officer and trustees of the multi-academy trust.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. She also spoke to several parents and carers at the beginning of the school day.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted’s online surveys for staff and for pupils.
- The inspector met with those responsible for safeguarding at the school. She scrutinised a range of documents in relation to safeguarding. The inspector spoke with staff, parents and pupils about safeguarding.
- The inspector observed pupils’ behaviour during lessons and at playtimes. She spoke with pupils about bullying, behaviour and leaders’ expectations of pupils’ conduct.
- As part of this inspection, the inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, and art and design. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, discussed curriculums, visited a sample of lessons, met with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and reviewed samples of pupils’ work. The inspector also listened to pupils reading and spoke to other subject leaders about their curriculums.

Inspection team

Louise McArdle, lead inspector

His Majesty’s 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 2022