

Inspection of a good school: Pear Tree Primary School

Pear Tree Field, Stapeley, Nantwich, Cheshire CW5 7GZ

Inspection dates:

21 and 22 September 2022

Outcome

Pear Tree Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love coming to Pear Tree Primary School. They feel safe and well looked after by staff. Pupils and their parents and carers have great confidence in the school's leaders and staff. Pupils know that they can trust staff to support them with their learning and with any problems they face.

Expectations are high throughout the school. Pupils try their best every day to live out the school's motto, 'being our best selves'. Pupils enjoy learning, whether they are in Reception, Year 6, or any year in between. Teachers ensure that learning is interesting, engaging and carefully follows the curriculum. Pupils learn well as a result.

Pupils' behaviour is praiseworthy. They demonstrate excellent attitudes to learning. They are caring, polite and courteous to each other and to adults. Pupils understand the school's values, 'kind thoughts, kind words, kind deeds' and they put them into practice. Staff rarely have to apply sanctions for inappropriate behaviour. Any issues, including bullying, are dealt with quickly and effectively when they occur.

There is a rich variety of activities and enrichment opportunities beyond the classroom. The school's 'curriculum pledge' sets out the enrichment that staff want all pupils to experience. Pupils take advantage of these opportunities with enthusiasm.

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

The school is very well led. The headteacher provides clear and principled leadership. Other leaders model their practice on hers. Governors provide effective support and challenge. Consequently, leadership is strong at all levels.

The school's staff form a dedicated and hard-working team. They appreciate leaders' direction and efforts to ensure that workload is manageable. Morale is excellent. Leaders place great emphasis on supporting the well-being of staff as well as pupils.

Leaders have developed an ambitious curriculum across a broad range of subjects. The curriculum is clearly organised. All staff know what important knowledge pupils need to learn, and the order in which they need to learn it. This ensures that pupils build up their learning logically from the early years to Year 6.

In most subjects, teachers and staff have strong subject knowledge. This enables them to deliver the curriculum effectively for pupils. In a few subjects, staff's subject knowledge is less well developed. There have been only limited opportunities available for training to improve their knowledge further. This makes it more difficult for staff to deliver the curriculum well, and pupils learn less well in these subjects as a result.

Reading is a top priority for leaders. They have made sure that teachers and staff have strong expertise in the teaching of phonics. Children start learning about phonics straight away in the Reception class. Children quickly pick up the relationship between letters and the sounds they represent. Their knowledge builds through key stage 1 and pupils become fluent readers. Staff carefully assess pupils' progress in reading to make sure that they are keeping up. Any pupils that start to fall behind receive extra help, so that they catch up quickly. Pupils of all ages develop a love of reading. They are encouraged to read books of different genres and by different authors. The school library is spacious, attractive and well used.

Teachers regularly check pupils' understanding of key concepts in lessons. This ensures that pupils' knowledge is secure before they move on to new learning. Subject leaders work with staff to check how well the curriculum is helping pupils to learn over time. This enables them to make necessary improvements to help pupils learn better. For example, leaders and staff noticed that some pupils struggled to explain their mathematical thinking. As a result, leaders have made changes to the curriculum and this has had a positive impact for pupils, including children in the early years.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive prompt help to enable them to learn well from the curriculum. Pupils' needs are identified quickly, often as they join the school in the Reception class. Staff make sure pupils get the support they need to learn effectively. Leaders and staff communicate effectively with parents and with professionals to ensure that these pupils receive the expert support that they need.

Leaders place a strong emphasis on pupils' wider development. There is a thorough and well-planned personal, social and health education curriculum. Pupils take part in a wide range of sporting and music activities. Music plays an important part of the life of the school. All pupils benefit from learning in the exciting woodland area. The school takes part in an annual Shakespeare festival. Pupils in Years 6 and 5 develop a sense of responsibility through their roles as buddies to children in Reception and pupils in Year 1.

Parents are full of praise for the school. All who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, said they would recommend the school to another parent. Several commented on how well their children had been welcomed into the school when they joined the Reception class.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school has a strong culture of safeguarding. Leaders have trained staff thoroughly to spot the signs that pupils might need extra help. Safeguarding procedures are clear. Staff report to leaders any concerns that they have. Leaders deal with these appropriately, involving outside agencies when necessary. They ensure that pupils get the help they need.

Through the curriculum, pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, they learn how to keep themselves safe when they use the internet. They know what action to take if they see anything that does not look right. Pupils know who to go to if they need help. They trust staff to support them. All parents who responded to Ofsted Parent View consider their children to be safe in school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, staff do not have the strong subject knowledge that they need to deliver some aspects of the curriculum effectively. This means that on occasions, pupils learn less well in these subjects. Leaders should ensure that staff are supported to develop strong expertise in these subjects, so that pupils learn equally well across the curriculum.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Pear Tree School, to be good in March 2014.

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	140740
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	10240169
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	218
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Simon Holden
Headteacher	Boo Edleston
Website	www.peartreeprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	23 May 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has not undergone any significant changes since its last inspection.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision for pupils.

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 met with the headteacher, other school leaders and four governors. He spoke over the telephone with the school's improvement partner and the headteacher of a local high school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, he discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector also discussed the curriculum in other subjects with leaders. He considered the school's work to support pupils with SEND.

- Safeguarding was considered by meeting with the headteacher, who is also the designated safeguarding lead. The inspector scrutinised policies and records relating to child protection and examined the safeguarding checks made on staff before they join the school.
- The inspector listened to pupils read and talked to them about their reading.
- The inspector spoke with several members of staff, including those who have recently joined the teaching profession. He considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- The inspector spoke informally with pupils at breaktime and lunchtime. He observed the school at these times.
- The inspector spoke with parents at the end of the day and considered the responses, including written responses, to Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Alun Williams, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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