

Inspection of a good school: Much Wenlock Primary School

Racecourse Lane, Much Wenlock, Shropshire TF13 6JG

Inspection dates:

7 and 8 March 2023

Outcome

Much Wenlock Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and safe in this welcoming school. They are proud of their school. Pupils shared many examples of how they are involved in school life. For example, they run their own clubs, such as chess, craft and litter-picking. They take these responsibilities very seriously. Pupils develop strong relationships with their friends and adults.

Pupils have excellent manners. They greet adults with a 'good morning' or 'have a lovely day'. Pupils feel cared for by the adults in the school. If bullying happens, pupils know that adults will deal with it quickly and effectively. Pupils have high expectations for their own behaviour and the behaviour of others. In lessons, pupils work hard and try their best.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils. One pupil said, 'The teachers want to inspire us to be better people in the future.' Leaders have devised a curriculum that is broad and aspirational. In most subjects, leaders have thought carefully about how learning builds over time. For example, pupils in early years learn about the astronaut Neil Armstrong, moving on to learning about the 'Space Race' in Year 1. However, this level of thought is not fully in place in all subjects.

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

Leaders are building a curriculum that is ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders have thought about how the curriculum develops pupils' knowledge from the early years through to Year 6. This is especially well done in subjects such as history. In these subjects, pupils in key stage 2 learn in a chronological order and develop a rich body of knowledge over time. However, this level of detail is not fully in place in all subjects. Leaders are aware of this and are

working to refine the remaining subjects. However, some of this work has been hampered due to recent staffing changes. Some subject leaders are new and have not had the necessary training and time to be able to implement and monitor curriculum revisions. This means that some pupils do not learn and remember what leaders expect them to.

Reading is prioritised across the school. Teachers read a range of ambitious texts to the pupils. Children make a quick start in learning to read in the early years. Leaders have implemented an ambitious and sequential phonics curriculum. Pupils read books that match the sounds they know. Leaders' and staff's actions help pupils to develop their phonics knowledge and become confident readers.

Teachers use a range of assessment strategies to check how well pupils remember their learning. However, sometimes, teachers do not use this assessment information to plan activities that build seamlessly on what pupils already know. This means that pupils do not always learn as well as they could.

Pupils with SEND are supported well. Leaders identify the needs their accurately. In lessons, they receive support that allows them to access work alongside their peers. Pupils with SEND are fully included in the life of the school and achieve well. For example, they represent the school in inclusive sports and take part in activities such as horse riding.

Children in early years benefit from a vibrant learning environment. Classrooms have been carefully crafted to support children's learning. Children engage in activities for sustained periods of time. They form very strong relationships with adults and their friends.

Pupils' personal development has been well considered. Leaders have thought carefully about how to develop pupils' skills and character beyond the classroom. Pupils have the opportunity to take part in a wide range of clubs, including maypole dancing, science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and sports clubs. This year, all pupils have benefitted by attending at least one club. Leaders build on these opportunities to develop pupils' individual talents. For example, pupils who took part in the 'voice confidence' club went on to take part in drama exams.

Pupils relish the different roles and responsibilities they are given, such as being school councillors, digital leaders or sports leaders. They learn about different religions, cultures and beliefs. They are respectful and tolerant. One pupil said, 'We have been taught to be respectful. Everyone is welcome here because everyone is the same on the inside.'

Leaders and governors are considerate of staff workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know pupils and their families well. Staff are well trained to identify pupils who are at possible risk of harm. When staff identify concerns, leaders act quickly to ensure that

pupils are safe. Leaders work effectively with partner agencies to provide support when needed.

Through the curriculum, pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including how to keep safe online. Pupils learn how to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy. They learn about establishing and maintaining healthy relationships.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers do not always use assessment information effectively enough to help pupils to learn well. This means that, at times, some of the activities that pupils complete do not build on what they already know. Staff need to ensure that they use assessment information effectively so that that activities carefully support pupils to learn what leaders intend.
- Some subject leaders have not had the training or opportunity to monitor and evaluate the impact of their work effectively. This means that they do not know how well their plans are supporting pupils' learning. Senior leaders need to ensure that all subject leaders have the training and opportunity to effectively measure the impact of their work.

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 school to be good in October 2012.

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	123407
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	10256972
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Michael Theobalds
Headteacher	Carl Litchfield
Website	www.muchwenlock.shropshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	10 October 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not use alternative provision.
- The school has a nursery that accepts two-year olds.
- The school operates its own before- and after-school club.
- The school has applied to join the 3 to 18 Education Trust, which it plans to join in April 2023.

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 the provider and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the provider.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about

their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also listened to a selection of pupils read to an adult.

- The inspector met with the designated safeguarding leader and checked documents relating to safeguarding, including the checks made on staff. The inspector also examined documentation relating to pupils' attendance and behaviour.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's parent questionnaire, Parent View, and the views of staff from Ofsted's online survey.

Inspection team

Eve Morris, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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