

Inspection of Daresbury Primary School

Chester Road, Daresbury, Warrington, Cheshire WA4 4AJ

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 March 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Ofsted has not previously inspected Daresbury Primary School as an academy school under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections.

Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection of the predecessor school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Daresbury Primary is a happy and welcoming school. Pupils feel cared for and safe. They said that staff know them well. Pupils described, with enthusiasm, the many things that they like about their school, especially the friends that they make. Year 6 pupils are proud to be buddies to children in the early years. Leaders address any instances of bullying swiftly.

Pupils' behaviour in class reflects leaders' high expectations and the school's values. Staff support pupils to build their confidence and independence. Pupils are polite, respectful and caring towards each other and adults. They strive to be 'kind, safe and ready' as staff expect.

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils to achieve well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). In the main, pupils achieve well.

Pupils make great strides in their personal development during their time at the school. They enjoy the trips and visits that capture their interest and support their learning. Pupils are proud to take on leadership opportunities such as being digital leaders, science ambassadors, members of the school council or becoming the school president, vice president or secretary. They are proud of their recent fundraising work for Turkey and Syria.

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

The current leadership team have made significant improvements to the curriculum. They have worked closely with leaders from across the multi-academy trust to design an ambitious curriculum for all pupils, including children in early years. However, some of this work is still quite new which means it is early days in terms of these curriculums being taught.

In some subjects, subject leaders play an increasingly active role in providing teachers with support and guidance. This helps to ensure that teachers are knowledgeable about the subjects that they teach. Consequently, teachers deliver the intended curriculum well. They help pupils to revisit and to recap important learning. Teachers use a range of appropriate strategies to ensure that pupils make secure connections between new and previously learned concepts and ideas. This helps pupils to build a deep body of knowledge over time. As a result, most pupils, including those with SEND, achieve well in these subjects.

Some subject leaders are not sufficiently skilled or confident in ensuring that their intended subject curriculums are delivered effectively. In these subjects, teachers are less confident in designing learning that helps pupils to learn the more ambitious subject content effectively. As a result, pupils are not able to apply what they know as confidently and independently as they do in other subjects.

Leaders have prioritised reading across the school. They have recently introduced a new phonics programme. This ensures that there is a sharp focus on early reading. Leaders' actions have begun to have a positive impact on pupils' phonic knowledge, including children in the early years. However, these changes are very recent. Staff are still building their expertise in the delivery of this curriculum.

Leaders have invested in new books to match the sounds that pupils are learning. Staff assess pupils' reading skills accurately. Trained staff provide additional support for those pupils who are not keeping up with the phonics programme. Across school, pupils are well motivated to read. They read often at home and in school.

Leaders ensure that all pupils are supported, including those with SEND. They know pupils well and identify pupils' additional needs swiftly. Staff support pupils with SEND effectively. As a result, pupils with SEND access the full curriculum.

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They enjoy learning and are keen to do their best. Classrooms are calm, purposeful places where pupils learn without disruption.

Leaders have thought carefully about how to support pupils' personal development. They provide pupils with a range of opportunities to develop as young citizens. For example, pupils learn to take care of their emotional and physical well-being. They show great care and consideration towards others. Pupils understand fundamental British values and diversity. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Trustees and governors monitor the development of important aspects of leaders' work. They have supported leaders to address historic weaknesses in the curriculum. Governors have an increased understanding of the curriculum and their oversight of it has improved. They are able to provide appropriate challenge and support.

Leaders are mindful of staff's workload and well-being. They have considered this when making recent significant changes to the curriculum. The vast majority of staff feel well supported by leaders. They recognise and appreciate the improvements that have been made and the impact that these are having on pupils' achievement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff receive regular safeguarding training so that they can recognise the signs which could indicate that pupils are at risk or suffering from harm. Leaders act on any concerns promptly. When necessary, leaders work with external agencies so that pupils get the help that they need. They make sure that all adults in school have had the appropriate checks before they start working at the school.

Through the curriculum, pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, they learn about ways to keep safe when they are online and when using a bike.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The new phonics curriculum is at an early stage of implementation. Staff are still in the process of building their confidence and expertise in delivering the new approach. Leaders should further support staff to deliver the new phonics curriculum confidently and consistently well.
- Training and support for leaders of some subjects are at an early stage. As a result, some subject leaders lack the necessary skills and confidence to drive further improvements in their subjects. Senior leaders, governors and trustees should provide these curriculum leaders with further training and support so they are equipped to lead their curriculum areas effectively.
- In some subjects, staff are at an early stage of implementing the school's recently refined curriculums. This means that pupils are at an early stage of developing the knowledge that they need in these subjects. Leaders should ensure that staff are supported to teach all aspects of these subject curriculums consistently well so that pupils are able to apply what they know in these subjects as confidently and independently as they do in other curriculum subjects.

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	143602
Local authority	Halton
Inspection number	10226362
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	197
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Helen Stevenson
Headteacher	Paul Holloway (Executive Headteacher)
Website	www.daresburyschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Daresbury Primary School converted to become an academy school in November 2016 and is part of The Heath Family (North West) multi-academy trust. When its predecessor school, Daresbury Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- From September 2022, a new head of school and a new executive headteacher have been appointed.
- The executive headteacher is also responsible for another primary school in the trust.
- A new deputy head of school was appointed from January 2023.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19

pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors conducted deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders and teachers. They visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' and children's work and talked with groups of pupils about their learning. The lead inspector observed pupils from key stage 1 and key stage 2 read to a familiar adult. Inspectors also spoke with pupils about their learning and evaluated their work in some other subjects.
- Inspectors spoke with the chief executive officer of the trust, members of the governing body, the headteacher and other school leaders. The lead inspector also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors talked with staff about their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors met with the leaders who are responsible for attendance, behaviour, early years, SEND and pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors reviewed leaders' policies and procedures to keep pupils safe. They discussed safeguarding arrangements with leaders and staff. Inspectors also checked the single central record.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about safeguarding and their wider experience of school. Inspectors looked at a range of policies and documents related to pupils' and children's welfare and education. They observed pupils' and children's behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.
- Inspectors met with parents and carers at the start of the school day and took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.

Inspection team

Rebecca Jewitt, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sue Dymond

Ofsted 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 2023