

Inspection of a good school: Melling Primary School

Wheeler Drive, Melling, Liverpool, Merseyside L31 1DA

Inspection dates:

21 and 22 March 2023

Outcome

Melling Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils treat each other with respect at this school. They are expected to do this as part of 'The Melling Way'. Pupils have impeccable manners. They willingly help out around school. Every pupil in school has a specific responsibility, like looking after a younger pupil or handing out books in class. This helps pupils to feel part of their school community. Pupils are proud of their school. In turn, staff are proud of the pupils.

Leaders have high expectations for every pupil, including those with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This contributes to pupils' strong achievement.

Pupils are happy and safe. Behaviour in lessons and around school is calm. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong. Pupils' behaviour at breaktimes is very positive. For example, pupils demonstrate excellent sportsmanship when playing football. Staff at all levels are consistent in their approach to managing behaviour. If bullying does happen, leaders deal with it effectively.

Pupils value the wide range of extra-curricular clubs and activities, including residential trips, that are on offer. Pupils enjoy these experiences which help to build up their resilience. Pupils leave school well-prepared for the next stage of their learning.

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

Leaders have created an aspirational curriculum. Leaders and teachers work together to ensure that the curriculum is relevant and meaningful to pupils.

In most subjects, leaders have made it clear to teachers what should be taught and when this should happen. In doing so, pupils know more and remember more of their learning. However, in a few subjects, staff are less sure about what essential knowledge should be taught. Pupils do not develop a deep enough understanding of these subjects.

Leaders provide supportive resources and guidance for teachers. This allows them to deliver the intended curriculum well. Teachers ensure that pupils revisit concepts often so that they can recall what they have learned and make links when learning something new.

Pupils with SEND are identified quickly. They receive effective support in class and are provided with specialist support if needed. Pupils with SEND have access to the same curriculum as their peers.

Pupils read a wide range of books. This helps them to develop a love of reading. Pupils have reading books that are matched to the sounds that they know. Children in the Reception class become confident early readers. They are well prepared to develop their phonics knowledge further when they reach Year 1. Pupils who struggle to keep up with the phonics programme receive immediate support. This allows most pupils to become fluent readers over time. However, some staff have not received up-to-date phonics training. This hinders their ability to address pupils' misconceptions in lessons.

Pupils are keen learners and disruption in lessons is rare. Pupils have a positive attitude to their education. They are committed to their learning and they are resilient to setbacks. Pupils work well independently and when working with others.

Pupils' personal development is promoted well. Pupils understand how to look after their physical and mental health. Many pupils are active at breaktimes and enjoy competing for their school in different sports teams. Pupils learn about a range of inspirational and diverse people as part of their curriculum. This helps them to develop into respectful and responsible young citizens.

Governors are skilled and knowledgeable. They have an accurate understanding of the strengths and areas for development of the school. Leaders are considerate of staff's workload and well-being. All staff spoken to said that they enjoy working at this school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. For example, they learn about online safety and are alert to the signs of grooming.

Leaders ensure that safeguarding has a high profile. All staff and governors receive up-to-date safeguarding training. This helps staff and governors to remain vigilant and identify pupils who are at risk of harm. Leaders liaise effectively with safeguarding agencies and put support in place quickly for those who need it.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some staff have not received suitable training to deliver the phonics programme. This can hinder the progress that some pupils make when learning to read. Leaders should ensure that all staff have the phonics training that they need so that they can support pupils to become fluent readers.
- In some subjects, leaders have not refined the essential knowledge they want pupils to know and remember. This hinders some teachers from designing appropriate learning for pupils. As a result, pupils do not develop a deep enough understanding of some aspects of the curriculum. In these subjects, leaders should ensure that teachers know the key knowledge that pupils must learn.

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 2011.

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	104889
Local authority	Sefton
Inspection number	10240229
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	216
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brian Lawlor
Headteacher	Vivienne Ainsworth-Brown
Website	www.mellingprimaryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	6 June 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, a new chair of governors has been appointed.
- Leaders do not use 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 his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and members of staff.
- The inspector met with members of the governing body.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documentation, including that relating to safeguarding. The inspector also spoke to staff about safeguarding and their workload and well-being.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour as they moved around the school, in class and in the outdoor play areas.

- The inspector spoke with parents as they dropped their children off at school. He considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. The inspector also considered the responses to Ofsted’s online surveys for staff and for pupils.
- The inspector conducted 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, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at a sample of pupils’ work. The inspector also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.

Inspection team

James Marsh, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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