

Inspection of a good school: Hursthead Junior School

Kirkstead Road, Cheadle Hulme, Cheadle, Cheshire SK8 7PZ

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 April 2023

Outcome

Hursthead Junior School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They especially like the different leadership roles they can take on. For example, the pupils who act as restorative ambassadors make a significant contribution to resolving minor playground disagreements. Pupils behave well because of the high expectations that staff set for their conduct. Pupils have excellent relationships, both with staff and with each other. Teachers address instances of name calling and bullying instantly. Pupils know from experience that leaders' actions prevent unpleasant behaviour from happening again.

Pupils are safe in school. They feel reassured by the nurturing approach of staff. Pupils know that they can share any worries or concerns with a trusted adult.

Pupils achieve well because of the high expectations that leaders set for all pupils' learning, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Parents, carers and pupils value the diverse range of clubs, which offer something for everyone, such as a business and enterprise club and a knitting club. Pupils are also proud of the school's strong sporting heritage.

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

Senior leaders have ensured that there is a well-crafted curriculum in place across all subjects. Teachers follow the curriculum carefully so that they design learning that helps pupils to build on what they already know. Teachers question pupils effectively to check on their knowledge before moving on to new content. Teachers also ensure that they verify what pupils have learned at the end of each unit of work to help inform the way in which their next steps in learning are taught. However, in a small number of subjects, some pupils cannot remember some essential subject knowledge. Pupils, instead, recall the activity they have done, rather than what they have learned. This is because teachers

are sometimes not clear about what pupils are expected to learn. Nevertheless, this does not prevent pupils from achieving well in subjects across the curriculum.

Leaders have put in place an effective phonics curriculum to support pupils with gaps in their early reading knowledge. Teachers are adept in identifying pupils who need extra help and at putting effective support in place so that pupils catch up. Older pupils read with intonation and a deeper understanding of the texts they have read. They enjoy the texts they read and have developed a love of reading for pleasure.

Pupils are keen to learn. They work well together and focus on their work. There is no disruption to learning.

Leaders provide a wealth of opportunities to support pupils' personal development. Whether through sports leadership, representing the school council or being mental health champions, pupils develop their confidence and a strong sense of achievement when helping others. Pupils are proud of their school and are positive about the way in which leaders turn their suggestions into actions. Leaders have put in place a wide range of imaginative opportunities for pupils to learn about other cultures and faiths, such as through a link with a school in Taiwan for Year 3 pupils. Pupils understand equalities well. There is a strong focus on ensuring that all pupils are valued and that they appreciate each other's individuality.

Pupils' additional needs are identified early. Pupils with SEND receive highly effective support. Leaders place a strong emphasis on removing barriers to learning so that pupils with SEND can access the same curriculum as other pupils.

Trustees, governors and leaders are united by the same vision of pursuing excellence. They have an accurate view of the school and have an unwavering focus for continually improving the provision for pupils. Staff are all on board with the direction that the school is taking. The vast majority appreciate the support they are given for their workload and for the way in which senior leaders look after their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have clear systems in place to help identify any pupils who may be at risk of harm. Staff are provided with comprehensive training and regular safeguarding updates and, as such, are well informed. Staff adopt a positive attitude of 'it could happen here' to remain highly vigilant.

Leaders ensure that support for pupils is put in place at an early stage to prevent any issues from escalating. Leaders engage well with other agencies, such as when securing early help for pupils and their families where needed.

Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe, including on social media or when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, teachers do not make it clear what essential knowledge they want pupils to learn. As such, these pupils cannot remember some key subject-specific knowledge they will need for their future learning. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum design is refined so that pupils have a better understanding of what they are learning to achieve even higher standards.

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 school to be good in December 2017.

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	140925
Local authority	Stockport
Inspection number	10256201
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	360
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of trust	Tim Scott-Wilson
Headteacher	Tracy Kendrick
Website	www.hursthead-jun.stockport.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	6 and 7 December 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of The Kirkstead Education Trust.
- Since the previous inspection, all senior leaders have changed their roles and approximately half of the teaching staff are new to the school.
- Since the previous inspection, all trustees, and all but one governor, are new to their roles.
- Leaders do not make use of 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 their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. 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 heard pupils read individually and as part of classroom activities.

- The inspector also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in other subjects and spoke with pupils about their work in these subjects.
- The inspector took into account the views of those who responded to the Ofsted parent questionnaire, Parent View.
- The inspector also took into account the responses to Ofsted's staff survey and pupil survey.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, at breaktimes and when walking round the school. He discussed behaviour and bullying with pupils, senior leaders and other staff.
- The inspector spoke with pupils and leaders about the provision in place for pupils' personal development.
- The inspector met with different groups of pupils to ask them about safeguarding. The inspector reviewed documentation, which included the school's safeguarding policy, register of the checks carried out on new employees and safeguarding records.

Inspection team

Steve Bentham, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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