

Inspection of a good school: Haslington Primary Academy

Crewe Road, Haslington, Crewe, Cheshire CW1 5SL

Inspection dates:

25 and 26 May 2023

Outcome

Haslington Primary Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, including children in the early years, are proud to belong to this welcoming school community. Strong, warm and caring relationships characterise this school. Pupils show high levels of respect for staff and understand the importance of being kind to each other. They are happy to attend school. Pupils told the inspector that they value the many friendships that they have with their peers.

Pupils enjoy learning. They work hard to meet the high expectations that leaders and staff have of their academic achievement and personal development. Most pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well in many subjects.

Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. As a result, pupils behave well in and around the school. They trust that staff will help them if they have any concerns. Pupils are kind and make sure that they include everyone. If bullying should happen, leaders deal with it quickly. This helps pupils to feel safe.

Pupils take advantage of the wide range of enrichment activities on offer. They like attending after-school clubs, which range from photography to creative writing. They also value their leadership roles in the school, for example as school counsellors and buddies.

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

Leaders and governors have led the school very effectively through a considerable period of turbulence in staffing. With the support of the trust, which took over the school in April 2021, leaders have taken swift action to improve the quality of education at a rapid pace. Leaders, trustees and governors have not shied away from making difficult decisions to ensure that the school is on a pathway to success.

Leaders have created an ambitious, broad curriculum, which they review regularly. They have thought carefully about how to design the curriculum so that it can be implemented

effectively for mixed-age classes. The curriculum builds pupils' knowledge progressively and connects subjects well. Leaders and staff have considered how the curriculum can meet the needs of all pupils, especially pupils with SEND. The curriculum in the early years is particularly well designed. Leaders and teachers have identified what children in the early years need to know so that they are well prepared for key stage 1.

Teachers deliver the planned curriculum well and have strong subject knowledge. They regularly check that pupils have made links with their prior learning and they take time to help them to address misconceptions. As a result, pupils achieve well.

In many subjects, leaders check and evaluate what is working well in their subjects. This helps them to refine and develop the curriculum further. However, this is not consistent. In some subjects, leaders are relatively new to their role. Because of this, they have not had enough opportunity to assess the impact of their curriculum design on what pupils know and remember.

Leaders have ensured that there is a systematic approach to the teaching of phonics that begins as soon as the children start school in the Reception Year. Staff use their high-quality training to teach reading effectively. Pupils have regular opportunities to practise their reading and writing skills. Teachers make sure that pupils who are struggling to read get extra help quickly.

Throughout the school, most pupils enjoy reading and achieve well. In most year groups, including in the early years, staff share a wide range of literature with pupils. However, in a few classes, staff do not ensure that pupils get enough opportunity to practise reading across a diverse range of genres and authors. This means that some pupils do not develop a strong love of reading. This holds back the learning of some older pupils.

Pupils with SEND have access to the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. Leaders and staff identify these pupils' needs quickly. They put appropriate support in place to ensure that they succeed. This includes the use of additional resources and appropriately adapted tasks.

Staff make sure that they apply behaviour routines and expectations consistently across the school. Pupils are very polite and courteous to adults and each other. They have strong attitudes to learning and work hard in lessons. Disruption to learning is very rare.

Leaders think carefully about providing for pupils' personal development. All pupils, including pupils with SEND, benefit from a rich set of experiences, such as trips to museums and theatres.

Pupils understand the importance of maintaining healthy relationships. Through the curriculum, they gain an appreciation of our diverse society. They respect and value differences between themselves and others.

Staff are highly positive about the support and consideration that they receive from school leaders. There is a strong culture of teamwork among the staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders take their safeguarding responsibilities seriously. They have created a strong culture of safeguarding. They provide regular training and updates for staff. This means that staff are quick to identify any pupils who may be at risk of harm. Leaders and staff know pupils and their families well. They work with external agencies to ensure that both receive the early help they may need.

Safeguarding is woven through the curriculum. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe in different situations. For example, when they are online or in the community.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A few subject leaders are relatively new to their role. They have not had enough opportunity to assess the impact of their curriculum design on what pupils know and remember. This means that these leaders do not know if teachers are implementing the curriculum consistently well. Senior leaders should make sure that subject leaders conduct these checks to ensure maximum impact on pupils' achievement.
- Leaders do not make sure that all pupils read a wide range of literature by a diverse mix of authors. This hinders some pupils from developing a love of reading and achieving as well as they could. Leaders should make sure that pupils experience a broad range of texts to help promote their desire to read often.

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, Haslington Primary School, to be good in February 2013.

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	148487
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	10283662
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	305
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Alan Guilford
Principal	Donna Mitchell
Website	www.haslington.cheshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision for pupils.
- Haslington Primary Academy converted to become an academy school in April 2021. When its predecessor school, Haslington Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school is part of the Alexandra Academy Trust.
- The school provides part-time funded places for two- to four-year-old children.

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 her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector met with leaders, discussed curriculums, visited a sample of lessons, met with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and reviewed samples of pupils' work. She also observed pupils from Year 1 to Year 3 reading to a familiar adult.

- The inspector considered other subjects in the school's curriculum. She talked to the leaders of these subjects. She also spoke to pupils about their learning in these subjects.
- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher, other leaders and staff.
- The inspector met with governors, including the chair of the governing body and the chair of trustees. She also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector spoke with different groups of pupils to gather their views about the school and held discussions about their behaviour and learning. She also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at playtime.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. She spoke to several parents at the start of the school day. The inspector also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.
- The inspector met with those responsible for safeguarding at the school. She scrutinised a range of documents in relation to safeguarding and spoke with governors, staff, parents and pupils about safeguarding.
- The inspector considered a range of documents provided by school leaders and staff. These included the school development plan, minutes of governing body meetings, headteacher's reports and the leaders' self-evaluation document.

Inspection team

Julie Barlow, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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