

Inspection of Upton Westlea Primary School

Upton Westlea Primary School, Weston Grove, Upton-by-Chester, Chester, Cheshire
CH2 1QJ

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 June 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

There is a warm and caring culture at Upton Westlea Primary School. Pupils say that they feel safe and there are always staff to talk to if they have any worries. Many parents and carers appreciate leaders' actions to understand and meet their children's needs. For example, pupils who join the school late and their families are well supported so that they can be fully involved in the life of the school.

Pupils are polite. They learn about respect for others and make new pupils and visitors welcome. They value the frequent opportunities to work with their parents in school.

Pupils enjoy their lessons. They work hard and want to do well. Pupils comment that staff help them to rebuild their relationships when they fall out with each other. Staff deal with the rare incidents of bullying quickly and effectively.

Leaders have high aspirations for pupils' learning across most of the curriculum. However, there are gaps in pupils' knowledge across a range of subjects. They do not learn as well as they should.

Pupils enjoy helping to make their school a better place. They are proud of the roles that they have within school. They feel that they are making the school a better place.

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

Leaders are ambitious for what pupils can achieve. They have prioritised the improvement of the curriculum, starting with English, mathematics and the early years. They have provided training to improve teachers' subject knowledge in reading and mathematics. The new phonics and mathematics curriculums are supporting teachers to improve pupils' learning. Where pupils have fallen behind in reading, they are provided with support that helps them to catch up.

In other subjects, improvements are at an early stage. In these subjects, leaders are only just beginning to define the precise detail of what they want pupils to know and when this key knowledge should be taught. Where curriculum thinking is underdeveloped, it does not enable precise checks to be made on pupils' learning. Additionally, teachers do not always provide pupils with appropriate activities to enable pupils to know more and remember more over time.

Leaders have prioritised reading. This starts in the early years, where children listen to stories and rhymes and have access to a wide range of books. Leaders have responded to low outcomes in phonics checks in 2022. The new early reading programme has improved pupils' reading accuracy. Leaders have provided staff with clear guidance about the teaching of phonics. This means that teachers know which sounds to teach and when to teach them. However the books that pupils take home

are not well matched to the sounds that children learn in class. This hinders pupils when they are practising their reading.

The needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified as early as possible when they join the school. Staff work closely with outside agencies and specialist providers to ensure that pupils with SEND receive the support that they need. This allows pupils in mainstream classes to access the same curriculum as their classmates. Pupils in the provision for pupils with autism have a bespoke curriculum that is delivered by well-trained staff and meets their needs. These pupils are involved in school life. They access assemblies, some breaktimes and some of the visits arranged by teachers across the school.

Children settle quickly when they join the school. Across the early years, clear routines help children to work and play safely and purposefully. Staff support children to develop their play and build their vocabulary. The new curriculum ensures children are prepared for Year 1.

Pupils are polite, welcoming and have positive attitudes towards their learning. Most pupils take pride in their work. Leaders make sure that there is a calm and orderly environment. Learning is rarely disrupted.

Leaders promote pupils' personal, social and health education and personal development well. Pupils can explain how to stay healthy and fit. Pupils enjoy learning about people from different faiths and cultures, and they have respect for different beliefs. Leaders promote high aspirations for pupils. This includes access to a careers fair where pupils learn about jobs linked to their interests.

Governors are committed to the school and its pupils. They understand the school and the community it serves well. They are aware of the school's strengths and know what needs to improve.

Staff feel supported. They appreciate the professional support and training they receive. They value leaders' work to improve their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Issues in the local community and in school are identified and monitored. Leaders ensure that staff are well trained. They know how to identify pupils who may be at risk of harm.

Staff report and record welfare concerns diligently. Records are meticulously maintained. Leaders follow up on any safeguarding concerns appropriately. Leaders work closely with local support agencies to get pupils and their families help when needed.

Staff teach pupils about the risks that they may face in the local community and how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, leaders have not identified the most important knowledge they want pupils to learn and the order in which it should be taught. As a result, it is difficult for teachers to know what to teach and when they should teach it. It is also hard for teachers to check that pupils have learned all that they should. This means that pupils are not learning in sufficient depth in these subjects. Leaders should ensure that, in all subjects, teachers know what key knowledge should be taught and the order in which it should be delivered. Leaders should also ensure that strategies are developed that help teachers to check that this key knowledge is being remembered.
- In some subjects, teachers sometimes do not provide pupils with work that enables pupils to learn well. As a result, pupils sometimes do not understand and retain key knowledge sufficiently well. Leaders should ensure that teachers have the skills to deliver all subjects effectively.
- Teachers do not ensure that the books selected for pupils to read match the sounds that the pupils have learned. This hinders how well pupils learn to read. Leaders should ensure that teachers choose the books that closely match the sounds that pupils know.

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	111100
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	10256050
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	198
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Josette Foster
Headteacher	Kathryn Carruthers
Website	www.uptonwestleapprimary.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	21 and 22 November 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The deputy headteacher has been the acting headteacher since January 2023.
- The local authority has arranged support for leaders, including support from a local school.
- Governors provide breakfast and after-school clubs.
- The school has resourced provision for pupils with autism.

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. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with subject

leaders, discussed the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work.

- The inspectors also considered the curriculum in art, history, science and writing.
- Inspectors studied a range of documents, including the school’s self-evaluation, the school development plan, attendance data, minutes of governing body meetings and reports from the local authority. The lead inspector met with the local authority adviser to the school.
- Inspectors observed pupils’ behaviour throughout the school day, including during lesson visits and at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils about their views on behaviour and the wider experiences they receive at school.
- Inspectors met with the leaders responsible for early years and SEND and looked at a range of documents and planning.
- Inspectors held meetings with leaders, including the acting headteacher, curriculum leaders, the special educational needs coordinator and governors.
- The inspectors reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding by scrutinising records and through discussions with leaders, staff and pupils.
- The views of pupils, parents and staff were gathered through discussions and by considering their responses to Ofsted’s online surveys.

Inspection team

Keith Pullen, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Valmai Roberts

Ofsted Inspector

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