

Inspection of Thatto Heath Community Primary School

Hobart Street, Thatto Heath, St Helens, Merseyside WA9 5QX

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 October 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Thatto Heath Community Primary School embody the school's values of being ready, respectful and safe. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), appreciate the strong relationships that they have with staff. Pupils told inspectors that they feel happy and safe in school.

The school has high expectations of pupils' achievement. Pupils work hard in lessons and they try their best to succeed. As a result of pupils' hard work, typically they achieve well across a range of subjects.

Pupils are friendly and respectful towards adults and towards each other. They are eager to talk about what they have been learning. Disruption to pupils' learning is uncommon. Should any poor behaviour happen, pupils trust adults to deal with it quickly.

Pupils are offered a wide range of opportunities that successfully enhance their personal development. These activities include visiting speakers, and access to many extra-curricular clubs, such as sewing and rugby. Pupils also enjoy plentiful opportunities to learn to play musical instruments and to perform. For example, they learn to play brass instruments and the choir performs at the local church. These experiences help to broaden pupils' horizons.

Pupils are proud to be awarded positions of responsibility, for example as eco councillors, mini-police officers and librarians. They carry out these roles diligently.

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

The school has ensured that there is a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum on offer to pupils from the early years to Year 6. Across subjects, and in the early years, the school has identified the important knowledge that it wants pupils to learn and by when. Overall, this knowledge is delivered in a logical order. As a result of a well-designed curriculum, children in the early years are suitably prepared for the demands of Year 1. Pupils in key stage 2 are typically ready for secondary school.

The school places great importance on ongoing staff training. This training ensures that staff have secure subject knowledge and that they feel confident to teach the curriculum consistently well. As a result of this training, staff prepare carefully chosen activities that help most pupils to successfully learn new topics and concepts.

In most subjects, staff skilfully use assessment systems to identify and to address any gaps in pupils' learning. In these subjects, teachers and other staff are adept at rectifying any misconceptions or misunderstandings that pupils may have. Typically, this ensures that the majority of pupils have secure foundations on which to build new learning. However, in a few other subjects, the school has not put secure enough systems in place to help teachers to check what pupils remember from their

previous learning. On occasion, this hinders how well some pupils acquire new knowledge.

The school has successfully cultivated a love of reading. For example, each class visits the local library regularly. Furthermore, each classroom has a designated reading area, where pupils enjoy picking up a book to read for pleasure.

Children in the Reception classes learn to read through the well-delivered phonics programme. Staff are expertly trained in the teaching of phonics. They quickly identify any pupil who is struggling to learn to read. Staff provide suitable additional support to help pupils to catch up. Pupils practise their reading using books that match their phonics knowledge. As a result, most pupils learn to read confidently by the end of Year 2.

Overall, the school identifies the additional needs of pupils with SEND quickly and accurately. In the main, staff successfully adapt the delivery of the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils with SEND, including those with more complex needs. On occasion, however, a small number of pupils do not access the same breadth and depth of curriculum knowledge as their peers. This prevents a few pupils with SEND from being as fully prepared as they could be for the next stages of their education. Pupils, including children in the early years, behave well. They are well mannered and considerate of each other's views. Pupils enjoy socialising with one another.

The school has created a carefully designed programme to promote pupils' personal development. For example, pupils successfully learn how to look after their physical and mental health. Pupils also know that extra support is available from the school's welfare team, should they require it.

Pupils have a secure understanding of equalities. They respect and welcome those people from different cultures or those who have customs different to their own. Pupils participate annually in national events to develop their understanding of democracy and the rule of law.

Governors understand their statutory duties and they fulfil their responsibilities effectively. They routinely challenge and hold the leadership team to account for the quality of education that pupils receive.

Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the support that they receive from leaders to manage their workload and to protect their well-being. For example, when leaders revise school policies, they measure the potential impact on staff's workload.

The school has worked closely with parents and carers to improve pupils' attendance. As a result, the vast majority of pupils attend school regularly.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, the school's assessment systems have not been finalised. On occasion, this hinders how well staff identify and address any gaps in pupils' learning in these subjects. The school should ensure that it finalises its systems to check how well pupils are learning new knowledge and information.
- From time to time, a few pupils with SEND do not access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. This means that these pupils are not as well prepared for the next stage of their education as they could be. The school should ensure that pupils with SEND learn the breadth of knowledge that they need across the curriculum to be fully prepared for their next steps.

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' is used to mean pupils with SEND; pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	104763
Local authority	St Helens
Inspection number	10294200
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	610
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Anthony Tucker
Headteacher	Catherine Ireland
Website	www.thattoheath.st-helens.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	27 September 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school makes use of alternative provision for a small number of pupils.
- The school has provision for two-year-old children. However, there were none on roll at the time of this inspection.

Information about this inspection

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

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- During the inspection, the lead inspector met with the headteacher, other senior leaders and staff. She met with members of the governing body, including the

chair of governors. The lead inspector also spoke with a representative of the local authority.

- The lead inspector spoke with the headteacher of an alternative provider that the school uses.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentation, including the school improvement plan and documentation relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, history, physical education, science and music. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also considered the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector listened to some pupils read to a trusted adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes. They also spoke with pupils about their experiences of school.
- Inspectors spoke with a group of parents while pupils were arriving at school.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.
- Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Ruth Moran, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Barbara Dutton	Ofsted Inspector
John Hanley	Ofsted Inspector
Lisa Littler	Ofsted Inspector

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