

Inspection of a good school: Woolston Community Primary School

Barnfield Road, Woolston, Warrington, Cheshire WA1 4NW

Inspection dates:

12 and 13 September 2023

Outcome

Woolston Community Primary School continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Craig Burgess. This school is part of One Community Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Gary Cunningham, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Julie Bennion.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel included at this caring school community. They value and embrace difference. They also appreciate and welcome pupils who are part of the specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). At social times, the playground is an oasis of calm. Pupils of all ages mix well together. They engage in a variety of carefully considered activities. These include adventures on the climbing frame, ball games and imaginative play.

Pupils are happy to come to school each day. They are eager to learn. The school is clear about how it expects pupils to behave. Pupils, including those with SEND, live up to these high expectations. They display positive attitudes in class. The school has high expectations for pupils' achievement. Pupils fulfil these expectations and achieve well across the curriculum.

The school caters for a wide range of pupils' interests. Pupils are enthusiastic about attending the plethora of clubs available, such as science, street dance and rugby. The school actively encourages pupils to be responsible citizens. For instance, pupils on the school council worked with a local organisation to raise awareness of air pollution in order to improve air quality around the school.

The school regularly consults with parents and carers and takes their views into account. There is a strong home school partnership. Parents are extremely positive about how the school helps their child to thrive both academically and socially.

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

The school is ambitious for pupils. The school's broad and effective curriculum builds successfully on pupils' learning from the Reception Year to Year 6. The school has identified the essential knowledge that pupils need to learn and the order in which it should be taught. Teachers deliver information clearly and design appropriate activities which help pupils to learn. Teachers check whether pupils have understood and remembered what they have learned. Consequently, in most subjects, pupils make links with what they have learned previously. This helps them to know more and remember more. However, in a small number of subjects, some teachers do not regularly check what pupils understand. As a result, misconceptions and gaps in their knowledge are not addressed.

The school has ensured that teachers have the relevant skills and knowledge to be able to present information clearly to pupils. Nevertheless, the school knows that there is more work to do to ensure that the subject-specific vocabulary is used consistently well by teachers and understood by pupils. At times, pupils lack the vocabulary they need to be able to articulate their learning clearly.

Reading is a key priority for the school. Children start to learn phonics as soon as they join the Reception Year. Staff are well trained to deliver the phonics programme. The school puts timely support in place for pupils who struggle with reading. This helps them to catch up quickly. Furthermore, there is an ambitious range of high-quality texts that pupils read. Pupils are encouraged to read for pleasure. As a result, they speak excitedly about their favourite authors. This includes children in the Reception Year. The school's actions lead to pupils developing into confident and fluent readers.

Pupils' additional needs are identified swiftly. Staff receive the information and training that they need to help them to adapt learning. As a result, pupils with SEND learn the curriculum successfully. Furthermore, pupils in the specially resourced provision are well prepared for the next steps in their education. Where appropriate, there are carefully planned opportunities for those in the Owl and Owlet classes to learn and play alongside their peers.

Pupils benefit from strong and caring relationships with staff. They are polite and respectful. Pupils move sensibly around the school. Learning is rarely disrupted by pupils' behaviour. In the Reception Year, children learn to follow simple routines. This helps them to get off to a flying start in school.

The school's values are threaded through the curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 1 talk about why discrimination is wrong. Pupils benefit from well-thought-out activities, including trips and visits, which widen their experiences of the world. Much emphasis is placed on the importance of being a good citizen. To this end, pupils contribute positively to their school and local community, such as acting as play leaders for younger pupils.

The trust places great emphasis on staff well-being. Staff appreciate the consideration that the school gives to their work-life balance. Ready-made resources have eased staff

workload. Staff said that they are happy working in the school. The trustees and governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- On occasions, in a few subjects, teachers do not identify misconceptions or gaps in pupils' learning. As a result, some pupils struggle to make links with new learning. The school should ensure that teachers check how well pupils have learned and remembered essential knowledge before moving on to new learning.
- In a small number of subjects, teachers do not ensure that pupils know and understand subject-specific vocabulary. When this happens, pupils' understanding of key concepts in these subjects is not as clear as it could be. The school should help teachers to ensure that pupils know, understand and use subject-specific vocabulary fluently to articulate their learning.

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 predecessor school, Woolston Community Primary School, to be good in April 2015.

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	147388
Local authority	Warrington
Inspection number	10291440
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	233
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Julie Bennion
CEO of the trust	Gary Cunningham
Headteacher	Craig Burgess
Website	www.woolstoncp.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of the One Community Trust.
- The school is registered to host a specially resourced provision on behalf of the local authority for up to 16 pupils with autism. There are currently 19 pupils, aged 4 to 11, who are part of this provision.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision for pupils.
- Woolston Community Primary School converted to become an academy school in September 2019. When its predecessor school, Woolston Community Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection that the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.

- The inspector met with the headteacher, members of the trust board, the CEO and the chair of governors. The inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, history and mathematics. For each deep dive, the inspector 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.
- The inspector also discussed the quality of the curriculum in some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector 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.
- The inspector listened to pupils in key stage 1 and key stage 2 read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector spoke to pupils about their views of the school, behaviour and bullying.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including any free-text responses. She also considered the responses to Ofsted's survey for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Jenny Jones, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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