

Inspection of a good school: Upton Priory School

Berwick Close, Off Prestbury Road, Macclesfield, Cheshire SK10 3ED

Inspection dates:

30 and 31 January 2024

Outcome

Upton Priory School continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Emma Ransom. This school is part of the Fallibroome Trust, which means other people in the trust also have the responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Jeremy Spencer, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Mike Gorton.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love attending Upton Priory School. They enjoy the warm welcome that they receive from staff each morning. Pupils understand and embody the school's values of respect, cooperation, pride and resilience. They know that these qualities will help them to succeed in school and in later life.

The school has high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Pupils typically work hard to meet these expectations. They are proud to be awarded with house points and certificates that recognise their efforts. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well across the curriculum.

Pupils conduct themselves well across school. They are polite, respectful and kind towards others. Pupils have developed strong learning behaviours. In lessons, they work hard and listen attentively to their teachers. Pupils play competitive games with respect for each other on the playground.

The school provides many opportunities that help pupils to learn beyond the academic curriculum. Pupils choose from a vast choice of clubs and activities. They take part in a range of exciting trips. The school aims for pupils to be aspirational for their future lives. People from a variety of professions visit the school to talk to pupils about their careers. For example, a recent visitor caused great excitement when they spoke about their job studying volcanoes across the world.

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

The school has designed a broad and balanced curriculum. It is ambitious for pupils, including those with SEND. The school has ensured that pupils' learning builds from the

early years in all subjects. This helps to prepare children in the Reception class for their learning in Year 1. However, in some subjects, pupils have gaps in the important knowledge that they should know and remember. This is because, until recently, teachers did not focus closely enough in lessons on the precise knowledge that pupils should learn. As a result, pupils sometimes struggle to recall and build on their previous learning.

The trust provides teachers with comprehensive training. This equips them with the expertise that they need to select appropriate activities and to present information clearly to help pupils to learn. Subject-specific vocabulary has a high priority across all classes. This means that pupils are confident in their use of this vocabulary.

The school has made reading a priority. Communication and language are a key feature of children's learning in the Nursery class. Staff use a range of engaging books and conversations to help promote language skills. Children are well prepared to begin learning phonics as soon as they enter the Reception class. Staff are well trained to deliver the phonics programme. They regularly check that pupils are keeping pace with their learning in phonics. Staff support pupils who struggle with reading to catch up quickly. The school fosters pupils reading for pleasure. Pupils read widely and often. They spoke with enthusiasm about the high-quality books in their new library. Pupils enjoy listening to their teachers read to them at the end of the school day.

Pupils' levels of attendance are high. They value their education and show a positive attitude to school. Pupils enjoy learning. Classrooms are well-resourced, calm environments.

The school quickly identifies the additional needs of pupils with SEND. Staff know how to adapt the delivery of the curriculum so that pupils with SEND learn well. The school works with a range of other agencies to provide specialist support when required. Pupils with SEND achieve well.

Pupils know that everybody should be treated with respect, regardless of differences that they may have, such as their religion, culture or background. They are taught about the importance of regular exercise and healthy eating. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe both outside school and online. They understand the importance of democracy in society and the role that voting plays in their own school. Pupils carry out their responsibilities, such as school councillors, with pride and diligence.

The trust and the local governing body work well together to support and challenge the school on the high-quality education that it provides for pupils. The trust provides staff with many opportunities to collaborate with other schools to share best practice. Staff appreciate the consideration given to their workload and well-being. For example, the trust has recently introduced a new assessment system to reduce unnecessary burdens on staff's workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, pupils have gaps in their learning. This is because, until recently, teachers did not focus closely enough on the most important knowledge that pupils must learn. Some pupils struggle to recall earlier learning as a result. The school should ensure that gaps in knowledge are identified so that pupils can overcome any barriers that prevent them from building a secure body of knowledge over time.

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 2018.

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	142513
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	10314047
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	333
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mike Gorton
CEO of trust	Jeremy Spencer
Headteacher	Emma Ransom
Website	www.uptonpriory.cheshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4 December 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, a new deputy headteacher has been appointed.
- The school is part of the Fallibroome multi-academy trust.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision for pupils.
- The trustees manage the before- and after-school provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection 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 his evaluation of the school.
- 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 met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and members of the senior leadership team. The inspector also met with the CEO, trustees and the chair of governors.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, science and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The inspector spoke with staff to discuss their workload and well-being.
- The inspector spoke to parents at the start of the school day and considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. There were no responses to Ofsted's online staff and pupil surveys to consider.
- The inspector listened to some pupils from Years 1 to 3 read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at playtimes and lunchtimes. The inspector also spoke with pupils about school life.

Inspection team

John Tomlinson, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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