

# Inspection of Aston by Sutton Primary School

Aston Lane, Aston, Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 3DB

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Inspection dates: 13 and 14 February 2024

**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 feel proud to belong to this small, friendly school. They appreciate the kind and caring nature of staff and their peers. The school's values of respect, inspire and achieve underpin pupils' everyday actions. Newcomers to the school community are warmly welcomed. Pupils celebrate the differences between people.

Pupils, including children in the early years, rise to their teachers' high expectations for behaviour in lessons and during social times. Sanctions are rarely needed. Pupils develop a strong moral compass and support one another well. Pupils feel happy and safe at school.

The school is aspirational for all pupils. To this end, pupils strive to achieve their potential in all the subjects that they study. Pupils take pride in their work, and many achieve well across a range of subjects. Teachers motivate pupils to do their best.

The school offers pupils a wide range of opportunities to spark their interests and knowledge, as well as to develop their confidence. For example, all pupils in Years 2 to 6 experience a residential visit, which helps to build their resilience and independence.

Pupils relish the variety of extra-curricular clubs on offer to them, such as archery and choir. Pupils regularly take part in fundraising events in school and in the local community.

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

The school has acted quickly to address the issues raised at the previous inspection. In most subjects, there is now an ambitious and well-designed curriculum from the early years to Year 6. The school has ensured that in these subjects, there are clear expectations as to what pupils should learn and when this content should be taught, including in the early years.

In a very small number of subjects, the curriculum is not designed as well as in others. In these subjects, the school has not thought carefully enough about the content and order in which pupils should learn the essential knowledge in the curriculum. This sometimes hinders pupils from building securely on what they know already. From time to time, some pupils do not learn as deeply as they should. Leaders are in the early stages of addressing some of these issues.

Typically, teachers deliver the curriculum well. They design learning that captures pupils' interests. For example, in the early years, children deepen their understanding of the need to brush their teeth by conducting an exciting experiment which teaches them about germs and bacteria. Teachers use a range of ways to check how well pupils are learning the intended curriculum. In the main, teachers

use this information well to make adjustments to the curriculum so that pupils can secure their understanding.

The school ensures that the additional needs of pupils are identified quickly and accurately. Staff have received appropriate training to enable them to successfully adapt the delivery of the curriculum for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). For instance, learning is broken down so that pupils with SEND can access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers.

The school has taken important steps to strengthen the way that reading is taught across the school. Children are taught to recognise letters and their corresponding sounds as soon as they join the Reception class. Phonics is taught consistently well, and most pupils are able to use their phonics knowledge confidently by the end of Year 1. The school provides intensive support for those pupils, including those with SEND, who struggle with their phonics knowledge. The vast majority of these pupils catch up quickly.

Reading is perceived as a relaxing and pleasurable pastime by pupils. Teachers read regularly to pupils and share their love of reading. The school ensures that the range of fiction and non-fiction texts are regularly reviewed to match the interests and aspirations of pupils. Pupils said that they enjoy reading in the well-stocked library.

The school has implemented a successful approach to maintaining high standards of behaviour. Pupils know the school rules and respect its values. There is very little disruption to learning. Children in the Reception Year learn to regulate their emotions well and play cooperatively with their peers.

The school prioritises attendance. The school's work to support the families of those few pupils who are regularly absent is strong. Across the school, pupils' rates of attendance are high.

The school's personal development offer is rich and ambitious. The taught curriculum is well thought out, giving pupils sound guidance to prepare them to live safe, happy and healthy lives. Pupils are confident in how to keep safe online. For example, the Safer Internet Day served to deepen their understanding of cyber safety.

Pupils have many opportunities to take on leadership roles as they get older. As well as play leaders, pupils can become head students or safety officers. The buddy programme, where Year 6 pupils support a child from the Reception class, has become a long tradition in the school. This helps to foster pupils' sense of responsibility and empathy and, therefore, prepares them for life beyond primary school.

Governors have strengthened the way that they support and challenge the school since the last inspection. They are visible and active members of the school community. Governors have supported the school in ensuring that staff's well-being and workload pressures are addressed.

Staff appreciate the kind and caring culture that leaders have created throughout the school. For example, staff told inspectors that collegiate working practices and access to a range of resources have helped to further reduce their 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 a very small number of subjects, the school has not ensured that the curriculum supports pupils to build on their prior learning securely. On occasion, some pupils' learning is superficial. The school should ensure that in these remaining subjects, staff are supported to design a logically sequenced and suitably demanding curriculum so that pupils can achieve well.

## **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 special educational needs and/or disabilities (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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	110993
<b>Local authority</b>	Cheshire West and Chester
<b>Inspection number</b>	10289992
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	97
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Kim Davies and Sarah Griffiths (Co-Chairs)
<b>Headteacher</b>	Anna Plant
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.aston.cheshire.sch.uk">www.aston.cheshire.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	28 June 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school is part of a local cluster called The Frodsham Village Schools Association.

## 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 pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- 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 met with the headteacher and other leaders.
- The lead inspector spoke with members of the governing body, representatives of the local authority and the school's improvement partner.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of documentation related to leadership strategy, behaviour, attendance, personal development, safeguarding, SEND and the curriculum.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, design and technology, and computing. For each deep dive, the inspector spoke with subject leaders about their curriculums, visited lessons, reviewed pupils' work and met with staff and pupils to discuss learning.
- The lead inspector heard pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. There were no responses to the pupil survey.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.

### **Inspection team**

Zarina Connolly, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Liz Davidson

Ofsted Inspector

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