

# Inspection of Sound and District Primary School

Whitchurch Road, Sound, Nantwich, Cheshire CW5 8AE

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Inspection dates: 28 and 29 February 2024

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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|---------------------------|--------------------|
| The quality of education  | <b>Good</b>        |
| Behaviour and attitudes   | <b>Outstanding</b> |
| Personal development      | <b>Good</b>        |
| Leadership and management | <b>Good</b>        |
| Early years provision     | <b>Good</b>        |
| Previous inspection grade | Good               |

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils, and children in the early years, are happy and enjoy attending this school. They feel well cared for because staff know them well. Pupils referred to the school as being like one big family.

Pupils' behaviour is exceptional. Pupils of all ages are polite and courteous to staff and one another. They are highly attentive and listen respectfully in lessons. Pupils are proud to show that they are 'sound superstars' by being independent and curious learners.

The school has high expectations of pupils' learning. Pupils benefit from a carefully designed curriculum. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well. They leave Year 6 ready for the next stage of their education.

Pupils enjoy the wide range of clubs on offer. These includes musical theatre, boxing and netball. Pupils are especially proud of the school's sporting achievements. They develop their leadership skills through various roles. These can include being an eco-warrior, as well as a sports or house captain. They make a positive contribution to the life of the school. For example, members of the school council help other pupils to learn how to stay safe online.

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

The school's curriculum is ambitious. In most subjects, the curriculum identifies the important knowledge that pupils should learn and the order in which they should learn it. In the main, teachers' secure subject knowledge enables them to choose activities that help pupils to know and remember more. Teachers check how well pupils are learning. They provide additional support for pupils who need it.

In a small number of subjects, the curriculum is not as carefully organised. There is not enough information for teachers to know what they should teach and when they should teach it. In addition, the school has not considered the most effective activities to help pupils to learn well. In these subjects, pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

The school places a high priority on the teaching of reading. This begins as soon as children start in the Reception class. Children like to vote for their favourite books during daily story time. Afterwards, they enjoy acting these stories out with their friends. Well-trained staff deliver the phonics programme effectively. Reading books are well matched to the sounds that pupils know. Pupils who need extra help to keep up with the phonics programme are given the support that they need. Older pupils are confident readers. They recognise why reading is so important and how it helps them to learn across the curriculum.

As soon as children start school in the Reception class, they learn well-established routines. This helps them to settle quickly into school life. As they move into key stages 1 and 2, pupils show great attentiveness in class. Pupils across school are sensible and mature. They listen carefully and have extremely positive attitudes to learning. The school has the highest expectations for pupils' behaviour. This is the case both in and out of lessons. Pupils move very sensibly around school. Breaktimes are happy, and pupils enjoy the range of activities that are on offer outside. Pupils of different ages play harmoniously in the playground.

The needs of pupils with SEND are swiftly identified. Staff adapt activities so that most pupils with SEND can learn alongside their friends. This helps most pupils with SEND to achieve well.

The school promotes pupils' wider personal development effectively. Pupils appreciate the range of activities in which they can participate. They especially enjoy the experience of residential visits. Pupils develop as responsible citizens. They learn about differences between people and are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

The school is mindful of staff's workload and well-being. For example, time is provided for subject leaders to develop the curriculum.

Governors are committed to their roles. However, they do not have an informed view of the school. Systems are not in place to enable governors to fully understand the school's weaknesses. As a result, governors do not give sufficient challenge to support the school with its ongoing improvement.

## **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, teachers do not have the information that they need to know what pupils should learn. This hinders pupils from building their learning over time. The school should ensure that the small steps of learning are identified so that teachers can help pupils to know and remember more.
- In a minority of subjects, the activities that pupils complete do not enable them to learn subject content effectively. As a result, some pupils do not learn as well as they could. The school should ensure that the activities chosen to deliver the curriculum help pupils to build a secure body of knowledge.
- Systems for governors to identify any weaknesses in the school are not effective enough. As a result, governors do not offer sufficient challenge to the school to ensure its ongoing improvement. Governors should ensure that systems are further developed so they can gain a sharper insight into the quality of education on offer.

## 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

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| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 111074   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Cheshire East  |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10294254   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 4 to 11  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 140  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body   |
| <b>Chair of governing body</b>             | Anthony Shuker   |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Laura Minshall-Thomas  |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.soundprimary.co.uk">www.soundprimary.co.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | 2 December 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005         |

## Information about this school

- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

## 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 carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with subject leaders, discussed the

curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, looked at samples of pupils' work, spoke with teachers and talked with pupils about their learning.

- The lead inspector observed pupils from Years 1 to 3 read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors also considered the curriculum in other areas. This included talking with pupils and looking at a sample of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other leaders. An inspector also met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- An inspector spoke to a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour as they arrived at school and during lessons and breaktimes. They also spoke with pupils about their views of school life.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents and carers. They looked at the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also spoke to a number of parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors considered the views of pupils and staff who responded to Ofsted's pupil and staff surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Frith Murphy, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Elizabeth Hulse

Ofsted Inspector

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