

Inspection of a good school: Over St John's C of E Primary School

Delamere Street, Winsford, Cheshire CW7 2LU

Inspection date:

9 May 2024

Outcome

Over St John's C of E Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy, safe and nurtured at Over St John's C of E Primary School. They develop a strong sense of belonging to the school community. Pupils look after each other and respect each other's differences. They welcome new pupils to the school enthusiastically and help them to settle in quickly.

Pupils behave well in lessons, when moving around the school and at breaktimes. They work hard and they are resilient when overcoming problems. Pupils take pride in their work. They enjoy the recognition of adults and their peers when they do well.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), benefit from an ambitious and carefully designed curriculum which motivates them to do well. The school has high expectations for pupils' achievement. These expectations are realised in most subjects. Typically, pupils achieve well.

Pupils appreciate the broad wider development offer available to them. They enjoy the visits that enhance the curriculum, including the visit to a local zoo. Pupils readily participate in the wide range of clubs offered by the school. Pupils value the responsibilities that they hold, such as acting as reading champions and playleaders. They spoke confidently about fundamental British values. Pupils learn to be responsible citizens and they are well prepared for growing up in modern Britain.

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

The school has fostered a strong culture of reading. Children in the early years enjoy learning songs and nursery rhymes in readiness for learning to read. From the Reception Year, teachers deliver a carefully ordered phonics curriculum with confidence. They receive regular training and guidance to help them to meet the needs of pupils. Teachers make regular checks of the sounds that pupils remember. They use this information to

adapt their delivery of the curriculum to close gaps in pupils' knowledge. If pupils find learning to read difficult, teachers provide effective support so that they catch up with their peers. Most pupils, including those with SEND and those who are disadvantaged, read fluently and accurately by the time that they leave key stage 1.

Pupils enjoy the wide range of books read to them by adults. They spoke enthusiastically about the books that they have read. Older pupils recommend books to their peers, and younger pupils, with enthusiasm.

The standards achieved by pupils in writing in key stage 1 and the Year 4 multiplication check in 2023 were low. The school has taken decisive action to address these shortcomings. It has refined its curriculum so that the order of learning from the early years to Year 6 is carefully set out in each subject. As a result, pupils are learning new knowledge well.

The curriculum makes clear the vocabulary that pupils need to know. Teachers are well trained to deliver the curriculum effectively. This is helping pupils to achieve better than they did in the past, including in writing. Pupils spoke confidently about their learning in most subjects.

In most subjects, teachers use assessment strategies successfully to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge. Teachers use this information to adapt teaching so that gaps in pupils' knowledge are remedied. Occasionally, in some subjects, teachers do not support pupils to make links between new learning and what they already know. When this happens, pupils do not build their knowledge as well as they could.

The school works closely with parents, carers and outside agencies to ensure that the needs of pupils with SEND are identified quickly when they join the school. The school has designed appropriate adaptations to the delivery of learning that are used consistently well across the curriculum. This enables pupils with SEND to learn successfully alongside their peers.

Staff have consistent and high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils said that their learning is rarely disrupted by the behaviour of their peers. They understand that some pupils need extra support to manage their emotions.

The school has prioritised pupils' wider development. Pupils enjoy learning about different cultures. They have a strong understanding of fundamental British values. For example, they understand about democracy and how it is used inside and outside of their school. Pupils learn how to stay physically and mentally healthy. They spoke about what constitutes healthy relationships and how to keep themselves safe when they are online.

The school robustly monitors pupils' attendance. Support for pupils and their families to improve attendance is effective. In most cases, this ensures that pupils do not miss important learning.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They said that leaders listen to them. Staff appreciate the actions that the school takes to help them to manage their workload and

to support their well-being. For example, staff value the programme of professional development that enables them to be successful in their roles.

Governors know the school well. They use the detailed information that they receive from the school to provide rigorous challenge and support. Governors complete regular training so that they can carry out their responsibilities effectively.

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, on occasion, teachers do not ensure that pupils understand how new learning links with prior knowledge. From time to time, this hinders some pupils from building a deep and rich body of subject knowledge. The school should ensure that teachers are equipped to support pupils to understand how new knowledge builds on what they know already.

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 July 2019.

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	111263
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	10348062
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	136
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governors	Sarah McClellan
Headteacher	Emma Snowdon
Website	www.overstjohns.cheshire.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	9 and 10 July 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Chester. The school's last section 48 inspection took place in June 2022. The next inspection is expected in June 2027.

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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, representatives of the diocese and of the local authority and members of the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of

lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors also discussed the school's development priorities and the organisation of the curriculum with senior leaders.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including safeguarding records, records of meetings from the governing body and school policies.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. Inspectors also spoke to some parents at the end of the school day.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff and pupils through meetings, informal discussions and through their responses to Ofsted's online surveys.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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.

Inspection team

Keith Pullen, lead inspector

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