

# Inspection of Mersey Drive Community Primary School

Mersey Drive, Whitefield, Manchester M45 8LN

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Inspection dates: 21 and 22 May 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 are unequivocally proud to be part of this community-focused school. Pupils are curious. They respond positively to the school's motto, which is to 'enjoy learning and aim high'. The warm and nurturing relationships between staff and pupils are the foundation of the school's success. This makes pupils feel happy in school.

Pupils have a strong appreciation of the fundamental British values, including democracy and the rule of law. They have visited different places of worship and met with various religious leaders. Pupils understand that people should not be treated unfairly because of their differences, such as their beliefs or where they are from.

Pupils behave well. They are conscientious and active citizens. Pupils shine in their different leadership positions. For example, they demonstrate their maturity as anti-racist ambassadors, eco-warriors, happy-mind mentors and school councillors.

The school has high expectations of pupils' achievement. This includes for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those in the specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND (specially resourced provision). Pupils respond well to the school's strong aspirations, which help to ensure that pupils learn consistently well in most subjects.

Pupils raise money for many different children's charities, including during special occasions, such as school fayres. This charitable work helps pupils to understand the importance of helping others who are less fortunate than themselves.

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

Since the last inspection, the school has focused on improving the quality of education that it provides. The curriculum is broad and balanced and matches the ambitions of the national curriculum. It identifies what pupils will learn from the beginning of the early years to the end of Year 6 in a logical order.

The school ensures that staff receive training and support to deliver the curriculum effectively. Typically, teachers check pupils' learning regularly. They identify any gaps that pupils may have in their knowledge and provide support to help them to learn well. However, in some subjects, the school's support in ensuring and checking that staff deliver the curriculum consistently well is not as strong as it should be. This means that the advice that the school gives to teachers on how to improve their practice, and pupils' learning, is not as effective as it should be.

The school prioritises reading. Pupils said that they enjoy reading. Those who were heard to read did so confidently and with expression. However, some pupils have a limited appreciation of the work of different writers, including poets.

The phonics programme is well implemented by skilled staff. Children begin to learn phonics from the start of the Reception class. In their phonics lessons, pupils learn new letters and the sounds that these represent as well as revisiting prior learning

to embed this into their long-term memory. The school makes sure that the books that pupils read are closely matched to their phonics knowledge. Pupils who find reading difficult are supported well to develop their confidence and fluency in reading.

The school identifies pupils' additional needs as soon as they start in the early years. Staff work closely with parents and carers, and with specialist professionals, to ensure that pupils with SEND get the support that they need to access the same curriculum as their peers. Pupils in the specially resourced provision are supported well. They regularly participate in class alongside their peers. The school's careful organisation of the curriculum helps to ensure that pupils with SEND develop their knowledge and skills well over time.

Pupils are well mannered, and they are considerate towards others. They behave well during lessons and listen carefully to staff. Children in the early years enjoy singing along to rhymes and stories. The school's initiatives to improve pupils' attendance are having a positive impact on reducing persistent absence.

The school supports pupils' personal development well. Pupils know how to maintain their well-being and their physical and mental health. They appreciate the importance of eating a balanced diet and exercising regularly. Pupils in Year 6 look forward to their annual residential trip, where they engage in different outdoor activities. Pupils enjoy visits to theatres, museums and other local places of interest. They attend various after-school activities, including multi-sports, dance, cooking and karate clubs. Pupils learn about the dangers associated with gang affiliation, including knife crime. They also learn about safe and appropriate relationships.

Governors know which areas of the school's provision are strongest and which need further development. They provide effective support and challenge to the school.

Staff feel well supported by the school. They appreciate the time that they get to develop the curriculum. Parents speak highly of the school. They often participate in learning and training workshops that the school provides. This enables them to support their children's learning with confidence.

## **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 curriculum areas, the school does not check how well the curriculum is delivered. Some pupils do not learn as well as they could in these subjects. The school should ensure that teachers have the training and support needed to deliver the curriculum well in these subjects.

- Some pupils have a limited understanding of the work of different writers. These pupils do not acquire the knowledge that they need to successfully access the English curriculum, and other subject curriculums. The school should ensure that pupils read a broader range of books and authors, to better prepare them for their next stages in learning.

## 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>             | 105299   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Bury   |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10321268   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 3 to 11  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 194  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body   |
| <b>Chair of governing body</b>             | Paddy Heneghan   |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Angela Ridley  |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.merseydriveprimary.org.uk">www.merseydriveprimary.org.uk</a> |
| <b>Dates of previous inspection</b>        | 13 and 14 March 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005                  |

## Information about this school

- The school does not make use of alternative provision for pupils.
- The school provides a breakfast club and an after-school club.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND. The specially resourced provision has places for 14 pupils from the Reception Year to Year 6. At the time of the inspection, places were allocated to 14 pupils. Pupils' primary need is autistic spectrum disorder. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.

## 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.

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. They also held meetings with other leaders, including those responsible for attendance and for pupils' behaviour, welfare and personal development.
- Inspectors held meetings with the leaders responsible for SEND and the provision for children in the early years.
- The lead inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. He also held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils from Years 1 to 3 reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors met with pupils to discuss their learning in some other subjects.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors met with parents and reviewed the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They took account of responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil 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**

Lenford White, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Stephanie Swift

Ofsted Inspector

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