

Inspection of Pewithall School

Kenilworth Avenue, Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 4XQ

Inspection dates:	3 and 4 December 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and proud to attend this school which is at the heart of its local community. Pupils feel cared for by staff who know them and their families well. Pupils say that all are welcome here. Even when they leave at the end of Year 6, pupils know that they will always remain part of Pewithall School.

Pupils show kindness to one another. They consider the feelings of others' and show empathy when someone needs help. In lessons, pupils try their best. They have very positive attitudes to learning. They are keen to impress their teachers and take pride in their work. Pupils, including children in the early years, listen carefully to adults and one another. They are not fazed by challenge; in fact they relish it.

The school has high expectations of pupils. This includes for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). In turn, pupils achieve well and they are prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of opportunities. These include clubs such as drama, football and mathematics. The school choir is popular. Pupils enjoy performing in the local area. Pupils take great joy in outdoor learning in the school grounds. They help to look after the school's chickens and delight in collecting their eggs.

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

Reading is given a high priority. As soon as children start in the Reception class, they begin to learn the sounds and letters that they need in order to read. Pupils practise their reading using books matched to their phonics knowledge. Pupils who need additional support are identified quickly. They are given the help that they need to keep up with the school's phonics programme from well-qualified staff.

However, some pupils in key stage 1 are not given enough opportunity to practise the sounds that they have learned in their writing. This means that, on occasion, these pupils do not develop their confidence as writers as quickly as they might.

The curriculum has been carefully considered. Each subject sets out the important knowledge and the order in which it should be taught. Staff regularly check how well pupils are learning. They use this information to identify what pupils need to learn next. Teachers design activities that help pupils to remember what they have learned. This helps pupils to build knowledge over time. At the end of a topic, pupils put their knowledge to good use. For example, Year 4 planned and presented an assembly to their parents and carers about the Romans.

The school's leadership of subjects is at various stages of development. There is a lack of consistency around the school's oversight of the curriculum. For example, some subject leaders are not adept at using information from staff's checks on pupils' learning to refine

the curriculum. This means that staff, on occasion, do not have all of the information that they need to teach as well as they might.

The individual needs of pupils with SEND are identified at an early stage. This enables them to receive the support that they need. Skilled staff help pupils to access the curriculum successfully alongside their peers. This allows pupils with SEND to be happy and confident learners.

Pupils benefit from a broad offer for personal development. They learn to understand the views of others and celebrate differences. They know how to keep safe including online. Pupils are encouraged to develop leadership skills. They learn about democracy by voting for the school council and eco team. Members of these groups take their responsibilities seriously. Trips to the theatre and museums enhance pupils' learning. Pupils especially look forward to residential visits in Years 2 and 6. The school helps pupils to learn how to be a good citizen. For example, by supporting the local foodbank and planting in a community garden.

Pupils are expected to behave well, and they do. Older pupils are good role models. For example, Year 6 prefects help to serve lunch. In the playground, pupils play harmoniously. The buddy system helps pupils of all ages become friends.

Attendance is prioritised and pupils attend well. The school takes prompt action to support the families of a small number of pupils who need to attend better.

Governors are committed to their roles. They are especially supportive of staff's well-being and workload. Staff appreciate the support that they receive from the governors. For example, they appreciate the annual well-being day. This makes staff feel valued.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils in key stage 1 who are at the early stages of reading do not have sufficient opportunity to practise the letters and sounds that they know in their writing. This means that, on occasion, some pupils do not develop fluency in writing as quickly as they could. The school should provide regular opportunities for these pupils to practise writing utilising their phonics knowledge so that they can become more confident writers.
- The school's leadership of some subjects is underdeveloped. This means that, in these subjects, teachers are not provided with the support and guidance that they need to deliver these subjects as well as they might. As a result, some pupils do not achieve as well as they could. The school should ensure that it develops subject leadership so that teachers are helped to deliver all subject curriculums effectively.

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

Unique reference number	111141
Local authority	Halton
Inspection number	10348050
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Neil Burgess
Headteacher	David Baugh
Website	www.pewithall.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	31 October 2013 and 1 November 2013

Information about this school

- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024, will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- 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.

- 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.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, looked at a sample of pupils' work, spoke with teachers and talked with pupils about their learning.
- An inspector observed pupils from Years 1 to 3 read to a familiar adult.
- An inspector also considered the curriculum in other areas including English. This included talking with pupils and scrutinising curriculum documentation.
- 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 met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at the start of the school day and during lessons and breaktimes. They also spoke with pupils about their views of school life.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents. They looked at the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. An inspector also spoke to a number of parents at the end of the school day.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff and pupils who responded to Ofsted's surveys.

Inspection team

Frith Murphy, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Tony McCoy

Ofsted Inspector

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