Inspection of Hope Primary School - A Joint Catholic and Church of England Primary School

Lordens Road, Huyton, Knowsley, Merseyside L14 8UD

Inspection dates:	12 and 13 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	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils have a thirst for learning and are highly attentive in their lessons. They are happy and behave well. Pupils are very polite to others when they move around the school. They are safe at the school and feel well cared for by their teachers. There are strong, trusting relationships between pupils and staff. The school is a warm and caring environment in which to learn.

The school has high expectations for what pupils should learn. Pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well across many parts of the school's curriculum.

The school provides many opportunities for pupils to develop their musical talents and interests. Pupils get to learn instruments, including the ukulele and keyboard. Pupils often sing at school and local events.

Pupils have some opportunities to take on leadership roles, including through the junior leadership team. They have access to different sports clubs and to several other clubs, such as art. Pupils look forward to the residential visit to an outdoor activity centre. They also enjoy their 'beach school' lessons. These take place several times each year at a regional coastline area and help pupils to deepen their understanding in subjects such as geography.

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

The school has designed an ambitious curriculum that builds logically from the early years through to Year 6. The school has carefully considered the knowledge that pupils need to acquire over time. It delivers its curriculum well. Pupils, including pupils with SEND, achieve well in many subjects. Those in the early years make a positive start to their schooling, often from low starting points.

The school carries out regular checks on pupils' learning to identify what pupils know and have possibly misunderstood. The school typically provides responsive guidance to help pupils correct their errors and misconceptions.

There are clear systems in place to identify pupils with SEND early. The school makes appropriate adaptations to the delivery of the curriculum so that pupils with SEND can access their learning. The school meets the needs of these pupils well.

The school has a strong focus on developing pupils' communication and language skills in the early years. It places a high priority on early reading and delivers its chosen phonics programme well. It provides appropriate catch-up support for pupils who struggle with learning new sounds. The school helps many pupils to quickly become confident readers. However, the school is less successful in helping a small number of pupils, including some pupils with SEND, to develop the necessary skills to blend familiar sounds together when reading new words. This limits these pupils' ability to read as fluently as they otherwise could.

The school provides well for pupils' personal development. It helps pupils to gain a firm appreciation of the differences of others, which prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. Pupils have a secure understanding of fundamental British values and how these are reflected in their school life. They know how to look after their own well-being and how to keep themselves safe. They engage positively with fundraising activities for several chosen charities.

The school has recently embarked on a large-scale project to improve attendance rates, which have been stubbornly low since the COVID-19 pandemic. This project has started to have a positive impact on pupils' punctuality. However, the school's overall implementation of this project is still in its early stages. It is too soon to see a sustained impact of the school's recent actions on overall absence rates and persistent absenteeism. At present, the school's attendance rates continue to sit below local and national averages. This means that some pupils continue to miss out on important learning.

Governors fulfil their duties effectively. Leaders, including governors, look after staff. They have made positive changes to the school's feedback policy to reduce staff workload. They also ensure that staff have dedicated time to carry out wider responsibilities, such as subject leadership roles. Staff are happy and morale is high.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school does not ensure that a small number of pupils, which includes some pupils with SEND, can blend the sounds that they know when reading words containing these sounds. This hinders their ability to read books with confidence and fluency. The school should ensure that these pupils receive sufficient guidance to develop their fluency skills so that they can become confident readers sooner.
- Many of the actions that the school has taken to improve attendance are embryonic. It is too soon to see a sustained impact of these actions on stubbornly low attendance rates. This means that some pupils continue to miss out on important learning. The school should ensure that its new approaches to tackling absenteeism are implemented successfully and bring about the desired improvements in pupils' attendance.

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	135796
Local authority	Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Inspection number	10348259
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	421
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Liam Anderson
Headteacher	John Casson
Website	www.hopeprimary.com
Dates of previous inspection	17 and 18 December 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school operates before- and after-school clubs that are overseen by those responsible for governance.
- The school currently uses one registered alternative provider for a small number of pupils.
- The school is a voluntary-aided joint Catholic and Church of England primary school. The most recent section 48 inspection of the school's religious character took place in November 2017. The school is awaiting confirmation of its next section 48 inspection.

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 evaluation 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 conducted deep dives in these subjects: design and technology, early reading, history, mathematics and science. They met with subject leaders and teachers. They visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work and talked with groups of pupils about their learning. The lead inspector observed pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors also considered the curriculum, spoke with pupils about their learning and evaluated their work in some other subjects.
- Inspectors talked to staff about their workload and well-being.
- The lead inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority. He also spoke with representatives of the diocese and archdiocese.
- The lead inspector spoke with representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- Inspectors met with the leaders who are responsible for attendance, behaviour and pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their wider experience of school.
- Inspectors looked at a range of policies and documents related to pupils' welfare and education. They observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around 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 took account of the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. There were no responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils.
- Inspectors met with parents at the beginning of the school day and took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.

Inspection team

David Spruce, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Keith Wright	Ofsted Inspector
Lindy Griffiths	Ofsted Inspector

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