

Inspection of a good school: Woolton Primary School

Out Lane, Woolton, Liverpool, Merseyside L25 5NN

Inspection dates:

25 and 26 April 2023

Outcome

Woolton Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending this lively and vibrant learning community, which has books in every corner. 'Blaise', the school bus, stands proudly at the school entrance, and the 'giant book' is a popular sanctuary for pupils. Pupils, including children in the early years, are enthusiastic learners who focus well on their learning. They are proud of their school.

The school's ten core values underpin everything that leaders do. Values such as kindness, self-belief and determination are reflected in pupils' day-to-day conduct. Children in the early years are helped to understand the importance of these by the Year 6 values team.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and what they can achieve. Pupils behave well, both in lessons and during social times. As a result, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), learn and achieve well across the curriculum.

Pupils embrace the positions of responsibility they are given. For example, they are keen to be involved in the 'WPS friendship zone', an initiative to prevent incidents of bullying. Staff respond to any incidents of bullying swiftly. This helps pupils to feel safe in school.

Pupils are keen to grab as many experiences as possible, such as taking part in a joint musical production with nearby schools and performing a poem with a local poet for the king and queen.

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

In most subjects, including in the early years, leaders have thought carefully about their curriculums to ensure that they are broad and well designed. Leaders are ambitious for all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with SEND.

Overall, leaders are clear about the essential knowledge they want pupils to learn. Teachers regularly check what pupils know and address any gaps they may have in their understanding. This helps pupils to secure learning and develop deep knowledge in these subjects. However, in a small number of subjects, leaders' thinking around their curriculums is less developed. As a result, some staff do not use assessment strategies effectively in order to check that pupils have learned the intended curriculum. This hinders some pupils when they come to apply their learning to more complex concepts.

For the most part, teachers' choices of resources are appropriate to deliver the curriculum successfully. Pupils take pride in their work. In the early years, staff have established clear routines, which the children follow. Children are keen to take part in activities that support their learning of the intended curriculum. They get off to a flying start, and they are well prepared for Year 1.

Staff are equipped well to deliver the phonics curriculum with confidence. The books that pupils read are matched well to the sounds they have learned. For those pupils who struggle with reading, effective support is put in place to help them catch up quickly. This helps pupils to read with confidence.

Leaders have ensured that there is a strong culture of reading for enjoyment embedded throughout the school. Pupils enjoy sessions with the school's storyteller in residence. Furthermore, they understand and value the importance of reading to gain knowledge. Pupils in key stage 2 read accurately and fluently.

Leaders have robust processes in place for identifying the additional needs of pupils with SEND. Pupils with SEND access the same curriculum as their peers. Teachers are skilled in adapting the delivery of the curriculum appropriately for them. Pupils with SEND are fully involved in all aspects of school life.

Pupils behave well, both in lessons and in the playground. They are respectful of others, including staff, and follow instructions quickly. There is rarely any disruption to learning. Teachers competently deal with any incidents of poor behaviour.

Leaders make the best use of every opportunity, including those offered by the local area, to expand and enrich pupils' experiences. There are frequent visitors to the school and trips that enhance the curriculum. Pupils' aspirations are raised through visits to universities. Pupils are passionate about promoting equality and are accepting and welcoming of everyone.

Governors are well informed about what takes place in this school. They have a clear understanding of their role in supporting leaders. Leaders are considerate of staff's workload. They support staff well-being in creative ways. Staff told inspectors that leaders show a high level of trust in them. This makes them feel valued.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that staff understand that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility. To this end, staff are well trained to spot the signs of potential abuse and neglect.

Leaders follow up any safeguarding concerns thoroughly and swiftly. Safeguarding records are detailed and up to date. Leaders engage proactively with external agencies and offer appropriate and timely support to the pupils who need it.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. They are aware of potential safeguarding risks, including online. Pupils know that there are trusted adults in school to whom they can report concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, leaders' curriculum thinking is not as developed as in most other subjects. This hinders staff in using assessment information to address gaps that some pupils may have in learning and correct pupils' misconceptions. In these subjects, leaders should clarify their curriculum thinking and ensure that teachers use assessment strategies to check how well pupils have remembered intended curriculum content.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 2013.

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' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	136813
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	10256176
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	670
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jason Kirby
Headteacher	Jane Ngenda
Website	www.wooltonprimary.com
Date of previous inspection	16 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision for pupils.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior members of staff. They also met with representatives of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.

- The inspectors checked the safeguarding procedures. They met with leaders, staff and pupils to evaluate the culture of safeguarding.
- The inspectors reviewed documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation form, school development plan and behaviour records.
- The inspectors spoke to pupils about their views of the school, bullying and behaviour.
- The inspectors observed behaviour at break and lunchtimes.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's parent questionnaire, Parent View, including any free-text responses. The inspectors also spoke to parents before the start of the school day to gather their views.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's survey for staff. There were no responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Jenny Jones, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

David Woodhouse

Ofsted Inspector

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