

# Inspection of a good school: Ashton Hayes Primary School

Church Road, Ashton Hayes, Chester, Cheshire CH3 8AB

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Inspection date: 30 November 2022

## **Outcome**

Ashton Hayes Primary School continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils enjoy school. There is a tangible community feel to this school, with strong relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils feel safe. They said that their friends, and the staff, look after them well. Pupils have a good understanding of bullying. Leaders and staff deal with the few incidents swiftly and effectively.

Leaders and staff are highly ambitious for the achievement of all pupils, including those with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils. Pupils succeed because of the academic, social and emotional support that leaders provide.

Teachers' high expectations for behaviour are clear. Pupils behave well. Classrooms are calm. This allows pupils to do their best in lessons. They are polite and well-mannered. They speak confidently and articulately with visitors.

Pupils have a well-developed understanding of diversity. Pupils typically share comments such as 'everyone is different and no-one will be excluded in our school'. They revel in their responsibilities, for example as members of the pupil parliament. Pupils enjoy the varied range of sports and games that are provided for them at lunchtime and after school. A variety of visits and structured activities in the forest area support their learning across the curriculum.

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

Leaders have thought carefully about the curriculum and the knowledge they want pupils to acquire across the school. They have designed and implemented an ambitious curriculum with high expectations for all pupils, including those with SEND. This includes the creative use of the outdoor environment. Teachers have a strong knowledge of the curriculum. However, leaders have not identified the precise knowledge that they wish pupils to learn by the end of the early years as they move into Year 1. This limits pupils' application of their prior knowledge to new learning.

Teachers ensure that pupils learn phonics in a well-ordered manner. This begins when children start in the early years. Any pupils who are at risk of falling behind in their phonics learning are identified early. For these pupils, additional and effective support is provided by staff. However, leaders have planned a new approach, which is in the early stages of implementation. Staff are developing their understanding and delivery of this new phonics curriculum. This means that for a small number of pupils their secure recall of phonics knowledge and their fluency in reading are still developing. By the end of key stage 1, though, most pupils can read well.

Teachers provide lots of opportunities for pupils to read or to listen to stories. This improves their knowledge and understanding of vocabulary. In key stage 2, the reading curriculum helps pupils to develop their understanding of a wide range of texts. Older pupils read fluently. They talk with enthusiasm about reading in general and the books they have read.

Teachers make checks on pupils' learning. This helps them to identify which pupils need more help or guidance. In most subjects, leaders gather a range of information about pupils' learning. This provides leaders with a clear understanding of how the curriculum helps pupils to build up their knowledge successfully.

Leaders ensure that pupils with SEND are identified accurately. Teachers support pupils with SEND to learn the same curriculum as other pupils through effective use of resources and other adults. Staff work closely with outside agencies and specialist providers to ensure that pupils with SEND receive the support that they need. These pupils make similar progress to other pupils in school.

Children in the early years quickly adopt the clear routines to help them work and play safely and purposefully. Pupils across the rest of the school behave well. They listen carefully in class and are well behaved around school. They concentrate on their learning. Pupils are keen to do their best.

Leaders ensure that pupils learn about the wider world. They learn about different cultures and religions. They know that everyone is equal. Leaders have planned a curriculum that includes a variety of memorable experiences for pupils to enjoy. For example, pupils visit museums and have the opportunity to attend residential visits. Visitors to school deepen pupils' understanding of the school's personal, social and health curriculum. Pupils, parents and carers value the range of after-school clubs, which include a variety of sports.

Staff appreciate the trust that the leadership team and governors place in them. They recognise leaders' efforts to consider their workload when new initiatives are being introduced. Governors are well informed about the curriculum in school and have processes and procedures to assure themselves of the quality of education.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have regular training in safeguarding and are aware of their responsibilities. They know what to do if they have any concerns about a pupil. Staff know children and families very well and are vigilant to changes in behaviour or presentation. Leaders liaise with families and a range of agencies to quickly identify and manage any safeguarding issues. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. This includes learning to swim and ride bikes safely. Pupils appreciate the support that they receive from their teachers. They understand how to keep themselves safe online.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Changes to the phonics curriculum in the early years and key stage 1 are at an early stage of implementation. This means that some staff are developing their understanding of the requirements of the new phonics curriculum. Leaders should further embed the planned curriculum to ensure that even more pupils successfully develop the phonics knowledge and skills that leaders expect of them.
- Leaders have not identified in sufficient detail the important knowledge that children in the early years need in preparation for learning in key stage 1. This means that teachers are not clear what earlier knowledge pupils have secured before they introduce new concepts. Leaders should ensure that the early year's curriculum identifies this important knowledge so that pupils can embed earlier learning and build securely on what they know.

## **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 April 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	111109
<b>Local authority</b>	Cheshire West and Chester
<b>Inspection number</b>	10226098
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	137
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Ann Lowry
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jon Gilbert
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.ashtonhayes.cheshire.sch.uk">www.ashtonhayes.cheshire.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	28 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The headteacher and new leadership team have been appointed since the last inspection.
- A number of new governors, including a new chair of governors, have been appointed since the last inspection.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection that 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.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, the assistant headteachers, and with other leaders and members of staff. They also spoke with members of the governing body. Inspectors also spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents and spoke with leaders about the school's work to safeguard pupils.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. 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. Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Inspectors observed younger pupils reading to staff; older pupils read to the inspectors.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in class and as they moved around school. They also observed pupils in the dining hall and playing outside at lunchtime.
- Inspectors spoke with a group of pupils about their experiences at school. There were no responses to the pupil survey.
- Inspectors looked at the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. They also met with parents and carers before school to find out their views of the school.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.

### **Inspection team**

Ian Shackleton, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Kathy Nichol

Ofsted Inspector

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