

# Inspection of a good school: Heswall Primary School

Whitfield Lane, Heswall, Wirral, Merseyside CH60 7SD

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Inspection dates:

27 and 28 January 2022

## **Outcome**

Heswall Primary School continues to be a good school.

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

Pupils enjoy coming to this school. Pupils who spoke with the inspector made comments such as, 'This is a happy school where we all respect each other.' Pupils feel safe and are confident that staff will listen to them if they have any worries or concerns.

Pupils are proud of their school. Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and achievement. Pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to learning. As a result, the school is a calm and purposeful place where most pupils learn well in a range of subjects.

Pupils find out about the differences between people. They understand the importance of treating everybody fairly and with respect. Pupils learn about the harmful impact of unacceptable behaviour, such as racism and homophobic bullying. They said that they feel protected from bullying. If it happens, they know that staff will deal with it immediately.

Many opportunities are available for pupils to take part in a range of sports. Pupils also raise money for charitable causes and enjoy projects aimed at protecting the environment. For example, pupils raised funds for a water-harvesting project for their twin school in Uganda. Pupils organise litter-picking activities in the community, and they strive to upcycle items whenever they can to minimise waste.

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

Leaders have developed an ambitious, interesting and well-ordered curriculum that helps most pupils know and remember their learning. Leaders want pupils to be fluent readers, with strong knowledge and skills in all areas of learning. Across subjects, most teachers are clear about the knowledge and skills that pupils should learn and in what order they should gain this knowledge. Teachers explain new learning clearly and help pupils if they do not understand subject content. This enables most pupils to build on their knowledge as they move through the curriculum. Most teachers make effective use of assessment strategies to identify pupils' knowledge and skills. Teachers use assessment information

well to set learning activities in subjects, including English and mathematics, that build on what pupils know and can do.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on how well pupils have been able to build their learning. Leaders are adapting the curriculum to ensure that most pupils can catch up on forgotten or missed learning. However, some gaps are still evident. For example, some pupils in key stage 1 have not developed some of the basic rules for calculating.

Reading is central to the curriculum. Pupils enjoy reading and read regularly. Pupils in key stage 2 read fluently and are familiar with the work of a wide range of authors. Pupils in key stage 1 use their knowledge of phonics well to sound out and read unfamiliar words. Phonics sessions in the Reception class help to enhance children's understanding of letters and the sounds that they represent. Story time in early years contributes to children's developing love of books. The one-to-one support available for those in the early stages of reading is effective in helping pupils to catch up with their peers.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) benefit from effective support from well-trained staff, who keep a close check on pupils' learning. Staff promptly identify pupils' needs. Staff work closely with parents and carers and specialist partners to ensure that pupils with SEND can access the curriculum and build up their knowledge effectively.

Lessons are rarely affected by low-level disruption. Staff have effective ways of handling pupils' behaviour and showing pupils how to manage their own behaviour. This enables the majority of pupils to take part in learning well so that they know more and remember more as they progress through the school.

Leaders provide pupils with a wide range of activities beyond class lessons. Pupils pursue their interests in art and design, computer, football and netball clubs. They hone their musical talents on the guitar, ukulele and drums. Pupils relish visits to theatres, gardens, zoos and museums. They are diligent school captains and prefects. As trained mentors, older pupils look after their younger peers. Leaders provide opportunities to deepen pupils' understanding and appreciation of ecological issues.

Staff enjoy working at the school. Their morale is high. Staff recognise leaders' efforts to consider their workload and well-being. Staff feel valued and fully included in decision-making about matters such as school improvement. Governors have a clear overview of the curriculum's effectiveness. They provide helpful support to aid leaders in reaching their high ambitions for all pupils.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Leaders ensure that staff and governors are trained well and know how to keep pupils safe.

Staff follow the school's comprehensive safeguarding policies and procedures closely. For example, they know how to spot potential signs of neglect or abuse. They take immediate action to record and report any concerns that they have about pupils. Leaders act promptly to provide the help that pupils need. They make referrals to outside agencies, such as social care, when required.

Staff ensure that pupils know how to keep themselves safe in different situations, such as when using the internet.

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

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

- Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, some pupils have not gained secure knowledge about certain aspects of the curriculum. This hampers pupils' ability to build on what they know. Leaders should ensure that teachers have the knowledge and expertise to ensure that pupils' learning is remembered over time.

## **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 a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2012.

## **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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## 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>	105038
<b>Local authority</b>	Wirral
<b>Inspection number</b>	10211274
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	217
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Linda Spall
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jonathan Lawrenson
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.heswall-primary.wirral.sch.uk">www.heswall-primary.wirral.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	25 January 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- There have been no significant changes since the previous inspection.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders, and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.

- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and the special educational needs coordinator. The inspector held a virtual meeting with nine governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- The inspector carried out deep dives into these subjects: early reading, mathematics and science. For each deep dive, he considered the curriculum and spoke to leaders about their subjects. The inspector conducted lesson visits, spoke with pupils and looked at a range of pupils' work. The inspector also talked with class teachers and teaching assistants from the classes that he visited. The inspector observed pupils reading.

- The inspector spoke with staff about their workload and well-being.
- The inspector spoke with parents to gather their views about the school and he considered the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys. The inspector also considered responses to Ofsted's Parent View.
- The inspector examined a range of policies, schemes of work and curriculum plans. He also scrutinised safeguarding information, including the school's safeguarding policy. The inspector spoke to the designated safeguarding lead about the reporting and recording of any safeguarding incidents. He also talked with pupils about their safety, welfare and safeguarding.

### **Inspection team**

Lenford White, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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