

Inspection of a good school: Culcheth Community Primary School

Warrington Road, Culcheth, Warrington, Cheshire WA3 5HH

Inspection dates:

17 and 18 May 2023

Outcome

Culcheth Community Primary School continues to be a good school. There is enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding if we were to carry out a graded (section 5) inspection now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish at Culcheth Community Primary School. Many parents and carers share the view that this is a school where pupils are cared for exceptionally well and encouraged to be their very best. There is a strong sense of family and belonging among staff, pupils and their families.

Leaders have extremely high expectations of the work and behaviour of all pupils, including those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff set out and model these expectations clearly. Pupils take pride in their work and try their best to live up to leaders' expectations. Pupils, including those with SEND, achieve highly.

Pupils behave exceptionally well in lessons and around the school. Staff deal with any bullying issues swiftly and effectively. This helps pupils, and children in early years, to feel safe and happy.

Pupils value their leadership roles in the school and take these seriously. For example, members of the 'bookateers' led their very own summer reading-bingo challenge. School councillors and buddies also enjoy helping to make the school the best it can be.

Many pupils, including those with SEND, benefit from a wide range of extracurricular activities. Pupils are very proud to represent their school in competitions. They have won many trophies and shields, including through a recent victory for the cross-country team in the Culcheth annual cross-country race.

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

Leaders have designed a rich and ambitious curriculum that has pupils' needs at its heart. They have made sure that the key knowledge that they want pupils to acquire in all

subjects is clear and precise. Teachers carefully break down learning into well-organised sections. As a result, pupils, including those with SEND, achieve exceptionally well. Year 6 pupils are very well equipped for the transition to secondary school.

Leaders provide staff with highly effective training so that they can carry out their leadership roles well. Curriculum leaders have considerable subject expertise. They ensure that pupils build up secure knowledge across the curriculum. They make regular checks to ensure that staff implement the curriculum to a high standard. Teachers are skilled at questioning pupils to check what they know and have remembered. They quickly adapt future teaching to address any misconceptions and gaps in learning.

Leaders make sure that all staff are exceptionally well trained to teach pupils to read. Staff expertly teach the phonics curriculum as soon as children enter Reception Year. They make sure that children and pupils practise their reading using books that match closely the sounds that they know. This allows them to develop reading fluency. Those few pupils who find reading more difficult have daily intervention sessions to help them to catch up with their classmates.

Pupils talk with great enthusiasm about their favourite authors and books. They thoroughly enjoy attending the reading clubs at school and holding the coveted leadership role as a 'bookateer'. In this role, they champion reading across the school. Older pupils are confident and competent readers. This contributes to their strong achievement across all subjects.

Children in early years learn the routines of school very quickly. They are kind to others, take turns and make friends successfully. They are highly engaged, enthusiastic learners. Children in early years flourish and achieve highly.

Leaders' use of assessment is highly effective. They accurately identify the needs of pupils with SEND. Pupils who need extra help benefit from well-tailored support programmes. This helps pupils with SEND to achieve as well as they should.

Leaders have developed a very engaging curriculum. As a result, pupils have highly positive attitudes towards learning. They are extremely motivated, focused and attentive in class. Pupils across the school behave exceptionally well. This means that everyone can learn without disruption.

Leaders inspire pupils to be aspirational, including through planned trips to universities and visits from speakers employed in several sectors. As a result, pupils value education and the potential opportunities it provides for them. Leaders also make sure that they broaden pupils' horizons through a wide range of exciting trips and residential visits. Pupils expressed how all these experiences embrace the school motto, 'Where Learning is Fun', and bring their learning to life.

Staff are immensely proud to work at the school. They are overwhelmingly positive about the support and consideration that they receive from school leaders. This includes how well leaders manage their workload and well-being. Governors know the school extremely

well. They have exceptionally high expectations of leaders and check on their work rigorously. Governors are highly committed to the success of every pupil.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have made sure that there is a very strong culture of safeguarding at the school. They provide regular safeguarding training for all staff. This means that staff know how to recognise the signs of abuse or neglect. They know what to do if they have concerns about pupils' safety.

Highly effective processes are in place to ensure that staff identify, record and review any concerns about a pupil. Leaders respond to these concerns quickly and work closely with external agencies to offer pupils and their families the support that they need.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations. They know what to do and whom to talk with if they do not feel safe, especially when they are online.

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 December 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.

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	111180
Local authority	Warrington
Inspection number	10240244
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	217
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Joanne Michaelas
Headteacher	Amanda Dodd
Website	www.culchethprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	8 June 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision for pupils.
- The governing body is responsible for the before- and after-school provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, she met with leaders, discussed the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, met with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and reviewed samples of pupils' work. She also observed pupils from Year 1 to Year 3 reading to a familiar adult.
- The inspector considered other subjects on the school's curriculum. She talked to the leaders who lead these subjects. She also spoke to pupils about their learning in these subjects.

- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher, other leaders and staff.
- The inspector met with governors, including the chair of the governing body. She spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector spoke with different groups of pupils to gather their views of the school and held discussions about their behaviour and learning. She also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at playtime.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. She spoke to several parents at the start of the school day. She also considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff and Ofsted's online survey for pupils.
- The inspector met with those responsible for safeguarding at the school. She scrutinised a range of documentation in relation to safeguarding. She also spoke with governors, staff, parents and pupils about safeguarding.
- The inspector considered a range of documentation provided by school leaders and staff. This included the school development plan, minutes of governing body meetings, headteacher reports and the leaders' self-evaluation document.

Inspection team

Julie Barlow, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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