

Inspection of a good school: Ellesmere Port Christ Church CofE Primary School

Deeside, Whitby, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire CH65 6TQ

Inspection dates:

6 and 7 December 2022

Outcome

Ellesmere Port Christ Church CofE Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a school where pupils, and children in the early years, feel safe and cared for well. Staff greet pupils at the school gates in the morning and check that they are ready to learn. Pupils are eager to get into their classrooms to start their lessons. Pupils, and their parents and carers, spoke highly about the pastoral support that they receive.

Leaders have high expectations of what pupils can and should learn. Parents value the help and guidance that staff give to their children. This helps pupils to learn well and achieve highly. Children in the early years also grow and develop in confidence.

Leaders have equally high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils work hard in lessons and take pride in their work. They are supportive and encouraging towards each other. Pupils understand the school's behaviour system and they said that it is fair. They like the rewards that leaders provide in recognition of their positive behaviour. Pupils also said that if bullying happens, adults make it stop.

Pupils enjoy the topics that they learn in the wider curriculum. They have many opportunities to explore different cultures and religions. Pupils enjoy the exciting trips, visitors and events that enrich their curriculum experience. Leaders give pupils plentiful opportunities to develop their interests and talents. This includes taking part in a variety of sports and learning musical instruments.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum, which provides pupils with the knowledge and skills that they need to achieve well, both academically and socially. The curriculum is well organised and develops pupils' learning in a logical order. It is commensurate with the national curriculum. In the main, teachers deliver the curriculum well.

In most subjects, leaders have designed an appropriate system to check how well pupils are learning the curriculum. Overall, teachers use these checks to address pupils' misconceptions and misunderstandings. However, in a small number of subjects, teachers do not use leaders' assessment systems as effectively as they should to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge. On occasion, this hinders how well some pupils achieve.

Leaders have successfully prioritised the teaching of reading. Pupils develop a love of reading. Pupils, and children in the early years, enjoy the stories and books that their teachers share with them. They can talk about their preferences and recommend books for others to read.

Teachers have regular and appropriate training in phonics. Leaders check to make sure that teachers deliver the phonics curriculum in the way that they intend. Teachers introduce children to the sounds that letters make in the Reception class. Pupils' phonics knowledge builds successfully as they move through key stage 1. Most pupils are fluent readers by the end of Year 2. Leaders ensure that any children or pupils who fall behind, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), receive appropriate support, so that they can catch up quickly.

Leaders have robust systems to identify those pupils who may have SEND. Leaders work well with parents and a range of agencies to secure expert help for pupils with SEND when they need it. Well-trained staff ensure that pupils with SEND are well supported to access the curriculum.

Leaders provide a range of opportunities to support pupils' personal development. Pupils learn how to be healthy, and they understand the importance of exercise and a balanced diet. Pupils learn about healthy relationships in ways that are appropriate for their age.

Leaders afford pupils many opportunities to develop their leadership skills. Pupils value the responsibilities that they are given. These include acting as school councillors, where they help to improve playtimes.

Pupils behave well in lessons, when moving around the school and at breaktimes. Pupils concentrate well in lessons. They learn without disruption. The youngest children learn and play well together. They cooperate when completing tasks, like building obstacle courses in the outside area. Children listen carefully to their teachers and follow instructions.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They said that leaders are considerate of their well-being and workload. Staff feel that leaders support them well to be successful in their roles.

Governors are knowledgeable about the school and its community. They are highly supportive, and they provide appropriate challenge to leaders as required.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff undertake regular safeguarding training. Staff are trained to support different pupils' needs. For example, they are alert to any signs that pupils may be at risk from harm. Staff make detailed records of their concerns in a timely manner. Leaders follow up on any concerns appropriately. They work well with outside agencies to ensure that pupils and their families get the help and support that they need.

Staff teach pupils how to stay safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, teachers do not use leaders' assessment systems well enough to check on pupils' learning. This hinders how well some pupils learn. Leaders should ensure that teachers are supported well to use assessment systems to address any gaps in pupils' learning.

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 March 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	111351
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	10240473
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	200
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Stefanie Boyle
Headteacher	Helen Friend (Executive Headteacher)
Website	www.christchurch-primary.org
Date of previous inspection	21 October 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is in a federation with Bishop Wilson CofE Primary School and share an executive headteacher and governing body.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Chester. The most recent section 48 inspection took place in February 2016.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection that the school has received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector considered a range of documentation shared by leaders, including the school development plan, minutes of governing body meetings, leaders' self-evaluation of the school and reports from the local authority and diocese.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector evaluated the curriculum, met with curriculum leaders and visited a sample of lessons. They reviewed pupils' and

children's work in these subjects, and spoke to teachers and pupils about their learning.

- The inspector spoke with the chair of governors and other members of the governing body. They spoke with the headteacher, other senior leaders and curriculum leaders, teachers and support staff. Meetings were held with a representative of the local authority and a representative of the diocese.
- To judge the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector reviewed a range of documentation, including safeguarding records, behaviour records, attendance records and reports from governors. The inspector discussed safeguarding with pupils and staff throughout the inspection.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online staff and pupil surveys.
- The inspector spoke with pupils informally during breaktimes and observed pupils playing. They collected the views of different groups of pupils and discussed their learning.

Inspection team

Keith Pullen, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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