

Inspection of a good school: Whitley Village School

Village Lane, Lower Whitley, Warrington, Cheshire WA4 4QH

Inspection date: 15 February 2022

Outcome

Whitley Village School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel safe in school. They enjoy learning and playing with their friends. They value the strong and supportive relationships that exist across the school community. Pupils learn from the many opportunities that leaders provide for them to develop as responsible citizens. For example, they help other pupils as buddies and road safety officers. Pupils have a well-developed understanding of equality and diversity. They said that they welcome all pupils into the school.

Pupils are polite. Most have positive attitudes to their work. They said that other pupils are well behaved too. Pupils know that staff will respond positively to any instances of poor behaviour. They have confidence in leaders' actions to stop bullying.

Pupils' academic and wider talents are developed well by staff. Pupils flourish at Whitley Village School. This is because leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and achievement. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), take part in lessons, trips and extra-curricular activities. Parents and carers are delighted that their children are 'known for the young person they are'.

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

Leaders have created a curriculum that is ambitious and aspirational. All pupils, including those with SEND, achieve highly. Pupils succeed through studying a wide range of subjects. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Subject leaders are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about curriculum subjects. Leaders give staff access to the training that they need in order to lead their subjects well.

Leaders have considered the essential knowledge that they want children in early years and pupils in Years 1 to 6 to learn in most subjects. Leaders plan learning in a logical order so that pupils build their understanding from what they already know. Teachers check what pupils have learned. They address misconceptions quickly and give extra support to pupils if needed. However, this is not the case across the board. This means

that some of the planned teaching activities in some areas of the curriculum do not have the desired effect on pupils' learning. This leads to gaps in some pupils' knowledge over time.

Leaders have effective systems in place to identify the needs of pupils with SEND. Staff, including those in early years, are skilled at adapting resources and support for these pupils. As a result, pupils with SEND achieve well.

Leaders have developed a well-structured approach to reading. The curriculum promotes children's love of reading in early years and throughout the school. Pupils read confidently. They talked with enthusiasm about fiction and non-fiction books. They clearly enjoy reading. Older pupils vary the books that they choose to further develop their reading abilities. Pupils' reading shows that they have developed a good knowledge of phonics. Teachers address any mistakes in pupils' reading through extra support where needed.

Most pupils are sensible and self-disciplined. They cooperate with one another in class. They concentrate well when working independently. Older and younger pupils play together harmoniously. Leaders and staff help pupils to resolve their arguments or differences of opinion. This approach supports pupils' personal development effectively. In addition, pupils learn to understand values such as democracy. This includes pupils applying to become members of the school parliament so that they can help to improve the school.

The school's new leadership structure has had a positive impact on staff's professional development and work-life balance. Leaders and governors prioritise staff well-being and workload. Staff said that they feel appreciated. They are proud to work at the school. There is a very strong sense of teamwork and community within the school. Governors bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to their role. They have been fully involved in checking that the curriculum meets the needs of all pupils and enables them to achieve well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

School leaders understand their safeguarding responsibilities. Effective training ensures that leaders and staff have a strong knowledge and understanding of the school's safeguarding procedures. Staff identify concerns swiftly and promptly. Leaders' effective liaison with other agencies ensures that pupils and families are well supported. Leaders have developed the curriculum to ensure that pupils are aware of local dangers. Staff teach pupils how to keep themselves safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, leaders have not made clear the key knowledge that they want pupils to learn. This leads to some gaps in pupils' knowledge over time. Leaders should refine the curriculum for these subjects, so that teachers know what knowledge to teach and pupils know and remember more of what they have learned.

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 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.

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

Unique reference number	110997
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	10212416
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	66
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Kevin Unsworth
Headteacher	Hannah Broom
Website	www.whitleyprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	8 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of a federation with a larger primary school within the local authority. The governing body has responsibility for both schools.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

This was the first routine inspection the school had 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 executive headteacher and the head of school. They also spoke with a group of governors, including the chair of governors. Inspectors spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including the school's central record of checks undertaken on staff and visitors and leaders' safeguarding records.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and computing. They talked with curriculum leaders of these subject areas. Inspectors also visited lessons,

looked at examples of pupils' work, held discussions with teachers and talked with pupils. Inspectors also observed pupils reading to their class teacher.

- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in class and as they moved around school. They also observed pupils' behaviour at lunchtime.
- Inspectors spoke with a group of pupils about their experiences at school.
- Inspectors looked at the responses to Ofsted's Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also met with parents before school to find out their views of the school. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil questionnaires.

Inspection team

Ian Shackleton, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Kathy Nichol

Ofsted Inspector

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