

Inspection of a good school: Hoole Church of England Primary School

Hoole Lane, Hoole, Chester, Cheshire CH2 3HB

Inspection dates:

22–23 October 2019

Outcome

Hoole Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Hoole School is a happy place. Staff work as a team to ensure that pupils get a good start in life. Staff work closely with parents and carers to help pupils to develop. Pupils enjoy their lessons. They said that they enjoy learning outdoors. They also like the many clubs they can go to at lunchtime and after school. Pupils are proud to be in the school football and athletic teams.

Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school is of a high standard. They listen to each other and adults. They join in enthusiastically during story time. Pupils work hard in lessons because teachers have high expectations of them.

Pupils' wider development is a priority. Pupils have many opportunities to take on positions of responsibility, such as road-safety ambassadors. They also know about a range of religions and cultures.

All the pupils that I spoke to said that they feel safe in school. They know that their teachers would help them if there was a problem. Pupils are confident that bullying does not happen. This view is also shared by parents. Pupils know how to respond if bullying occurs.

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

Leaders provide an interesting curriculum that helps all pupils to do well. All subjects are well planned. In each subject, it is clear what pupils need to know and when. However, in history and geography, pupils sometimes do not remember important things that they have learned. Leaders have begun working with staff to improve this.

Leaders place reading at the heart of the curriculum. This helps pupils learn well in other subjects. The school library and the reading corner in every classroom are stimulating. They help to make reading interesting for pupils. Leaders make sure that the reading

curriculum is well planned. They have considered when pupils should learn the skills and knowledge needed to develop their reading.

As soon as children start school, staff quickly focus on teaching them how to read. Staff are well trained and knowledgeable about phonics. They teach children what they need to know in a sensible order that gives them confidence. Pupils use their phonics knowledge well. They become fluent readers for their age by the end of key stage 1. Pupils who fall behind in their reading receive effective extra help. This ensures that they can catch up. Pupils in key stage 2 have a keen interest in reading. They enjoy interesting books that teachers provide as the starting point for learning about a subject or topic.

Recently, leaders changed their approach to teaching writing. This is because they realised that pupils were not achieving as well in writing as they were in other subjects. In early years and key stage 1, this is having a positive effect. At key stage 2, pupils are improving their spelling, grammar and punctuation skills. However, when they write on their own, they sometimes do not apply these skills accurately.

Teachers have clear guidance about what to teach in science and when. Leaders have trained them well. Pupils benefit from clear plans that build their knowledge and skills. For example, pupils in Year 6 learn that the sun is a light source. Following this, they explore how shadows form. The science curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to carry out investigations and experiments. These enable pupils to use what they have learned to find things out for themselves.

Leaders firmly believe that all pupils must achieve to the best of their ability. Teachers support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. Staff provide extra support for pupils with SEND when they are at risk of falling behind.

Leaders provide pupils with a range of ways to support their wider education. For example, pupils visit art galleries and celebrate religious festivals. Assemblies help the pupils understand how to care for others. Pupils learn how to be 'a good person'. Adventurous activities outdoors encourage pupils to keep going when things are difficult.

Children get off to a good start in Reception. The environment is bright and stimulating. Children settle and learn class routines quickly. There is a lot of space for them to play and learn. Teachers use what children already know to build their knowledge and skills further. The early years curriculum supports early reading, writing and mathematics well. The children are now doing well in these areas of learning.

School leaders and governors value the staff. All staff feel part of the team.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure all members of staff know what to do if they have a concern about a pupil. Safeguarding training is regular. Staff have a good understanding of how to spot

signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. Leaders work well with external agencies when they need to.

The school keeps detailed and well-organised records. These include the necessary checks on the suitability of staff to work in school.

Pupils say they are confident to talk to staff if they are worried or unhappy. They trust staff to look after them and keep them safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders are determined that as many pupils as possible will be able to write fluently by the time they leave the school. Leaders have been working on improving pupils' writing. They have strengthened pupils' knowledge of spelling, grammar and punctuation. Leaders now need to ensure that teachers improve the quality of pupils' writing further by providing more opportunities to apply their writing knowledge for themselves.
- Leaders have made sure that, in almost all subjects, the curriculum is clear about what pupils need to learn and when. This means that pupils know more and remember more. However, in history and geography, some pupils do not remember what they have learned as well as they do in other subjects. Leaders need to ensure that teachers know what to teach pupils in these subjects and when. They also need to ensure that teachers check that pupils have remembered what they have learned.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good or 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 school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, 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 convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in February 2015.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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 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	134248
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	10058072
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	375
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jolene Weaver
Headteacher	Rosalind Flanders
Website	www.hooleceprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	4 February 2015

Information about this school

- The school is a voluntary-controlled Church of England school. Its most recent inspection under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 was in June 2017.

Information about this inspection

- During this inspection, I met with the headteacher and the senior leaders.
- I held meetings with teachers, support staff and subject leaders. I met with five members of the governing body and held a meeting with a representative of the local authority.
- I visited lessons in each key stage. I spoke to pupils from each key stage and viewed examples of their work. I spoke to pupils about behaviour and expectations in the school and observed behaviour around the school and in lessons.
- I heard pupils from Year 2 read.
- I considered the 85 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and the 44 free-text responses. I considered the 45 responses to the pupil online questionnaire and the 24 staff responses. I examined records in relation to safeguarding.

- As part of this inspection, I looked carefully at phonics and reading in all classes. I also focused on writing and science. During these activities, I met with subject leaders and visited lessons. I also spoke with teachers and pupils. I viewed examples of pupils' workbooks.

Inspection team

Andrew Morley, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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