

Inspection of a good school: Malvern Primary School

Willoughby Road, Huyton, Liverpool, Merseyside L14 6XA

Inspection dates: 26–27 February 2020

Outcome

Malvern Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Malvern is a friendly and welcoming school. Staff and governors work hard to live by the school's motto: 'Bringing out the best in children'. Pupils with whom I spoke said that they enjoy attending the school. They said that staff are kind and look after them well.

Pupils work hard. They say that staff have high expectations of them. They know that they can talk to adults if they have a worry. Pupils know how to stay safe. For example, younger children are taught how to stay safe when they are near the road. Older pupils understand how to stay safe online and when using apps on their own mobile phones.

Pupils' behaviour is good. They enjoy being rewarded by staff with house points. Pupils keenly represent their 'houses', named after the school values of 'trust, ambition, respect, courage'. Pupils say that bullying is rare, but if it happens, the recently appointed headteacher and staff, including the learning mentor, deal with it quickly.

Pupils enjoy opportunities beyond the usual school day such as the breakfast, drama, sports and music clubs. They enjoy their trips such as visiting an outdoor activity centre in Year 4 and travelling to London in Year 6.

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

The new headteacher, supported by senior staff and well-informed governors, leads Malvern well.

Leaders and staff promote reading very effectively. It is at the heart of the curriculum. High-quality books are visible throughout the school, including in the newly enlarged library, which pupils enjoy using. Staff plan and teach reading well. From starting school, children learn letters and sounds in a well-planned order. Teachers carefully check how well children are learning. Staff quickly identify the pupils who fall behind in their reading skills. They give pupils the extra support that they need, including frequent practice at reading. Staff give pupils reading books that match the sounds that pupils know.

Pupils develop a love of reading and become fluent readers. Many older pupils enjoy attending the school's 'Book club'. The proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in the phonics screening check in Year 1 in 2019 was above the national average. The proportion of pupils in Year 6 who attain the expected standard in reading is above the national average. This means that they are well prepared for reading in different subjects at secondary school.

In most subjects, staff plan the curriculum successfully. This begins in the early years, where children make a good start to their education. They settle quickly into a safe and happy environment. Staff know the children and families well. They work with parents and carers to support children's learning. For example, staff hold workshops to help parents to support their children with reading at home. Staff plan the early years curriculum so that activities build on what children can already do. As a result, children learn successfully, and they are well prepared for Year 1.

Staff plan the mathematics curriculum in a logical order. Children get off to a strong start with their number work in early years. Many pupils develop confidence and fluency in their mathematics because their teachers provide them with carefully planned tasks. However, not all teachers teach the mathematics curriculum consistently well. Some pupils do not achieve as well as they should, particularly in key stage 2. Leaders are acting to improve pupils' learning, including strengthening teachers' understanding of the curriculum. Such actions are beginning to have a positive impact on current pupils' understanding of mathematics.

A common strength of the curriculum at the school is that planned activities build on pupils' prior learning. Pupils achieve well in a range of subjects. In geography for example, pupils in Year 5 could explain how their study of rivers built on work that they had completed in previous years. However, the curriculum in religious education (RE) and physical education (PE) is not planned as well as in other subjects.

Staff quickly identify the pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers organise effective plans to support these pupils' learning in the curriculum. Leaders work successfully with pupils, parents and a range of agencies to support this work.

Leaders and staff promote pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development well. Pupils understand the principles of democracy. They learn about different faiths and cultures, for example Islam and Judaism. Leaders encourage pupils to think carefully about the lives of other people. Pupils keenly undertake charitable fundraising, for instance for nurses who support people who live with cancer and for a local hospice.

Governors, leaders and staff are rightly proud of their school. Governors and leaders know what the school does well and what it needs to do better. All staff are positive about the support that leaders provide, including for their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders, including governors, ensure that there are clear arrangements to keep pupils safe at the school. All staff receive regular safeguarding training. They know what to do if they have any concerns about pupils' well-being. Leaders review all concerns about pupils diligently, keep detailed records and work closely with a range of agencies where necessary. Pupils say that they are safe at the school. They say that if they have concerns, they can talk to staff who will help them.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some teachers do not implement the mathematics curriculum consistently well, particularly in key stage 2. As a result, some pupils do not make strong progress and are not fully prepared for studying mathematics at secondary school. Leaders should continue to challenge and support staff about the quality of pupils' learning so that staff teach the mathematics curriculum successfully. This will help to ensure that all pupils become able, confident mathematicians.
- The curriculum in some subjects is better planned than others. This means that pupils do not remember all the knowledge that they need. Leaders should ensure that the teaching of all subjects of the curriculum provides pupils with depth of knowledge and high-quality learning. This will mean that pupils can achieve even more strongly.

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 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, 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 second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 17–18 May 2011.

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 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	104427
Local authority	Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Inspection number	10111058
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	470
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Gavin Butterworth
Headteacher	Tony James
Website	www.malvernprimaryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	10 February 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The new headteacher has been in post since January 2020. Prior to this appointment, the assistant headteacher was the acting headteacher for one term.

Information about this inspection

- I met with several school leaders, including the headteacher, the curriculum leader, the leader for SEND and the leader for early years.
- I met with five governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- I took account of the 26 responses from school staff to Ofsted's questionnaire.
- I did deep dives in these subjects: early reading/phonics, mathematics and geography. Inspection activity included meeting with subject leaders, evaluation of curriculum planning, visits to lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work, listening to pupils read, and discussions with teachers and teaching assistants. I also held discussions with pupils about their learning in these subjects.

- I looked at safeguarding procedures and checked records about safeguarding and pupils' behaviour. I checked records of pupils' attendance and of teachers' training. I spoke with staff and pupils to evaluate their understanding of safeguarding procedures.
- I observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school. I also spoke with pupils about school life and their views on staff's support for their personal development and behaviour.
- I took account of the 85 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire.

Inspection team

Gary Bevin, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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