

Inspection of Thingwall Primary School

Pensby Road, Thingwall, Wirral, Merseyside CH61 7UG

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 May 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Thingwall Primary School is a happy and vibrant place for pupils to learn. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), arrive at school eager to see what the day has to offer. Friendly staff welcome pupils with a warm smile and a personal greeting.

Pupils, including children in the early years, share warm relationships with staff and their peers. They feel comfortable approaching staff to share any worries or concerns that they may have, including about bullying. If bullying occurs, staff soon make it stop. This helps pupils to feel safe.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' behaviour and achievement. Pupils do not disappoint. They achieve well across a range of subjects, and they typically behave well around all areas of the school.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of experiences beyond the academic curriculum. This includes an exciting range of trips and after-school clubs. They contribute to decision-making in the school through their roles as school councillors, eco-warriors and anti-bullying ambassadors. Pupils particularly enjoy playing in the school band and honing their skills on a varied range of musical instruments, such as the ukulele and guitar.

Many parents and carers hold the school in high regard and would happily recommend it to others.

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

Leaders and governors have designed a curriculum that is ambitious and meets the needs of all pupils. From the early years to Year 6, teachers are clear about the knowledge that pupils should learn and the order it should be taught. Across subjects, leaders have thought about the vocabulary that they want pupils to learn as they move through the school. However, a few curriculums are quite new. In these subjects, teachers are not quite as confident about what pupils should be taught and what pupils must learn. This hinders pupils' progress in these subjects.

Most subject leaders make effective checks on how well the curriculum is helping pupils know more and remember more. However, in a few subjects, leaders are less knowledgeable about how the curriculum is making a difference in pupils' achievement. This is because these subject leaders are new to their roles and are in the early stages of gaining the expertise that they need in order to lead their subjects with confidence.

Teachers explain new concepts clearly. They deal with pupils' misconceptions as soon as they arise. In lessons, pupils have opportunities to share their thoughts and ideas. Most pupils listen well in class. Teachers make their expectations for

behaviour clear, and pupils act accordingly. Consequently, in classrooms, there is little low-level disruption.

Pupils achieve well in phonics. However, leaders are not complacent and are keen for pupils to do even better. To this end, they have systematically introduced a new phonics programme, starting in the early years. All staff have been trained and they are developing their confidence in delivering this new scheme.

Pupils, including those with SEND, read books that are well matched to the sounds and words that they know. Leaders ensure that those who are struggling to read get the help and support that they need to help them catch up. Older pupils enjoy reading. They talked avidly about their favourite authors and the different types of books that they like to read.

Leaders identify pupils' additional needs and make suitable adaptations to ensure that as far as possible, pupils with SEND access the same curriculum as their peers. Leaders work with outside agencies to make sure that pupils with SEND get the help that they need.

Pupils are developing an awareness of the world around them. They learn about the importance of being tolerant and respectful of others. Pupils raise money for charitable causes, including for a school they have links with in Uganda. They recognise the importance of taking regular exercise and eating a balanced diet to promote their good health. Pupils understand the importance of recycling to help save the planet. Some pupils are aspirational about their future and talked about becoming architects, vets and accountants. Leaders pay due regard to pupils' mental health.

Governors know the school well. They offer support and challenge to all aspects of leaders' work, with a particular focus on the quality of education.

Staff work well as a team. They appreciate all that leaders do to ensure they have an acceptable work-life balance.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. All staff have received appropriate training. They are alert to the signs of harm, abuse and neglect. Staff know the procedures that they must follow if they are concerned about a pupil's welfare. Staff have an awareness of the safeguarding risks in the local area.

Leaders ensure that vulnerable families receive the support and help that they need from other agencies. Through the curriculum, pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. For instance, they understand what it means to be a good friend and how to keep themselves safe when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A small number of staff are new to subject leadership and do not have the confidence or expertise to lead their areas of responsibility effectively. This means that they are less able to check how well the curriculum is being implemented or how effectively pupils are remembering their learning. Leaders should ensure that these subject leaders are supported to lead their curriculum areas effectively.
- A few curriculums are relatively new. They are in the early stage of being implemented. Teachers are less confident in what to teach in these subjects. Leaders should ensure that staff receive the support that they need to deliver the new curriculums well.

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	105051
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	10226163
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	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Michael Collins
Headteacher	Danielle Evans
Website	www.thingwall.eschools.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	8 and 9 June 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not use any form of alternative provision for pupils.
- Since the previous inspection, a new chair of governors has been appointed.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with governors, the headteacher and other staff.
- The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and religious education. For each deep dive, they discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons and spoke to teachers and some

pupils about their learning. They also looked at a sample of pupils' work. The lead inspector listened to pupils read with a familiar adult. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum with leaders in some other subjects.

- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including that relating to safeguarding. They spoke with leaders, staff and pupils about the culture of safeguarding in the school.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors observed behaviour as pupils moved around the school, in class, in the dinner hall and outdoor play area.
- The lead inspector considered the views expressed by parents in their responses to Ofsted Parent View. This included the free-text comments. She also took account of the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff. There were no responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for pupils.
- An inspector spoke with parents as they brought their children to school at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

Sheila Iwaskow, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Peter Berry

Ofsted Inspector

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