

Inspection of Byley Primary School and Nursery

Moss Lane, Byley, Middlewich, Cheshire CW10 9NG

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 January 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?

Pupils, including children in the early years, are proud of their friendly school. They greet visitors with a warm welcome and a happy smile. They explained that their school is like a family 'because everyone cares for each other'.

Pupils thrive in the calm and nurturing atmosphere that leaders and staff have created. They feel safe and appreciate that staff care deeply about their well-being. Pupils said that if bullying should ever happen, adults would help them to make friends again. Leaders deal with any incidents of bullying effectively.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils, including children in the early years and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils enjoy their lessons. They are eager to learn. Pupils behave well and work hard. Pupils achieve well and, at the end of Year 6, they are prepared well for secondary school.

Older pupils take their responsibilities seriously. For example, they are proud to be house captains, school councillors and junior safety officers. At playtime and lunchtime, pupils have lots of fun together. Older pupils take good care of their younger friends.

Pupils relish the many opportunities that leaders provide such as trips to the theatre and residential visits. Pupils, parents and carers appreciate the many sports clubs from American football to lacrosse that pupils can join after school.

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

Leaders have created a curriculum that interests and engages all pupils, including those in the early years and pupils with SEND. Subject leaders have made sure that the curriculum is organised well and that teachers are clear about the knowledge, skills and vocabulary that pupils must learn.

Staff have secure subject knowledge. They have accessed a wide range of subject-specific training to keep their skills up to date. In many subjects, including reading and mathematics, leaders have developed effective systems that enable teachers to check how well pupils are learning the curriculum. Teachers use this information effectively to recap learning and close gaps in pupils' knowledge. This enables pupils to progress well through the curriculum and achieve well. However, in a few subjects, these strategies are at an earlier stage of development. As a result, in these subjects, teachers are less clear about those aspects of pupils' learning that are less secure.

Leaders and staff have prioritised the teaching of reading. Teachers choose books to read to pupils that are relevant to their learning and capture their interest. Staff ensure that pupils have high-quality books to read. Pupils enjoy listening to the stories that staff read to them. They also enjoy reading on their own for pleasure.

Children learn phonics well from the moment they start at the school. Staff are well trained to deliver the phonics programme effectively. They match books to the sounds that pupils know well. This helps pupils to practise their reading and grow in confidence. Staff provide appropriate support to those pupils who need to catch up. Staff understand how to support pupils who struggle to read. Pupils, including those with SEND, learn to read well.

Children get off to a strong start in the early years. Leaders' expectations of learning and behaviour are high. Children are happy and enjoy learning. They have access to a wide range of activities and experiences that prepare them well for Year 1. Leaders have set high expectations for pupils' behaviour. This helps pupils to feel safe and ensures that there is little disruption to their learning.

Leaders and staff are trained well to identify pupils with SEND, including those in the early years, quickly. Extra support from within school and outside of school is used effectively. Staff make careful adaptations to the curriculum so that pupils have access to the full curriculum. Pupils with SEND participate fully in all aspects of school life.

Leaders have made sure that pupils have many opportunities to further enhance their wider development across the curriculum. For example, teachers plan trips and residential visits carefully to enhance pupils' learning of different cultures and religions.

Governors are well informed about improvements in the school. They challenge leaders appropriately and actively seek answers to questions. Members of the governing body access appropriate training to keep their knowledge and skills fresh and up to date.

Staff enjoy working at the school and with each other. They are highly positive about the support that they receive from leaders. This is especially in relation to helping them manage their work-life balance and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture around keeping children safe throughout the school and in the wider community. Leaders know families well and have established strong and supportive relationships with parents.

Leaders provide regular training for staff. This means that staff know how to recognise the signs of abuse or neglect. Staff know what to do if they have concerns about pupils' safety.

Leaders work well with a range of professionals to ensure that pupils and their families receive support when it is needed. Pupils learn to keep themselves safe, for example when learning or playing online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, leaders' strategies in place to check on pupils' learning are at an earlier stage of development. This means that on occasion, teachers are not able to ensure that pupils are acquiring a secure knowledge of some aspects of the curriculum, including subject-specific vocabulary. Leaders should ensure that assessment strategies in these subjects are developed and used well by teachers to check whether pupils have learned what was intended.

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	111055
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	10242102
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	96
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Andrew Gibson
Headteacher	Elizabeth Whittingham
Website	www.byley.cheshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11 July 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher has been appointed.
- Leaders do not use alternative provision.
- The governing body is responsible for the before- and after-school provision in the school building.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in the evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their work and school life. They spoke with members of the governing body, the headteacher and other members of staff.
- Inspectors met with a representative of the local authority.

- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including information about safeguarding. Inspectors also spoke to staff about safeguarding and about their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted’s staff survey. There were no responses to Ofsted’s pupil survey.
- Inspectors observed pupils’ behaviour as they moved around the school, in class, in the dining hall and the outdoor play areas.
- Inspectors conducted deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions with subject leaders, visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils’ work, met with teachers and spoke with pupils. They also met with subject leaders for geography, physical education and computing.
- The lead inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.

Inspection team

Julie Barlow, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Sue Dymond

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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