

Inspection of Didsbury Road Primary School

Didsbury Road, Heaton Mersey, Stockport, Cheshire SK4 3HB

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 July 2024

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 10 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time. From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy to come to school each day. They champion one another and recognise each other's strengths. This contributes to an environment where success is celebrated and rewarded. Consequently, pupils are eager to succeed and to try their best. The school has the highest expectations for pupils' achievement. Typically, pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well across the curriculum.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They fully embrace the school's '3Bs' rules, to be kind, be respectful, be our best. As soon as they join the Nursery class, children are taught how to follow the school's behaviour routines. They are rewarded when they do so successfully. For instance, pupils enjoy receiving a kindness award. Staff and pupils enjoy positive relationships with each other.

The school's meticulously designed 'My Didsbury Road Journey' provides a vast array of opportunities that prepare pupils exceptionally well for their future lives. Pupils recognise this. For example, they spoke keenly about how their independence is developed through the different residential trips. The school also offers a myriad of roles of responsibility which allow pupils to contribute positively to their school community. For instance, house captains remind pupils how to move about sensibly in the school corridors. Playground leaders and infant helpers escort younger pupils to the dining room, lead games and help them in the classroom.

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

The school has designed a broad and ambitious curriculum that is logically ordered from early years to year 6. In the main, teachers know what curriculum content to teach to pupils and when it should be taught. However, in a small number of subjects, the curriculum needs refining. This is because the key knowledge that pupils should remember over time has not been identified. This makes it difficult for teachers to emphasise the key knowledge when they revisit and check pupils' learning in these subjects. As a result, a small number of pupils are not able to connect new ideas with previous learning.

Teachers swiftly identify any additional needs that pupils may have. There has been investment in training about how to support pupils with SEND. This training has helped teachers to adapt the delivery of curriculum content effectively. Typically, teachers deliver new learning well. There is a sharp focus on developing vocabulary which helps pupils to articulate their learning clearly.

Reading is integral to all that the school does. Pupils enjoy it. The school has ensured that pupils have access to and enjoy high-quality texts. Children in the Nursery class enjoy listening to familiar tales and recounting nursery rhymes. The school has recently changed its approach to teaching reading to ensure that all pupils can access ambitious texts. Pupils read with confidence and understanding.

Last year, the school introduced a new phonics programme which is still being embedded. In phonics lessons, some teachers do not check that pupils have secured their understanding of some sounds before moving on to new ones. This hinders a minority of pupils from building on their phonics knowledge successfully. Similarly, in some other parts of the curriculum, assessment strategies are not used well enough to identify and address any gaps in learning that pupils have. Pupils who struggle with reading receive effective support to help them to catch up.

Clear routines from the start of early years, along with a strong understanding of the school's values, help pupils to behave exceedingly well. They attend school regularly. Pupils are highly enthusiastic in lessons and eager to participate. They respond swiftly to instructions. Pupils' learning is uninterrupted. In the early years, children learn how to patiently wait for their turn on the climbing frame. Pupils' conduct embodies the caring atmosphere of the school.

The school places much value on promoting pupils' personal development and this is a real strength of the school. Pupils are provided with a wide range of exciting opportunities that enhance the curriculum, such as visits to a local church and a river. They have a well-formed understanding of British values. Pupils see these lived out in school. For example, children in the Reception class vote for which book to read. Pupils have a strong voice within the school. For instance, the reading council was instrumental in organising new reading sheds to be installed in the playground. Pupils are accepting of one another and appreciate that 'everyone is different'. The school nurtures pupils' talents and interests to an exemplary level. Pupils enjoy performing in concerts and assemblies. They blossom into confident individuals who are ready for their lives beyond school.

The governing body knows the school well. It provides effective support and challenge to the school in terms of improvement priorities. The school has made changes to its marking and feedback policy which has reduced staff workload and has improved feedback to pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a minority of subjects, the school is still refining the key knowledge that pupils need to know and remember over time. This means that, in these subjects, some pupils do not build on their prior learning as well as they should. The school should ensure that it clearly identifies the most essential knowledge that pupils need to learn so that teachers can emphasise this when revisiting and consolidating pupils' prior knowledge.

- At times, the school's assessment strategies do not check that pupils have learned the most important parts of the curriculum, including phonics. This means that some pupils develop gaps in their learning or reading knowledge without teachers knowing. The school should ensure that its assessment methods support teachers to check that pupils' knowledge is secure before moving on.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	106098
Local authority	Stockport
Inspection number	10348010
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	467
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Matthew Myers
Headteacher	Gemma Collins
Website	www.didsburyroad.stockport.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	2 and 3 April 2014 under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not make use of any alternative provision for pupils.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other senior leaders and staff.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The inspector met with a representative of the local authority.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, history, art and design, science and mathematics. For each deep dive, the inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors spoke to leaders about the curriculum and assessment in some other subjects.
- Inspectors reviewed samples of pupils' work across the curriculum.
- An inspector observed pupils in years 1, 2 and 3 read to a familiar adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation including attendance and behaviour data, minutes of governing body meetings, the school's self-evaluation summary and development plan.
- An inspector met with some parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors also considered the views of parents on Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.
- Inspectors spoke to staff to discuss the school's support for their well-being and workload. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at lunchtime and spoke to them about behaviour and bullying. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.

Inspection team

Jenny Jones, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Amina Modan	His Majesty's Inspector
Sally Rix	His Majesty's Inspector

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