

Inspection of Irby Primary School

Coombe Road, Irby, Wirral, Merseyside CH61 4UR

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 July 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	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

Irby Primary School is a happy and caring place to learn. This means that pupils are proud to be part of this school. The school's motto of 'be kind, work hard and never give up' underpins how pupils conduct themselves each day. The supportive and positive relationships that staff build with pupils, and that pupils build with each other, help them to feel safe in school.

Pupils appreciate being able to talk to staff if anything is worrying them. If bullying or friendship problems should occur, staff deal with these issues swiftly and effectively.

Leaders and staff have high aspirations for pupils, including children in the early years. Leaders make their expectations clear to pupils. Pupils behave well and they achieve highly across the curriculum.

Pupils celebrate people's differences and they are welcoming to everyone. They relish the chance to take on leadership responsibilities, such as acting as school and eco councillors. Pupils said that these responsibilities help them to prepare for the future. Pupils enjoy learning outdoors in the school's wooded areas. They also look forward to a range of visits and residential experiences.

Pupils are incredibly proud of the reading culture that staff have created. When pupils spoke about the books that they had enjoyed reading, there was a sparkle of excitement in their eyes.

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

Leaders have designed an interesting, varied and ambitious curriculum for all pupils, including those with special educational needs (SEND). In most subjects, leaders have decided on the important content, including the subject-specific vocabulary, that pupils need to learn. Leaders have carefully considered the order of this content. This enables pupils, including children in the early years, to deepen their knowledge and understanding of subjects.

In most subjects, pupils' learning closely follows the curriculum that leaders have designed. This is because teachers are clear about the building blocks of knowledge that pupils should learn and when this should be taught. However, in one or two subjects, leaders are still finalising their identification of the knowledge that pupils should learn. This means that, in these subjects, teachers are less clear about how to design learning that helps pupils to build on what they know.

In the main, staff introduce new learning clearly, and quickly identify and address any misconceptions that pupils may have. This means that pupils have a strong foundation of knowledge on which they can build and pupils achieve well. Nonetheless, in a very small number of subjects, staff are still honing their expertise to deliver some aspects of learning as leaders intend.

Leaders have placed a high priority on reading. Well-trained staff deliver the phonics programme consistently well. Staff encourage children in the early years to listen attentively to stories and to develop their spoken language and vocabulary. Children are prepared well for the demands of key stage 1.

Children in the Reception class and pupils in key stage 1 use their phonic knowledge confidently to read unfamiliar words. Teachers make timely checks on how well pupils are learning the sounds that they need to know. Those pupils who need extra support quickly get the help that they need from staff to become fluent readers. By the end of Year 2, almost all pupils can read with accuracy.

There is a love of reading throughout the school. Pupils spoke passionately about their favourite authors and stories. They also talked excitedly about the newly developed school library. Pupils in key stage 2 read a range of high-quality texts. Staff encourage pupils to read widely and often. For example, pupils are motivated to earn the class award each week for the most 'class reads'.

Children in the early years make a strong start to their education. The warm and nurturing environment that staff have created helps them to grow in confidence and independence. Pupils show positive attitudes to their learning, especially when learning in the school's wooded areas. The school is a calm and purposeful environment where pupils can learn without disruption.

Leaders have created a culture where everyone is welcome. They ensure that there are clear systems in place to support staff to identify the needs of pupils with SEND in a timely manner. Leaders provide teachers with appropriate strategies and resources to support these pupils to learn all that they should. This helps pupils with SEND to confidently access the full curriculum.

Leaders make sure that pupils' personal development is prioritised by staff. The high-quality care that staff provide ensures that pupils understand how to look after their mental and physical health. Pupils learn about different religions and faiths. They understand the importance of treating others with equal respect.

Governors know the school well. They fully support and challenge leaders in their work. Staff thoroughly enjoy working at the school. They appreciate that leaders are mindful of their workload and well-being. Parents and carers hold the school in high regard.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a strong safeguarding culture. They make sure that all staff and governors are up to date with the latest safeguarding training. Leaders and staff know pupils and their families well. This helps them to identify any potential safeguarding concerns in a timely manner.

Leaders work effectively with external agencies to secure appropriate and timely support for pupils and their families.

Leaders make sure that the curriculum helps pupils to learn about how to keep themselves safe. For instance, pupils learn how to keep themselves safe online, in school and in the community.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, some teachers are not sufficiently clear about the important knowledge that they should teach and when this content should be taught. This hinders teachers in designing learning and prevents some pupils from gaining the depth of knowledge that they should. In these subjects, leaders should finalise their curriculum thinking so that teachers are informed well about how to design learning for pupils.
- In a few subjects, some teachers are less confident in how to deliver some aspects of the intended curriculum. This hinders how well some pupils learn in these subjects. Leaders should ensure that subject leaders provide staff with appropriate guidance and support to deliver curriculums in these subjects with confidence.

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	105025
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	10240538
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	216
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sam Douglas
Headteacher	Richard Dixon
Website	www.irbyprimary.com
Date of previous inspection	21 and 22 September 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new chair of governors has been appointed since the previous inspection.
- Leaders make use of one registered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors conducted deep dives in these subjects: English, including early reading, art and design, geography and mathematics. They met with subject leaders and teachers, visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work and talked with groups of pupils about their learning. An inspector observed pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The lead inspector spoke to members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. She also spoke with a representative of the local authority.

- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher and other leaders. They spoke with subject leaders and other members of staff.
- Inspectors met with the leaders who are responsible for attendance, behaviour and pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about safeguarding and their wider experience of school.
- Inspectors looked at a range of policies and documents related to pupils' welfare and education. They observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors reviewed leaders' policies and procedures to keep pupils safe. They discussed safeguarding arrangements with leaders and staff. They also checked the school's records of the suitability of staff to work with pupils.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents shared through Ofsted Parent View. This included the free-text comments. Inspectors also took account of the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff. There were no responses to the Ofsted's online survey for pupils.

Inspection team

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