

Inspection of Hartford Primary School

Riddings Lane, Hartford, Northwich, Cheshire CW8 1NA

Inspection dates: 30 November and 1 December 2021

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

This school was last inspected 14 years ago and was 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 inspections. 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 inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

There is a warm welcome at classroom doors each morning as staff greet parents, carers and pupils as they arrive at school. Classrooms quickly become hives of activity and no time is wasted as pupils settle quickly to their work.

Pupils are polite, respectful and greet visitors with a smile. They are proud of their school. They told inspectors that they feel safe and well looked after. Pupils said that bullying is extremely rare. They said that if it does happen, staff deal with it effectively.

Leaders have high expectations regarding pupils' learning and behaviour. They are ambitious and ensure that pupils become happy, successful learners. They inspire pupils to work hard so that they achieve their very best.

Staff encourage pupils to live up to the school's values of responsibility, respect, aspiration and pride. Pupils respond well to the high standards that are expected of them. They enjoy receiving tokens in recognition for their good behaviour and attitudes.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, leaders had ensured that a range of after-school clubs were available for pupils to choose from. Pupils are pleased that these clubs are starting up again. They are also looking forward to the residential visits later in the year.

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

Children get off to a good start in the early years. Staff have high expectations and children do their best each day to live up to them. Children experience a broad curriculum. They enjoy the challenges that staff provide during lessons each day. They are keen to show what they have learned. Well established routines help children to develop positive attitudes to learning. They listen attentively to adults and engage in purposeful conversations. These good habits stay with them throughout their time at the school.

Leaders have prioritised the teaching of reading. Children experience a wide range of books from their very first days in the early years. Leaders have ensured that there is a consistent approach to phonics teaching. Staff have been well trained and have good subject knowledge. They ensure that pupils practise their reading with books that match their stage of development. Staff keep a close check on pupils' progress. If a pupil is struggling, they are given well-structured support to help them keep up with their classmates and become confident, competent readers. Many of the older pupils who met with inspectors read widely and often.

Over time, pupils have achieved well in reading, writing and mathematics at Hartford Primary. Leaders have worked effectively with staff to develop other subject areas.

The new curriculum plans for most subjects identify what pupils need to learn and when they should learn it. However, in a small number of subjects, leaders have not identified the knowledge that pupils need to acquire so that it builds on what they already know.

Leaders have developed effective systems to identify and support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff make adaptations to lessons, where necessary, so that these pupils can access the same curriculum as their classmates. Leaders also work with specialist services to ensure that pupils with SEND receive effective support.

The vast majority of pupils behave extremely well in lessons and during playtimes. They are highly respectful towards each other and the adults who teach them. However, pupils told inspectors that some older boys can be disrespectful towards other pupils. This sometimes goes unchallenged by staff and can disrupt learning.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves healthy both physically and mentally. They learn the importance of respecting different cultures. Older pupils enjoy the additional responsibilities they are given, such as leading lunchtime sports activities.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They feel well supported by leaders. Those who responded to the survey for staff said that leaders are mindful of their workload.

Governors possess a range of experience and expertise that equips them well for their role. They know the school well. They ask questions of leaders to help them understand the school's strengths and the areas that require further work. This enables governors to hold leaders to account for their work and support the school's development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding in this school. Leaders, including governors, ensure that the safety and well-being of pupils are given a high priority. Safeguarding records are well maintained, and staff receive regular safeguarding training. They understand what to do if they believe that a pupil may be at risk from harm. They teach pupils how to keep themselves safe online 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, leaders have not provided enough guidance and support to help teachers to deliver curriculums effectively. This prevents pupils

from learning as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that teachers benefit from training in each subject and clear guidance about what to teach and when.

- Some older boys do not always meet the expectations of the school's behaviour code. Their behaviour can cause upset and disrupt learning. Staff need to ensure that all pupils behave well in lessons and are respectful towards their classmates.

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.

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	111119
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	10199432
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	407
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mike Watson
Headteacher	Mair Fairweather
Website	www.hartfordprimaryschool.com
Date of previous inspection	22 May 2007, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- There have been many changes to the staff team since the school was last inspected. The headteacher took up her post in 2013 and the deputy headteacher in September 2016.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this 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 school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the leader for SEND. They also met with several subject leaders.
- The lead inspector met with five governors, including the chair of the governing body.

- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and during breaktimes and lunchtimes. They also met with groups of pupils to discuss behaviour.
- Inspectors visited the early years classrooms as part of the deep dives and spoke with staff and children.
- An inspector examined safeguarding records and met with leaders to discuss the school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, history, geography and religious education. As part of this process, they met with subject leaders, visited lessons and spoke with teachers. They looked at pupils' work and talked with pupils about their learning. The lead inspector also listened to pupils reading.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey Parent View. They also looked at the responses to the survey for staff and the pupils' survey.

Inspection team

Paul Tomkow, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Tim Sherriff

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