

Inspection of a good school: Rice Lane Primary School and Nursery

Brockenhurst Road, Walton, Liverpool L9 3BU

Inspection dates:

10 and 11 October 2023

Outcome

Rice Lane Primary School and Nursery continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils described their school as a safe and welcoming place. They told inspectors how they enjoy being with their friends, especially at breaktimes.

Pupils are curious and find learning fun. They like the increased challenge of their revised curriculum. Pupils recall and apply their knowledge with ease. Typically, pupils achieve well across the curriculum as a result.

Children begin to learn the importance of being polite, friendly and respectful while in early years. Across the school, pupils strive to uphold the school's charter. They behave well during lessons, on the playground and as they move around the school.

Pupils grow in confidence and independence. Older pupils carry out a wide range of leadership roles. Their diligence contributes well to the smooth running of the school.

Pupils explained to inspectors how staff provide effective support, especially if they have any worries. This helps them to feel happy. Many pupils have improved their attendance at school as a result.

The school has raised its expectations of all pupils. This is especially true for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), particularly pupils in the specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND. In the main, support for these pupils has improved considerably.

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

The school has developed a new and well-thought-through curriculum that meets pupils' needs and prepares them effectively for their next stage of education. Teachers deliver the revised curriculum consistently well from Nursery Year to Year 6, including for those

pupils accessing the specially resourced provision. The school ensures that teachers present learning in a logical order that helps pupils to build on what they already know. Teachers make sure that pupils practise and remember what they have learned. This helps pupils to make sense of new learning. Overall, pupils build a rich body of knowledge across the curriculum.

Teachers regularly check for and address misconceptions or gaps in pupils' knowledge. Staff are skilled at breaking down learning into smaller steps when needed. This enables pupils to experience success. Consequently, pupils' motivation increases and they remain focused on learning during lesson times.

The school has raised the profile of reading to address weaknesses in some pupils' phonics knowledge. Reading is firmly at the heart of the curriculum. Staff benefit from regular training that enables them to successfully teach pupils how to use phonics to read words. This learning begins in early years. For example, children in Nursery Year join in with songs, stories and rhymes enthusiastically. This helps them to become familiar with sounds in readiness for Reception Year. Across key stage 1, skilled staff support pupils to practise and develop their reading knowledge. Most pupils develop into fluent and accurate readers. They find reading pleasurable.

Owing to historical weaknesses in the early reading curriculum, a few older pupils in key stage 2 do not read as confidently and fluently as they could. Although the school provides additional support for these pupils to catch up, some continue to find reading difficult. On occasion, this hinders how well these pupils access the wider curriculum.

The school has recently overhauled its provision for pupils with SEND. The school ensures that teachers are furnished with appropriate resources and guidance so that they are suitably equipped to understand and meet the needs of pupils in their class. However, some of the new systems in place are in the early stages of implementation. This sometimes hinders staff in supporting some pupils with SEND to fully access the curriculum. From time to time, these pupils do not learn as well as they should.

The school provides effective support for pupils' wider development. Staff encourage pupils to learn about the wider world. Pupils develop respect for, and an appreciation of, the diversity in their school and local communities. They learn to listen to, and reflect on, differing points of view. For example, pupils were able to express their own well-considered ideas and opinions with inspectors about a range of topics, including inequality and racism. The qualities that pupils develop while at this school prepare them well for later life.

The school works closely with staff to devise and agree systems that improve the quality of education for pupils. Governors check carefully that these improvements do not create unnecessary additional work for staff. Staff appreciate leaders' consideration of their well-being.

The school provides a range of opportunities for parents and carers to become more involved in their children's learning. Many parents told inspectors that they value meeting

with staff to talk about different aspects of the curriculum and how they can best support their children's learning.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some staff do not adapt the delivery of the curriculum as well as they could for some pupils with SEND. Occasionally, this means that these pupils learn less well across the curriculum. The school should ensure that staff are supported to enable pupils with SEND to fully access the curriculum.
- A few older pupils in key stage 2 do not read as well as they should. From time to time, this hampers how well these pupils access the wider curriculum. The school should ensure that staff remedy the gaps in these pupils' reading knowledge swiftly.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2018.

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

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| Unique reference number | 141937 |
| Local authority | Liverpool |
| Inspection number | 10294383 |
| 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 | 646 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Frank Hilliard |
| Headteacher | Lesley Roach |
| Website | www.ricelanepprimary.co.uk |
| Dates of previous inspection | 12 and 13 June 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- A new headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for 20 pupils with SEND. All pupils placed at this specially resourced provision have an education, health and care plan. Pupils' primary need is autism.
- The school makes use of two registered alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's educational provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school had 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 spoke with the headteacher and other leaders in the school. An inspector also spoke with a group of governors, including the chair of governors.
- An inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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.
- An inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, geography and mathematics. They spoke with the leaders of these areas of the curriculum. Inspectors also visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work, held discussions with teachers and talked with pupils.
- Inspectors also spoke with pupils about their learning in other areas of the curriculum.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They observed pupils' behaviour as they moved around the school. An inspector scrutinised leaders' records of pupils' behaviour.
- Inspectors spoke with parents as they dropped their children off at school. Inspectors also considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for pupils.

Inspection team

Claire Cropper, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lindy Griffiths

Ofsted Inspector

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