

Inspection of Vernon Primary School

Clumber Road, Poynton, Cheshire SK12 1NW

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 May 2024

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since May 2012.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish at this nurturing and caring school. They thrive both academically and socially. The school motto 'Nobody else is quite like me' encourages pupils to celebrate their unique talents. Their happiness is reflected in their exceptionally positive attitudes towards each other.

Pupils' behaviour is impeccable throughout the school day. They endeavour to be 'safe, ready and respectful'. Children in the Reception classes learn to listen to each other and to adults. Older pupils spoke enthusiastically about the house points that they receive for their exemplary manners and conduct.

The school's expectations of what pupils can achieve are ambitious, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils strive to meet these expectations and achieve very well. By the time they leave Year 6, pupils are remarkably well prepared for their move to secondary school.

Pupils are very proud to make a tangible contribution to both their school and the local community. They enjoy being members of the eco and safeguarding committees. Children in the Reception Year visit local care homes. Older pupils are planning a 'bug hotel' for the local town centre.

The school provides a rich programme of experiences for pupils. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about clubs such as coding and gardening. These experiences enable them to discover new talents.

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

Much thought has gone into shaping an exceptional curriculum for pupils at this school. There is precision and clarity about the knowledge that pupils must acquire and remember in each subject from the early years to Year 6.

The school has carefully tailored the curriculum to pupils' individual learning needs, including pupils with SEND. Staff identify pupils who may have SEND quickly and accurately. Where necessary, they skilfully adapt resources so that these pupils can benefit from the same excellent curriculum as their peers. From the early years children become confident and inquisitive learners. They are remarkably well prepared for key stage 1.

Staff have in-depth subject knowledge. They embrace the ongoing professional development that they receive. Teachers ensure that pupils have mastered the foundations in subjects before moving on to more difficult concepts. There are regular opportunities to revisit learning. Teachers identify and quickly address gaps in learning. As a result, pupils gain an impressive depth of knowledge. They make strong connections between new knowledge and prior learning.

The school has made reading a high priority. Staff develop pupils' love of reading from the beginning of the Reception Year to Year 6. Staff have thought carefully about the books that are most suited to pupils at each stage in their reading journey. From the start of the early years, they immerse children in books. Children build an understanding of new vocabulary quickly. Older pupils spoke enthusiastically about the benefits of reading a wide range of books by different authors. They particularly appreciate the 'reading hub', which allows them to 'relax and get lost in books'.

Staff are extremely well trained to deliver the phonics programme to pupils from the start of the Reception Year. They match books well to the sounds that pupils are learning. Pupils rapidly become fluent readers. Those who find reading more difficult receive additional support to catch up swiftly.

Excellent relationships between pupils and staff help create a settled and calm environment in the school. In the early years, children focus fully on the task at hand. Pupils show admirable resilience when they find tasks more difficult. They are unfailingly polite and supportive of each other.

The school's work to ensure that pupils develop as well-rounded young people is highly developed. Pupils learn in depth how to look after their physical and mental health. They are keen to help others. For instance, they regularly support charities, including the local food bank. The school also encourages pupils to be aspirational about their futures. For example, they engage with local businesses and take part in enterprise days.

Pupils understand the diverse nature of the world in which they live. They talked knowledgeably about different religions. Their wider knowledge of the world allows them to debate relevant and topical issues with profound understanding and empathy. The experiences that pupils receive prepare them exceptionally well for life in British society.

Governors use their expertise to support and challenge the school effectively. This has helped them to ensure that the quality of education has remained exceptional over time. When making decisions, the school is considerate of the impact on staff's workload. Staff appreciate the time given by the school for them to complete their work. They feel valued and are proud to work at Vernon.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	135327
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	10294354
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	374
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Ashley Hickson
Headteacher	Jo Carvell
Website	www.vernonprimaryschool.com
Date of previous inspection	23 and 24 May 2012 under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not make use of 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 any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors conducted deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics, music, geography and history. For each deep dive, they had discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors spoke with subject leaders and with pupils about their learning in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector observed pupils from key stages 1 and 2 read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other school leaders.
- The lead inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. She also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors talked with staff and leaders about their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for attendance, behaviour, early years, the provision for pupils with SEND and pupils' personal development.
- 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.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their experiences of school. They looked at a range of documents related to pupils' welfare and education. They also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and for pupils.
- Inspectors met with parents at the start of the school day. They took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. Inspectors also considered parental emails sent for their attention.

Inspection team

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