

Inspection of Mickle Trafford Village School

School Lane, Mickle Trafford, Chester, Cheshire CH2 4EF

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 March 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

This school was last inspected fourteen 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 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?

Mickle Trafford Village School is a happy and welcoming place to be. Pupils comment that they enjoy coming to school and that they feel safe. They get on well together and make lots of friends. They feel that staff know them well and care about them.

Staff have high expectations of what pupils can and should achieve. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), respond positively to the work that their teachers prepare for them. In the main, they achieve well.

Teachers expect pupils and children in the early years to behave well. Across the school, most pupils and children are hard-working. They demonstrate resilience and independence in their learning. Overall, pupils cooperate well with each other, and they respect each other's points of view. They look forward to sharing 'Hot Chocolate Mondays' with their headteachers and taking part in 'Golden Table Awards' at lunchtimes. Leaders swiftly and sensitively deal with any incidents of bullying.

Pupils take pride in the leadership roles they have in the school. These include being members of the school council and well-being ambassadors. Pupils are keen to make a positive difference to their local community and the environment. For example, they take part in local litter picks and make nature promises to develop further the wildlife area in the school grounds.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum, which meets the needs of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND. They have designed learning so that it builds logically from the early years to Year 6.

Staff receive regular training to develop the necessary skills and knowledge to teach different subjects effectively. As a result, they feel confident in delivering the curriculum across a range of subjects. Subject leaders provide support for colleagues. They make regular checks on pupils' learning. However, in some subjects, they sometimes do not check precisely enough how well teaching matches the intended curriculum. As a result, in some subjects, some pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

In some subjects, teachers regularly revisit key knowledge and concepts before introducing new learning. In these subjects, they help pupils to build new learning on what they have already learned. Staff swiftly identify gaps in learning and address these gaps in a timely manner. However, in some subjects, sometimes, teachers do not revisit pupils' prior learning regularly enough. In these subjects, some pupils struggle to apply prior knowledge when learning something new. At times, this hinders pupils' progress in these subjects.

Children begin learning phonics at the start of the Reception Year. Staff have regular training, which ensures that they have the expertise to teach phonics well. The books that pupils read are closely matched to the sounds they are learning. Staff are quick to identify those pupils and children who need extra help in reading. The support that these pupils receive helps them to catch up and keep up with their peers. The majority of pupils are successful readers by the end of key stage 1.

Children in the Reception Year enjoy sharing stories and rhymes with staff and their peers. Across the school, engaging displays and book areas promote a love of reading. Staff ensure that a wide variety of books are available for each class. These encourage pupils to broaden the range of their reading. Older pupils read confidently and fluently. They enjoy their roles as reading buddies for younger pupils.

Leaders have ensured that there are effective systems in place to identify the additional needs of pupils with SEND. Teachers use a range of strategies to adapt the implementation of the curriculum appropriately. As a result, pupils with SEND successfully follow the same curriculum as their peers.

In most lessons, pupils are settled and focused on their work. They learn without interruption. They enjoy their breaktimes and play well together. Pupils who sometimes struggle to regulate their own behaviour benefit from sensitive support from staff.

Leaders provide a wide range of activities to enhance pupils' personal development. Pupils have an understanding of diversity and the importance of respecting differences. They learn about global, national and local news. They recognise the impact of events for people and communities. This helps to prepare them for life in modern Britain.

Governors know the school well. They challenge and support leaders in equal measure. Staff appreciate leaders' consideration of their well-being and workload. They feel valued and, as a result, are proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff and governors complete appropriate training to ensure that they understand their role in keeping pupils safe. This means that staff are alert to possible signs of abuse or neglect. Staff know pupils and families well. They know how to record and report any safeguarding concerns swiftly. Leaders work with external agencies successfully to support pupils and their families.

Through the curriculum, pupils are taught how to stay safe. They learn about the values needed to be a good friend. They have an age-appropriate understanding of healthy relationships. They also know about risks and dangers online and what to do

if they come across them. They have a range of appropriate strategies to help them if they are worried, including talking to a trusted adult.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, at times, teachers do not deliver subject curriculums precisely as leaders intend. This hampers some pupils from achieving as well as they could in these subjects. Leaders should check that the implementation of their curriculums is closely matched to their ambitious intent so that all pupils achieve well.
- In some subjects, sometimes, teachers do not revisit past learning with enough frequency. At times, this prevents some pupils from building their knowledge as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that teachers regularly revisit learning so that pupils can build on what they already know when learning something new.

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	111082
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	10255999
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	202
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Leslie Smith
Headteachers	Wendy Lyon and Julie Cox
Website	www.mickletraffordvillageschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	8 June 2009 under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- From September 2022, two headteachers lead the school on a job-share basis.
- The governing body is responsible for an after-school club.
- A new chair of governors was appointed in March 2023.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors conducted deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and computing. For each deep dive, they met with subject leaders and teachers, visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' and children's work and talked with

groups of pupils about their learning. The lead inspector observed pupils from key stage 1 and key stage 2 read to a familiar adult. Inspectors also spoke with pupils about their learning and evaluated their work in some other subjects.

- Inspectors spoke with members of the governing body, the headteachers and other school leaders. The lead inspector also spoke with two representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors talked with staff about their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors met with the leaders responsible for attendance, behaviour, early years, SEND and pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors reviewed leaders' policies and procedures for keeping pupils safe. They discussed safeguarding arrangements with leaders and staff. They also checked the single central record.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about safeguarding and their wider experience of school. They looked at a range of policies and documents related to pupils' and children's welfare and education. They observed pupils' and children's behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.
- Inspectors met with parents and carers at the start of the school day and took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.

Inspection team

Rebecca Jewitt, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Michelle Joyce

Ofsted Inspector

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