

Inspection of Brackenwood Infant School

Pulford Road, Bebington, Wirral, Merseyside CH63 2HN

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 November 2023

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 July 2010.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils said that their school is an incredibly welcoming place to learn. They are happy in school and build fond memories with their friends. Pupils are happy and proud to attend such an exceptional school.

Children in the early years and pupils in key stage 1 blossom at Brackenwood Infant School. They live up to the school's high expectations. Pupils achieve exceptionally well and become confident, articulate learners. They are excited to learn new things. They explained their knowledge clearly and accurately, often using complex words and concepts.

Pupils model the school's three values every day. They show self-control and act with care and consideration for others. Their conduct in lessons, on corridors and outside is exemplary. Pupils have high regard for others. Many pupils told inspectors that they welcome everyone and view everyone as uniquely special.

Pupils benefit from the school's exceptionally well-designed enrichment programme. For example, most pupils attend at least one club and have opportunities to learn to speak Spanish and to take part in activities such as judo and musical theatre.

Pupils feel honoured to take on leadership roles, including acting as school councillors, play leaders and librarians. They are dedicated to making the school the best that it can possibly be.

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

The school ensures that pupils enjoy a meticulously crafted curriculum that fully meets their learning needs. From the moment children join the school in the early years, they benefit from a curriculum that is aspirational and highly effective. The school has carefully considered what children should learn in the Reception Year and how this is built on in Year 1. Staff in the early years skilfully support children to increase the range of words that they use as part of their learning and when they communicate with each other. This prepares children in the early years exceptionally well for the demands of the Year 1 curriculum.

The school has ensured that reading sits at the heart of the curriculum and fosters a genuine love of books among all pupils. Leaders make judicious use of high-quality texts to underpin and enhance pupils' learning across the wider curriculum.

The school makes sure that pupils develop secure reading knowledge. Expertly trained staff support pupils to learn to read. As a result, the school's phonics programme is delivered to a consistently high standard. By the time that they leave the Reception Year, almost all children have a secure knowledge of how to use phonics to read and write words. Pupils in key stage 1 continue to practise and develop this knowledge so that they can read fluently and accurately. Skilled staff

ensure that the small number of pupils who fall behind with their reading knowledge catch up successfully.

Staff provide highly effective and well-tailored support for pupils to ensure that they are ready to learn. The school works quickly and purposefully to identify any pupils who may have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). There is effective communication between the school, parents and carers, and a wide range of professionals. This ensures that pupils with SEND receive expert support to enable them to achieve highly.

Staff adapt learning activities and address gaps in pupils' knowledge very effectively. Pupils remember their learning and understand the connections between essential concepts and ideas. Staff ensure that pupils have the understanding that they need before new learning is introduced.

Pupils display excellent manners. They do their best to treat others in the same way that they would like to be treated themselves. They are courteous and considerate. Children in the early years are exceptionally well behaved. They follow well-established routines and learn harmoniously alongside one another.

The school provides an exemplary range of carefully crafted opportunities that enhance the personal development of pupils. Leaders are dedicated to shaping pupils into responsible young people. Pupils build up an in-depth understanding of local, national and global issues. Importantly, leaders ensure that pupils know the role that they can play in addressing such issues. Pupils enjoy a rich variety of trips. These include visits to different places of worship, museums and places of historical significance. Pupils are prepared very well for life in modern Britain.

Leaders and governors collaborate closely to make sure that all pupils receive an exceptional standard of education. Leaders are dynamic and highly effective in driving forward continuous improvements. Governors have an astute understanding of the school. They support and challenge leaders in a measured and considered way. Staff value being part of the school and appreciate the support that they receive from leaders. Staff are grateful for the training that they receive and the positive impact that this has on their roles. This makes them feel valued.

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 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	105021
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	10289878
Type of school	Infant
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	160
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Dr Eric Mahers
Headteacher	Christopher Mervyn
Website	www.brackenwood-infant.wirral.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 July 2010, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The school does 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.

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection that the school 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.
- Inspectors conducted deep dives in early reading, mathematics and art and design. They met with subject leaders and teachers. They visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work and talked with groups of pupils about their learning. The lead inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.

- Inspectors considered the curriculum in other subjects. They met with leaders, spoke with pupils and reviewed pupils' work in these subjects.
- The lead inspector spoke with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. She also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors talked to staff about their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors met with the leaders who are responsible for attendance, behaviour and pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors looked at a range of policies and documents relating to pupils' welfare and education. They observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- 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 took account of the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. There were no responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils.
- Inspectors met with parents at the start of the school day and took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.

Inspection team

Helen Friend, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Adam Montague-Clewes

Ofsted Inspector

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