

Inspection of Higher Bebington Junior School

Mill Road, Higher Bebington, Wirral, Merseyside CH63 8QE

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 October 2023

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| Overall effectiveness | Good |
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| The quality of education | Good |
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| Behaviour and attitudes | Good |
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| Personal development | Good |
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| Leadership and management | Good |
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| Previous inspection grade | Outstanding |
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This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 15 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 graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. 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 graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to attend Higher Bebington Junior School. They value the nurture and care that the school provides for them. Pupils benefit from positive and supportive relationships with the adults in school.

Pupils take pride in the wide range of leadership roles that they hold, such as acting as hall helpers at lunchtimes. They want the school to be the best that it can be. For example, pupils told inspectors that they are keen to preserve the school as a happy and enjoyable place for everyone.

The school has high expectations for what pupils can achieve. Pupils develop the self-belief and determination that they need to reach these ambitious goals and achieve well.

Pupils show respectful attitudes to each other. Social times are a hive of activity as pupils engage enthusiastically with the selection of pursuits on offer. Pupils learn to take risks, to communicate and to resolve conflict. They behave well.

Pupils feel that staff will listen to their views and opinions. The school uses pupils' views to shape the support that pupils receive and to enhance the range of experiences that are available. The school makes sure that pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), make the most of the opportunities provided. These include extra-curricular clubs such as sports, chess and choir.

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

Pupils, including those with SEND, learn an appropriately ambitious curriculum. The school sets out clearly what it wants pupils to know and remember in each subject. In most subjects, the school skilfully supports staff to design learning that captures pupils' interest and supports them to learn the intended curriculum well. However, in a small number of subjects, staff are not as well equipped to design learning for pupils. In these subjects, from time to time, some pupils do not learn as well as they could.

The school ensures that teachers are adept at using assessment strategies to check on what pupils know, remember and can do. Teachers use assessment information to adapt future learning based on pupils' prior knowledge. The school ensures that teachers support those pupils with gaps in their knowledge to catch up quickly. As a result, pupils deepen their understanding of concepts as they build their knowledge successfully over time.

The school has appropriate systems in place to identify the additional needs of pupils with SEND swiftly and accurately. Staff skilfully adapt their delivery of the curriculum to meet these pupils' needs. For example, teachers break learning down into small steps that enable pupils to learn with success. Pupils with SEND receive

the support that they need to learn well alongside their peers. In addition, the school carefully considers how to best develop pupils' confidence and independence when designing support for them.

Reading is at the heart of the school's curriculum. Pupils enjoy reading and the opportunities to listen to books being read aloud by staff. Staff carefully choose books to reflect a range of different cultures and backgrounds. Pupils benefit from having a broad selection of high-quality books to choose from in the well-stocked library.

The school quickly identifies those pupils who find it hard to read. These pupils receive the help that they need to catch up quickly. Staff ensure that pupils read books that are carefully matched to their phonics knowledge. This helps pupils to develop their fluency and confidence in reading.

Pupils' wider personal development is a priority for the school. Pupils' in-depth knowledge of fundamental British values prepares them well for their next steps. Pupils respect the views of others, even when they differ from their own. They said that the school rules, 'ready, respectful and safe', are reminders of how they should conduct themselves inside and out of school.

In the main, pupils focus well on their learning and classrooms are seldom disrupted. Nevertheless, on a small number of occasions, the school's expectations for some pupils' attitudes to learning are not as high as they should be. When this happens, these pupils do not learn as well they could.

The school shares useful information with parents and carers. For example, parents are kept up to date on their children's rates of attendance. This helps parents to understand the importance of regular attendance so that their children do not miss out on important learning.

Governors have the knowledge that they need to check on how the school's actions impact on the quality of education that pupils receive. Those responsible for governance support and challenge the school when necessary.

Staff said that they feel valued by leaders. They appreciate the school's consideration of their well-being and workload when they make changes to the curriculum. Staff are positive about the support that they receive from leaders to carry out their roles effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, the school does not ensure that staff are suitably equipped to design learning consistently well. Where this is the case, pupils find it harder to build upon and deepen their learning over time. The school should ensure that staff receive the support that they need to deliver curriculums with confidence and expertise.
- On a small number of occasions, the school's expectations for some pupils' attitudes to learning are not high enough. This means that some pupils do not learn as well as they could. The school should ensure that the expectations for pupils' attitudes to learning are consistently high across the school.

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 | 105009 |
| Local authority | Wirral |
| Inspection number | 10226361 |
| Type of school | Junior |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 7 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 372 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Jess Harrison |
| Headteacher | Samantha Calveley |
| Website | www.higherbebington.wirral.sch.uk |
| Dates of previous inspection | 1 and 2 July 2008, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school does not use any 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. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and subject leaders. In addition, an inspector met with members of the local governing body, including the chair, and the local authority school improvement adviser.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, including early reading, mathematics, science, history and physical education. For each deep

dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also considered the curriculum in other subjects.

- An inspector listened to pupils read to a trusted adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- Inspectors analysed school documentation, including leaders' evaluations and improvement documentation. Inspectors scrutinised a range of policies and procedures, including those that relate to the curriculum, SEND, safeguarding and behaviour.
- An inspector listened to the views of parents at the end of the first day of the inspection. Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View and the free-text comments. Inspectors evaluated the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Jane Dennis, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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