

# Inspection of Overleigh St Mary's CofE Primary School

Old Wrexham Road, Handbridge, Chester, Cheshire CH4 7HS

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Inspection dates:	8 and 9 October 2024
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils are happy to come to school each morning. Their teachers and Ziggy the school dog greet them warmly. Everyone is made to feel welcome, especially those who have arrived from different countries from around the world. Pupils take pride in their language and culture and that of their friends. Pupils benefit from a strong sense of belonging to the school community.

Pupils behave exceptionally well. In class, they respond to the high expectations that the school has of them. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers as well to as each other. Relationships between staff and pupils are highly respectful. Pupils are very keen to try their best in all that they do. As a result, the school is calm and purposeful.

Teachers encourage pupils to reach their potential. In lessons, pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) are supported to learn alongside their friends. By the end of Year 6, pupils leave ready to meet the demands of secondary school.

Pupils benefit from the broad range of clubs on offer. This includes gymnastics, British Sign Language and gardening. Pupils enjoy developing their skills and talents. They take pride in representing the school at local sporting events and are especially delighted when they experience success.

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

There is a high priority placed on early reading. In Nursery, children delight in listening to stories and join in with songs and rhymes. In Reception, the phonics programme starts swiftly. Well-trained staff deliver phonics effectively. Most pupils keep pace with the programme. Staff provide support for those pupils who find reading more difficult to enable them to catch up. Pupils of all ages enjoy reading. Older pupils talk about books and authors that they like with confidence. However, pupils at the early stages of reading have not benefited from sufficient opportunities to practise and apply their phonics knowledge in their writing. On occasion, this slows the pace at which they become fluent writers.

The school has carefully considered each subject's curriculum. It has identified the small steps of learning so that staff know what to teach and when. Typically, teachers design learning which helps pupils to learn well and remember what they have been taught. Staff check pupils' learning in order to identify any gaps or misconceptions. In a small number of subjects, pupils have not had the opportunity to develop deep knowledge over time. This is because the school has not determined the knowledge that pupils need to learn in these curriculums in sufficient detail. Occasionally, this hinders how well some pupils understand key concepts in these subjects.

The school swiftly identifies the support that pupils with additional needs require. Staff ensure that learning activities are adapted so that pupils with SEND access the same curriculum as their peers. A small number of pupils access support which is tailored for their needs. In the main, SEND pupils progress well through the curriculum.

The school has carefully considered its provision for pupils' personal development. Pupils are encouraged to be active local and global citizens. For example, pupils donate to the local foodbank and to their twin school in Uganda. The many nationalities represented across the school are celebrated. This has enabled pupils to develop important values such as empathy and kindness. Pupils demonstrate these important traits in all that they do. This can be seen in the way that they listen to one another's ideas. Pupils are proud to take on a range of leadership roles and contribute to the smooth running of the school. For example, the pupil parliamentarians have been pleased to see leaders adopt their suggestions for aspects of school life that could be improved.

In the playground, pupils of different ages play happily together. They continue to demonstrate the high standards of behaviour that they display in classrooms. Year 6 pupils enjoy the great sense of reward that they get from supporting the youngest pupils at lunchtime. The atmosphere in school and outside is harmonious. Pupils feel very well cared for at this school where staff know them well. Attendance has a high priority across the school. The school has worked very successfully with the families of those pupils who previously struggled to get to school on time every day. This support and challenge has led to a notable improvement in the attendance of these pupils.

Governors know the school's priorities. They ensure that they are well-informed. This means that they offer appropriate support and challenge to the school. They are especially mindful of staff workload and do all that they can to ensure that staff are given the time that they need to complete essential tasks. Staff enjoy working at the school and feel valued.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The school does not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils who are the early stages of reading to practise the sounds that they have learned in their writing. This hinders some pupils' writing fluency as they move into the key stage 2 curriculum. The school should provide regular opportunities for these pupils to practise their phonics knowledge so that they can become fluent and confident writers.
- In a small number of subjects, the school has not thought out the curriculum design in sufficient detail. This means that some pupils in these subjects do not learn and remember as well as they could. The school should refine these curriculums so that pupils build a deep body of subject knowledge over time.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	111290
<b>Local authority</b>	Cheshire West and Chester
<b>Inspection number</b>	10321321
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	438
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Sarah Maoudis
<b>Headteacher</b>	Emma Drew
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.overleightmaryscofeschire.sch.uk">www.overleightmaryscofeschire.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	26 March 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of the Diocese of Chester. Its last section 48 inspection, for schools with a religious character, took place in May 2018. The next inspection is scheduled to take place in the 2025/26 academic year.
- The school offers before- and after-school provision.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024, will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- 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 the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of 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 carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, art, geography and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with subject leaders, discussed the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, looked at a sample of pupils' work, spoke with teachers and talked with pupils about their learning.
- An inspector observed pupils from Year 1 to Year 3 read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other leaders. An inspector also met with members of the governing body. This included the chair of governors.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour as they arrived at school and during lessons and breaktimes. They also spoke with pupils about their views of school life.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents and carers. This included the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also spoke to a number of parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff and pupils who responded to Ofsted's online staff and pupil survey.

## Inspection team

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His Majesty's Inspector

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