

Inspection of Medlar-with-Wesham Church of England Primary School

Garstang Road North, Wesham, Preston, Lancashire PR4 3DE

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 June 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Medlar-with-Wesham Church of England Primary School is a happy and friendly place to be. Everyone is welcome, and pupils know about the importance of equality and diversity. Positive relationships between staff and pupils and among pupils are evident throughout the school.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are starting to benefit from leaders' higher expectations of what they can achieve. Children achieve well in the early years. However, this positive start is not built upon well enough as pupils move through key stages 1 and 2. This is because, in some subjects, leaders are not sufficiently clear about what pupils should learn and when this content should be taught in these subjects. This means that pupils' achievement is uneven.

Pupils have stepped up to meet leaders' raised expectations of their behaviour. Most pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. If bullying does happen, staff deal with it effectively. This helps pupils feel safe.

Pupils benefit from the wide range of extra-curricular clubs that leaders provide. Pupils enjoy being part of their community. For example, they take part in a litter pick, a toy swap and attend the annual community procession.

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

Children in the early years enjoy a strong start to their education. They benefit from a carefully crafted curriculum, which helps them to gain secure foundations for later learning. For example, children write sentences about planting seeds and count blocks confidently. Children are well prepared for the demands of the key stage 1 curriculum.

Leaders have begun to construct a broad and balanced curriculum across Years 1 to 6. They have carefully considered the knowledge that pupils need to learn in some subjects, such as writing and mathematics. In these subjects, leaders are clear about the order in which curriculum content should be taught. Teachers present information clearly and confidently. They select suitable resources and activities to help pupils understand their learning. Consequently, pupils achieve well in these subjects.

In contrast, other curriculum subjects are at various stages of development. Leaders have a broad overview of the topics that will be taught throughout the year. However, they have not identified the small building blocks of knowledge that pupils should learn and the order in which this important knowledge should be taught. This makes it more difficult for teachers to build up pupils' understanding securely over time.

In some subjects, teachers find it difficult to check what pupils have learned because the curriculum content has not been identified well enough. This stops teachers from identifying, and then addressing, missing knowledge or misconceptions. This means that pupils do not build their knowledge across the curriculum as well as they should. This hampers their achievement.

In 2022, Year 6 pupils did not achieve well in the reading tests at the end of key stage 2. As a result, leaders have prioritised reading. Children begin to learn phonics as soon as they start school, in Reception. Pupils read books that match the sounds they are learning. This means that they are now reading with increasing accuracy and confidence. However, pupils who do not keep up with the phonics programme are not identified quickly enough or helped to catch up without delay.

Leaders make sure they identify pupils with SEND as early as possible. They work with staff and specialist providers to ensure that these pupils receive the help they need. Pupils with SEND learn alongside their classmates.

Pupils are polite and respectful to each other and to adults. Classrooms are calm and orderly. Children in early years play and work together well, taking turns and sharing toys. A small number of pupils present with challenging behaviour. Leaders work with external agencies to ensure these pupils get the help and support they need. This means that lessons are not disrupted.

The provision for pupils' personal development is woven through all aspects of school life effectively. Pupils, including those with SEND, have enjoyed a range of trips and visits, including to country parks, a castle and museums. Pupils relish the leadership opportunities they have, including acting as school council representatives. Pupils regularly raise money for a number of charities to help people less fortunate than themselves. This allows them to contrast their lives with those of others.

Leaders, including governors, are becoming increasingly aware of what the school does well and what it needs to do to improve further. However, a number of leadership changes over a short period of time have slowed improvement and resulted in inconsistencies in curriculum design and delivery. Nonetheless, leaders ensure that staff are well supported to manage their workload and well-being. Staff are proud to work at Wesham.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors make sure that teachers and other adults in the school receive regular and ongoing safeguarding training. Staff are alert to the signs of abuse and neglect. They carefully follow procedures and report concerns promptly. When necessary, leaders work closely with other agencies to ensure that families get the help and support they need.

Pupils are taught about how to keep themselves safe. They learn about road safety, healthy eating and how to stay safe online. They know that there is someone they can talk to if they are worried or concerned.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not ensured that those pupils who are not keeping up with the phonics programme receive the support they need to catch up quickly. This means that some pupils do not read with sufficient fluency or confidence. Leaders should improve the support that teachers receive to help pupils gain secure phonics knowledge.
- Leaders have not clearly identified the key knowledge that pupils should learn in each subject and the order in which this knowledge should be taught. This leads to variability in the implementation of the curriculum and stops pupils from achieving as well as they should. Leaders should complete their curriculum thinking in all subjects so that teachers know what should be taught and when this should happen.
- Teachers are not able to check if pupils have learned the curriculum because they are unsure what they should be assessing. This means that gaps in pupils' knowledge are not spotted or addressed quickly enough. Leaders should develop their procedures for assessment so that teachers can resolve gaps in pupils' knowledge.

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	119553
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10268884
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	171
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Marjorie Towers
Headteacher	Gareth Allen
Website	www.medlar-wesham.lancsngfl.ac.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 January 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not use alternative provision.
- The school is a Church of England school. The last section 48 inspection of the school's religious character was in 2022.
- The headteacher was absent during the inspection. The deputy headteacher led the school during the inspection. The deputy headteacher has been appointed as the substantive headteacher from September 2023.

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. The 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, science and art and design. For each deep dive, they discussed the curriculum

with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. They listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.

- Inspectors met with the acting headteacher and a member of the senior leadership team. They also met with subject leaders and a group of teachers.
- An inspector met with governors. The lead inspector also spoke with a local authority adviser to the school.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils in meetings and around the school.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View. There were no responses to staff and pupil questionnaires.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation about safeguarding. They spoke with staff to understand how they keep pupils safe. They reviewed the school's record of checks undertaken on newly appointed staff.

Inspection team

Emma Jackson, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Cleo Cunningham

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023