

Inspection of Benchill Primary School

Benchill Road, Wythenshawe, Manchester M22 8EJ

Inspection dates: 11–12 September 2019

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a calm and caring school where pupils thrive both socially and emotionally. Leaders' vision of 'Respect-Learn-Safe' is well embedded into the school's culture. Leaders and staff have high expectations for all pupils. As a result, pupils learn well.

Teachers know pupils well. Teachers nurture, develop and challenge pupils so that they achieve well. The curriculum has helped to raise pupils' aspirations and resilience. It equips them well for life in modern Britain. Pupils study a wide range of subjects and have many opportunities to learn beyond the school gates. For example, in geography, pupils learned about mankind's impact on the environment. Pupils decided to set up an eco-warrior club to raise awareness of the environment.

Pupils enjoy school because they enjoy their learning. They feel safe and well looked after. They know that the adults in school care about them and that there is always someone to talk to. Pupils' behaviour is good around the school. Pupils we spoke to told us that bullying is rare. If it does occur, they said that it is dealt with quickly. Pupils particularly enjoy learning by going on trips, for example to a museum, as this brings their learning to life.

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

Leaders are clear about how the curriculum should be taught. They also understand how the things pupils are taught will help them to be successful in the future. The curriculum is well planned in most subjects. Staff are well trained in some subjects. This means that teachers are more confident in teaching some subjects than they are in others. Pupils learn about new things in a logical order, which helps them to remember. However, there are still some subjects, such as history, where leaders have not identified what they want pupils to know and remember as they get older. This means that some lessons do not always build on what pupils already know.

Learning to read is central to the success of this school. Staff are well supported by the teacher who is responsible for reading. All staff understand how phonics should be taught and they do this well. Extra help is given quickly to any pupils who need to catch up. Pupils achieve well in the Year 1 phonics screening check.

Pupils enjoy reading and listening to stories. Some pupils explained in detail what makes a good writer and why they like different authors. Books that pupils read in school are matched to the phonics they have been learning. However, this is not always the case with the books that pupils take home. Some pupils find these books too challenging because they are not closely matched to the phonics they know.

Children get off to an excellent start in the Nursery. They make strong progress, often from a low starting point. This is because leaders and staff have created an environment that supports an ambitious and well-planned curriculum. In Reception, there is a focus on developing children's early reading, writing and mathematics skills. Staff read to children every day. However, in Reception, there are limited

opportunities for children to develop their physical skills and explore the natural environment outdoors.

Leaders and staff have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils are polite, respectful and caring towards each other. They know about different faiths and religions and how to be a good citizen. Pupils enjoy their time at school and they attend regularly.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have their needs met well. Parents and carers of these pupils spoke highly of the support they receive. They were all in agreement that their children make good progress academically and socially. Parents also feel that they now have a good understanding of how they can support their children's learning at home. This is because of the support they have received from leaders.

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher leads a dedicated team of staff who are all proud to be part of this calm and inclusive school. Leaders understand the pressure that staff are under and how hard they work. Leaders think about this before they make any changes to teaching. Leaders make sure that teachers are well supported and protected from bullying and harassment.

Governors use their skills well to support and challenge the leadership of the school. They regularly attend the school to check whether improvements are happening. Governors have been actively involved in the improvements made to the curriculum.

The school's curriculum is not yet sufficiently coherently planned and sequenced in most subjects. However, it is clear from the actions that leaders have already taken to plan this year's curriculum and to train staff in how to deliver it that they are in the process of bringing this about.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that there is a strong culture of keeping children safe. They understand any issues in the local area. They use this information well to provide training and support that pupils and their families need. As a result, pupils know how to stay safe at school, at home and in the local community.

All staff receive regular training and safeguarding updates. They know what signs to look for if they have any concerns about a child's safety. Relationships between adults and pupils are excellent. This ensures that pupils feel safe at school and are comfortable when approaching staff with any concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Children in Reception do not have the same opportunities as those in Nursery to develop their physical skills and explore the natural environment outdoors. Leaders need to ensure that all children within the early years have regular opportunities to do this.
- The changes leaders have made to the way that subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics are taught are very recent. Training has also mainly focused on the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders need to embed the changes they have made so that subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics are taught to the same high standard and in the same logical way. This will ensure that pupils know and remember more in all subjects.
- Some pupils guess words in the books that they are given to read at home. This is because the books are not matched to their phonics knowledge. Leaders need to make sure that the books children take home enable them to practise the phonics they are learning in school. This will help to further develop pupils' early reading skills.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	132241
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10086851
Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	537
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Ian Maddly
Headteacher	Helen Eken
Website	www.benchill.manchester.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	4–5 March 2015

Information about this school

- The school has provision for two-year-olds.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in classes across the school, including joint observations with senior leaders.
- Inspectors examined a range of pupils' work from each year group in subjects across the curriculum. Inspectors also examined work of pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read from Years 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, at breaktimes, at lunchtimes and when pupils were moving around the school. They spoke with pupils formally in groups and informally around the school.
- Meetings were held with governors, senior leaders and middle leaders.
- Inspectors considered a range of documentation, such as the school's evaluation of its own performance and its areas for development. Inspectors looked at

attendance and behaviour records.

- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding documentation, considered how this relates to daily practice and spoke with staff and pupils.
- The inspection focused deeply on reading, mathematics, science and history. This included discussions with leaders of the subjects, visits to lessons, discussions with teachers about the subjects, scrutiny of pupils' works in the subjects and discussions with pupils about the subjects. Inspectors also took a broad overview of pupils' work in subjects across the curriculum.
- Inspectors considered the 14 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and 22 responses from the online staff survey. There were no responses to the pupils' survey.

Inspection team

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