

Inspection of Cedars Primary School

St James's Road, Blackburn, Lancashire BB1 8HQ

Inspection dates: 12–13 November 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?

Pupils enjoy attending this warm, welcoming and happy school. Strong relationships with staff help pupils to learn well. Parents and carers told us that the school keeps them well informed about pupils' progress. They said that this helps them to support their children's learning at home.

Leaders and staff have high expectations for all pupils. They want pupils to work hard and to achieve their very best. Pupils behave well in class and show respect for their teachers. They listen carefully in lessons and take care not to distract each other from their work.

Pupils have many opportunities to develop personally as well as academically. They enjoy representing their school in sports competitions and singing in the choir. They also enjoy taking part in debates. Pupils are valued as individuals. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) participate fully in the school's wide range of activities.

Pupils conduct themselves well around school. They are proud to show off their school to visitors. Pupils are safe and well looked after. They do not see bullying as a problem. They are confident that if bullying was to occur, their teachers would deal with it quickly and effectively.

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

Leaders have inspired staff to share their high aspirations for pupils. The school's broad, rich curriculum sets out the order in which pupils should develop their learning in each subject area. This means that pupils' knowledge and skills build up and strengthen over time.

Teachers assess pupils' progress in a range of ways. This helps them to check that pupils are keeping up. Teachers take speedy action if they see anyone falling behind. Pupils with SEND also learn well. This is because teaching builds effectively on what these pupils already know.

Leaders and teachers see reading as the key to learning. They have made reading a priority. Pupils develop a love of reading because they are introduced to a wide range of books. They told us how reading helps them to develop a broad vocabulary to use in their writing.

Young children start to learn about phonics as soon as they start school. Teachers know exactly what children should be achieving in phonics as they move through the early years and into key stage 1. This helps them to provide strong support for anybody who struggles. The proportion of pupils who met the required standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check was above the national average in 2019.

Pupils learn well in mathematics. Teachers plan work that is demanding, but that builds securely on what pupils already know. Pupils know their times tables and

learn to apply their mathematical skills in different ways. Pupils develop confidence in mathematics as a result.

Pupils enjoy physical education. They take part in sports such as boccia, football and cross-country running. Teachers make sure that pupils keep building up and developing their skills over time. Pupils are able to develop their sports interests further in after-school clubs.

Pupils told us that they enjoy science. They are able to understand and use correct scientific vocabulary. For example, pupils talk knowledgeably about the refraction of light and about genetics. Pupils can remember earlier learning because science topics are taught in a logical order.

Most pupils attend school regularly. However, some pupils miss too many school days to take holidays during term time. This makes it difficult for them to catch up on work they have missed. Leaders have recently changed the way in which they work with families to reduce these absences. However, it is too early to see the impact of this work.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of activities which help them to develop personally. They take part in many trips and visits and support charitable works. Pupils learn about different cultures and religions. They can explain the 'Cedars Values' of respect, honesty, kindness, pride and ambition. However, pupils are less clear about fundamental British values, such as democracy and individual liberty.

Governors ask leaders challenging questions about pupils' achievements in reading, writing and mathematics. This helps them to hold leaders to account for their work. Governors ask fewer questions about other subjects. They know less about pupils' achievements in these subjects as a result.

Children benefit from good provision in the early years. Classrooms and the outdoor area are exciting places to be. Children soon settle in and feel confident in the setting. They enjoy listening to stories and joining in with songs and rhymes. Those children whose English is at an early stage of development, and those with SEND, receive good support. Adults listen carefully to what parents tell them about their children. This helps staff to plan experiences that capture children's interests and support their learning well. The majority of children are well prepared for Year 1 when the time comes.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have made safeguarding a priority at Cedars. Everyone understands the school's very clear systems for sharing any concerns they have about pupils' welfare. Leaders have made sure that staff are knowledgeable about the full range of safeguarding issues. The school carries out appropriate checks on the suitability of new staff to work with children.

Leaders have established effective professional partnerships with a range of agencies. This helps them to secure support for children and families where it is needed.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils understand the school's values and try to live them out in their daily lives. However, they are not sufficiently knowledgeable about fundamental British values. This means that pupils struggle to explain their understanding of everyday issues such as democracy and the rule of law. Leaders need to improve pupils' learning in this area so that pupils' knowledge of fundamental British values is secure.
- The governing body has taken important steps to improve its effectiveness. Governors now hold leaders to account more effectively for pupils' achievements, especially in reading, writing and mathematics. However, they do not ask enough questions about other areas of pupils' learning. Governors now need to improve this aspect of their work, so that they hold leaders effectively to account for the impact of the whole curriculum on pupils' learning.
- Leaders have worked hard to improve pupils' regular attendance at school. However, too many pupils are absent for long periods, especially for family holidays. This makes it difficult for these pupils to catch up with their classmates, and they sometimes lose ground in their learning as a result. Leaders now need to embed the strong systems they have introduced recently, so that persistent absences reduce further and more pupils benefit every day from the school's good quality of education.

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	119222
Local authority	Blackburn with Darwen
Inspection number	10082083
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	364
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mrs Rizwana Zaahid
Acting headteacher	Joanne Leak
Website	www.cedarsprimaryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	19–20 November 2014

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, a new headteacher has been appointed. There is also a new chair of the governing body.
- Currently, the school's deputy headteacher is leading the school as acting headteacher.
- The number of pupils on roll has reduced from 487 at the time of the last inspection to 364.

Information about this inspection

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

- We met with governors, senior leaders, subject leaders and staff. We also took account of 23 responses to the staff survey.
- The lead inspector met with the school's adviser from the local authority and with a local leader of education who has been supporting the school.
- We spoke with pupils in meetings and during lessons. We also spoke with them at breaks and lunchtimes. We spoke with some parents at the beginning of the school day and following a parent workshop provided by the school. We took

account of the nine responses to the pupil survey and the seven responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View.

- We looked at safeguarding procedures and records of safeguarding and behaviour. We observed pupils' behaviour around the school and took into account the school's attendance records.
- We looked at a range of documentation, including evidence of the school's self-evaluation, plans for improvement and records of the work of the governing body.
- In addition to subject-focused activity, we checked the quality of provision in the early years and the implementation of the wider curriculum across the whole school.
- We considered the following subjects in depth as part of the inspection: reading, mathematics, science and PE. Inspection activity in these subjects included evaluation of curriculum planning, visits to lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work, listening to pupils read, discussions with subject leaders, teachers and teaching assistants and discussions with pupils about their learning in these subjects.

Inspection team

Mavis Smith, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Ian Young	Ofsted Inspector
Aleksandra Hartshorne	Ofsted Inspector

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