

Inspection of Eden School

Heys Lane, Blackburn, Lancashire BB2 4NW

Inspection dates: 5–6 November 2019

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils like the stability and consistency that the permanent headteacher and staff have brought to Eden School. As a result, pupils now attend school more often. The school is calmer and more orderly than in the past. When they are in school, the vast majority of pupils take part in lessons and behave well.

Teachers set pupils work which pupils find interesting. Pupils know that if they are struggling to cope, staff will help them. They know that they must complete all of their work before the end of the school day. Teachers have high expectations of pupils.

Pupils generally treat each other and their teachers with respect. Bullying is rare. When bullying happens, staff deal with it well. Pupils feel safe in school.

From when they start at the school, pupils are happier, healthier and better prepared for their next steps. Pupils are well informed about college courses, apprenticeships and jobs. This information helps them make sensible decisions about what to do when they leave school.

While pupils and staff agree that much has improved, there is more to do. Leaders have not yet set out in enough detail what pupils need to learn and the order in which they need to learn new things. This makes it hard for pupils to use what they already know and can do to help them make sense of new learning.

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

Over the past year, the extended leadership team has put in place effective systems and procedures to improve the quality of education. Staff and pupils now know exactly what is expected of them. Leaders have made sure that training and support are in place to help staff do their jobs well. Also, they have reviewed pupils' needs and put in place the right support to help them succeed. Everyone agrees that Eden School is now a much better place to be for both pupils and staff.

Pupils are clear about the school rules. They know the consequences if they do not follow the rules. Training and support have helped staff deal with pupils' challenging behaviour. Almost all pupils now comply with school rules. Fixed-term exclusions are reducing quickly. Leaders have put in place extra support for the small minority of pupils who are at risk of exclusion.

More pupils are in school on time and every day than in the past. Many pupils had a history of poor attendance when they joined the school. These pupils have improved their attendance considerably. The attendance lead follows up on any absence straightaway. There are some families who struggle to get their children to school. The attendance lead works with other agencies to get these families the help that they need.

Information in pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans is now up to date and accurate. Leaders ensure that the provision set out in these plans meets pupils' current needs. The school has improved support for the large group of pupils with autism spectrum disorder. It is too early to be certain about the full impact of these changes. However, for individual pupils, there have been noticeable improvements already. For example, some pupils are using the new sensory room to better self-regulate their behaviour. These pupils are spending more time in lessons now and getting their work completed.

Overall, pupils' personal development is a real strength of the school. Bullying is not tolerated. There is a wide range of daily enrichment activities to support pupils' development. That said, pupils' knowledge about the different groups of people who make up British society is not as strong as it should be. Leaders do not create enough opportunities for pupils to learn about cultures, ethnicities and religions other than their own.

Staff enjoy their jobs, feel valued and are proud to be a part of Eden School. Leaders realise the benefits of working with other schools and with the local authority. These partnerships have helped them to make more rapid progress in improving the school.

Leaders intend that the school follows the national curriculum. Teachers are using this curriculum to inform their plans. The mathematics subject lead has devised a long-term plan. This plan sets out the essential knowledge to be taught by year group and by half-term. Teachers use these plans well to devise lessons. Teachers make frequent checks on pupils' learning. They pick up on misconceptions, set challenges for the 'quick graspers' and help those pupils who are struggling.

Curriculum plans in other subject across the school are not as well developed as they are in mathematics. They are still being updated and improved. That said, specialist subject teachers are planning lessons which help pupils to know more and remember more. For example, in food technology, younger pupils have a good grasp of safety rules and how to use appliances. As with the curriculum plans, the use of assessment is not as well developed in other subjects as it is in mathematics.

Many pupils join the school with considerable gaps in their education. For many pupils, it takes time to be 'ready to learn'. However, the school helps them to behave well. Those pupils who engage well in lessons make progress and achieve well across the curriculum. These pupils work towards a range of recognised qualifications at different levels, including GCSE, level 1 and level 2.

The school's comprehensive careers programme has prepared pupils very well for their next steps. Pupils across the school visit different workplaces, meet employers and attend careers fairs. In the past two years, all Year 11 pupils have moved on to college or apprenticeships. They have chosen courses or jobs that suit their interests and skills.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders carry out all the required checks on staff. Staff understand their roles and responsibilities well. Staff follow up on all concerns. They liaise closely with families and other agencies to keep pupils safe. Pupils learn about potential risks and how to manage them as part of the school's curriculum. Pupils get on well with adults in school. They know that they can confide in any of the staff if they have any worries. Trained staff offer a range of bespoke support, such as play therapy. Also, the school signposts pupils and their families to specialist services.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Subject leads are developing new curriculum plans. They want these to better reflect the ambition and depth of the national curriculum than the school's previous plans. This is the first time that many of these leaders have devised curriculum plans. It is important that senior leaders put in place the support and training to help these leaders succeed.
- Previously, assessment information has not given teachers and leaders the information they need. The mathematics lead and special educational needs coordinator have useful ways of checking on pupils' achievement. Leaders should continue to devise a consistent, effective approach to checking on pupils' learning in subjects other than mathematics. This approach should give teachers and leaders the information they need.
- Over time, pupils learn to treat adults and fellow pupils with tolerance and respect. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to learn about the different groups of people they will meet when they move on from Eden School. Pupils do not know enough about the major religions, ethnicities and other key groups that make up British society.

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	141016
Local authority	Blackburn with Darwen
Inspection number	10110911
Type of school	Special
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	8 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	40
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Ian Brown
Headteacher	Jen Ashworth
Website	www.edenschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	9–10 May 2017

Information about this school

- This is an academy free school. The school is part of the Education Partnership Trust.
- All pupils have an EHC plan. All pupils have social, emotional and mental health needs.
- A new governing body, specifically for Eden School, has been established by the trust since the previous inspection.
- The school uses no alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- During the inspection, we held meetings with senior leaders, middle leaders and class teachers. We spoke with the chief executive officer, the chair of trustees and five members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- We spoke to staff about their workload and well-being.

- We considered the three responses to Parent View, Ofsted’s online questionnaire, and three free-text responses. We also considered the 20 responses to a recent parent survey carried out by the school.
- We considered the 21 responses to Ofsted’s staff survey and the six responses to Ofsted’s pupil survey.
- We met with the people responsible for safeguarding in the school. We scrutinised a wide range of documentation in relation to safeguarding. We spoke with staff and pupils about safeguarding. We also considered the survey responses from staff, pupils, parents and carers around safeguarding.
- We observed pupils’ behaviour during lessons and around school. We spoke to pupils about bullying, behaviour and leaders’ expectations of pupils.
- As part of this inspection, we considered how leaders plan and organise the mathematics, food technology and personal, social and health education curriculums. We also looked at how the school teaches reading. We spoke to teachers and subject leaders. We visited lessons with leaders. We talked with pupils about their learning and looked at the work in their books, as well as other evidence of their learning.

Inspection team

Pippa Jackson Maitland, lead inspector Her Majesty’s Inspector

Kathleen McArthur Ofsted Inspector

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