

Inspection of a good school: Low Ash Primary School

Wrose Road, Wrose, Shipley, West Yorkshire BD18 1AA

Inspection dates:

19–20 November 2019

Outcome

Low Ash Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Parents and pupils are proud to be part of Low Ash Primary School. Pupils told me that learning is fun. They really like all the trips they have to help them learn. Parents and pupils value the 'excellent' sporting opportunities and after school activities. Pupils told me about the competitions they enter, such as boys' and girls' football and cross-country. They are pleased to be in the top ten schools across the country in a times table challenge.

Parents said that teachers are warm and welcoming. At the same time, teachers have high expectations of pupils. Pupils respect each other. In the playground, pupils behave well and move around the school sensibly. In lessons, pupils are attentive and keen to learn. Pupils say that bullying rarely happens. When it does, teachers act to make sure that it stops. Pupils feel safe in school. Their attendance is good.

By the end of key stage 2, pupils do well in reading, writing and mathematics. In science, pupils' achievement is more variable. This is because the subject is not carefully planned throughout the school. The teaching of phonics is slow to get off the ground. Reading books are not always well matched to help pupils learn their phonics.

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

Children in Nursery quickly adapt to the school routines. They enjoy reading in the 'bear's cave' using a torch to see their books in the dark. In the Reception classes, children are eager to learn outside. Here they enjoy a range of exciting activities linked to books and stories they know. During the inspection children were building bridges for the Gingerbread Man to cross the river safely.

The slow start to the teaching of phonics means that some pupils do not learn to read and write quickly. By the end of Year 1, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in phonics is the same as the national average. For a small number of pupils, it

takes until Year 2 for them to get there. Some pupils get extra help with their reading. Pupils' books are not always well chosen to match their phonics knowledge. This means that some pupils struggle to read fluently and with confidence.

School leaders and governors have identified 'reading for enjoyment' as a priority this year. This has been very successful. Pupils are keen to read. Each class has a special reading area linked to their class book. Pupils can sit in a wigwam or on the bridge of the Titanic to read. They really enjoy this. Pupils of all ages talk about their favourite books. Older pupils talk knowledgeably about different authors' writing styles.

The teaching of mathematics is highly effective. The sequence of learning is well organised. Pupils build successfully on the knowledge they already have when learning new mathematics topics. The school's approach of 'it's nothing new' means that pupils quickly become confident mathematicians. This is reflected in the excellent results at the end of key stage 2.

The mathematics curriculum and pupils' work are carefully planned. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) also enjoy success. Some pupils with SEND are given extra support from the teacher or teaching assistant. This helps them to keep up with the rest of the class in mathematics.

Pupils in both key stages enjoy science. Science is planned and taught well in key stage 2. In Year 4 pupils show high levels of understanding. They use the correct scientific vocabulary to describe the difference between solids, liquids and gases. In Year 6 pupils can confidently design and build electrical circuits. Pupils draw effectively on previous learning. In key stage 1 pupils are enthusiastic about science. The planning of science for these pupils is still 'a work in progress'. Leaders are in the process of ensuring that it is logically sequenced and builds carefully on previous knowledge.

Senior leaders have put together curriculum teams. Teachers from each key stage work together to lead subjects. Teachers have a good understanding of the subject requirements in their own particular key stage. However, not all teachers know what the subject looks like in other key stages. They are unclear about the bigger picture. This means that sometimes teachers do not build on what pupils already know and can do. In some subjects, knowledge and content are not sequenced carefully over time.

Leaders and governors effectively provide for disadvantaged pupils and those with high levels of need. They ensure that these pupils have every opportunity to participate in a wealth of activities and trips to help them learn. As a result, pupils behave well and want to go to school. Staff say that leaders are considerate of their workload and look after their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff work well with parents and carers, and other agencies. This helps to protect pupils and keep them free from harm. Governors check that they meet their statutory duties regarding the safe recruitment of staff. Staff training is up to date, which means that staff understand their responsibilities

for safeguarding pupils.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in school, online and in the local community. They feel confident to share any worries or concerns with staff. The inspector found that pupils' worries are followed up effectively.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders of subjects in different key stages of the school do not always have a clear overview of their subject from early years to the end of key stage 2. Leaders should support all subject leaders to improve their knowledge across the primary curriculum. Curriculum leaders should plan and implement a clear sequence of learning that builds year on year. Teachers should build on what has been taught previously in each subject, including science.
- The teaching of phonics in the early years is done methodically but is slow to gather pace. Leaders should raise teachers' expectations of what children can do and learn in phonics. Teachers should make sure that children make better progress and are well prepared for key stage 1.
- Some pupils in key stage 1 who are getting extra help with their phonics read books that do not match their phonics knowledge. These pupils do not read fluently and confidently. Teachers should make sure that reading books are well matched to pupils' needs.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged Low Ash Primary School to be good on 26–27 April 2016.

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 are 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	107272
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	10110832
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	479
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Emma Lister
Headteachers	Elizabeth Medhurst and Fiona Meer
Website	www.lowash.bradford.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Following the recent retirement of the previous headteacher, governors appointed two co-headteachers in September 2019.
- New governors have joined the governing body since the previous inspection and a new chair of governors has taken up post.
- Building work and changes to the number intended to admit in September 2019 resulted in a delayed start to the current Reception Year pupils.

Information about this inspection

- During the inspection, I spoke with pupils, both formally and informally, about their work and school life. I spoke with members of the governing body, the headteachers, other senior leaders and members of staff.
- I examined the single central safeguarding record. I spoke with leaders responsible for safeguarding to discuss how pupils are kept safe.
- I spoke to parents after school and considered the 56 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, the 20 responses from the online staff survey and 46 responses to the pupil survey.

- I looked in depth at reading, mathematics and science. I met subject leaders and teachers, visited lessons and looked at examples of pupils' work. I talked to pupils about their learning and listened to pupils read.

Inspection team

Karen Heath, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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