

Inspection of a good school: Chowbent Primary School

Laburnum Street, Atherton, Manchester M46 9FP

Inspection dates:

11–12 December 2019

Outcome

Chowbent Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils follow the school motto of 'Never be less than your best'. They are enthusiastic about learning. They enjoy the activities and trips that their teachers plan for them. Pupils are keen to share with others the many facts that they have learned while at school.

Pupils regularly discuss how well they are learning with their teachers. Pupils know that staff will help them if they find learning difficult. They can join in lots of activities outside of lesson times. These activities help them to develop a wide range of interests.

Overall, pupils behave well in lessons. They feel safe. However, a minority of pupils with complex needs struggle to get along with other pupils at social times. Staff know these pupils very well. They know what works best to help them to play safely with others and to be ready to learn. Staff deal with incidents of bullying effectively.

Leaders, including governors, have high expectations of all pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. They ensure that pupils are supported to achieve as well as they can. This is particularly true for pupils with special educational needs and or/disabilities (SEND).

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

Leaders and governors have thought carefully about what pupils need to know. Leaders and teachers have meticulously planned a rich curriculum that meets pupils' needs. Pupils' work is of a high quality. Pupils use resilience, responsibility, reflectiveness, resourcefulness and readiness as prompts to underpin their learning. Leaders' well-designed curriculum supports pupils to behave well because they are interested in their lessons. Learning is not interrupted.

The curriculum enables all pupils to achieve well. Pupils in key stage 1 build effectively on the knowledge that they gained in the early years. The attainment of Year 6 pupils has improved over time in reading and mathematics. In 2019, Year 6 pupils attained better than other Year 6 pupils across the country in these subjects. In writing, pupils'

attainment is in line with the national average. Leaders ensure that pupils achieve well, despite a significant number of pupils joining the school at different times of the year.

By the end of Year 6, leaders make sure that pupils read with fluency and accuracy. This is because pupils begin to develop phonics knowledge as soon as they settle into the Reception class. Skilled staff teach phonics well. Leaders provide effective support to help pupils to catch up when they are not reading as well as they should. Pupils across the school use strong phonics knowledge well in reading. They also use this knowledge to produce high-quality writing. Adults make sure that the books that pupils read are at the right level. This encourages pupils to practise their reading. Older pupils love to read. They value the school's well-stocked library.

The mathematics curriculum is equally well planned. Pupils tackle with enthusiasm the mathematics challenges that their teachers set for them. Children in the early years develop confidence in mathematics through a range of practical activities. Older pupils remember what they have learned over time. How they use their knowledge to solve problems is impressive. In both reading and mathematics, teachers address any gaps in knowledge that pupils have. Pupils discuss with their teachers what they have achieved and what they need to learn next. Teachers are adept at planning activities that challenge pupils and deepen their knowledge.

In history, pupils also build on their knowledge from the early years throughout the school. They can recall many facts from the topics that they have studied. However, some pupils struggled to explain the impact of ancient civilisations on modern society. These pupils were also unable to order the different time periods that they have learned about. Although the curriculum plans are appropriate in history, leaders have not made sure that teachers follow their curriculum plans thoroughly enough.

Pupils and their parents and carers value the opportunities that contribute to pupils' wider development. For example, pupils demonstrate global responsibility in activities such as the eco council's work on recycling. They participate in singing at 'Young Voices'. They visit a local residence for older people. They enjoy the many creative or sporting activities on offer at lunchtimes or after school. They know that activities like these can help them to keep mentally and physically well.

Governors prioritise pupils' and staff's well-being. Pupils, especially those with complex SEND, benefit from high-quality support to promote their emotional development. Leaders make sure that individualised support plans are in place for vulnerable pupils. Teachers adapt the curriculum to ensure that pupils with SEND achieve well. Pupils support each other's learning when working together.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that all staff know how to keep pupils safe. Effective systems are in place to record concerns about pupils. Information about vulnerable pupils is shared with relevant personnel. Leaders make sure that the right support is in place for pupils who

need it.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including when they are online. They feel safe at school. They know that staff check carefully who is allowed onto the school premises. Leaders check that pupils are safe during sessions with external providers. However, they do not always make sure that the quality of external providers' risk assessments matches that of those prepared by the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers have not made sure that pupils understand all of the key knowledge identified in the history curriculum. Some pupils are unable to recall essential facts and information. Leaders need to ensure that teachers follow curriculum plans, for example in history, as they intend.
- Although pupils are safe in school, leaders do not always ensure that risk assessments from private providers match the same high quality of their own risk assessments. On occasions, external providers' risk assessments lack detail. Risk assessments of external providers working on the school site need to reflect the same rigour as the school's own safeguarding procedures.

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 the school to be good on 12 May 2015.

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	106443
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	10087694
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	185
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Susan Heapy
Headteacher	James Randle
Website	www.chowbent.wigan.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 May 2015

Information about this school

- The number of pupils on roll has reduced since the time of the previous inspection. This is because there are more places available in local primary schools than there are pupils needing a place.
- The number of pupils with SEND has increased. Some of these pupils have complex needs.

Information about this inspection

- I spoke with the headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, a group of governors, including the chair of the governing body, and a representative from the local authority.
- I looked at a range of documentation for safeguarding, including the record of required checks carried out on school staff. I spoke with pupils about safeguarding. I also reviewed staff training logs, risk assessments and case files. I met with the person responsible for safeguarding to discuss how the school keeps pupils safe.
- I observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes. I also observed pupils in assembly, in the breakfast club and as they moved around the school.

- I spoke with pupils about their experiences at school.
- I looked at the 31 responses to Ofsted’s parental questionnaire, Parent View, and the 18 free-text responses from parents to find out their views of the school. I spoke with parents as they dropped their children off.
- I focused closely on reading, mathematics and history. I talked to the leaders of these subjects. I visited lessons. I looked at examples of pupils’ work. I talked with teachers and pupils about what pupils were learning.

Inspection team

Claire Cropper, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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