

Inspection of a good school: Clarendon Primary School

Recreation Street, Bolton, Lancashire BL3 6SN

Inspection dates:

12–13 February 2020

Outcome

Clarendon Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Clarendon is a friendly and welcoming school. The school serves a richly vibrant multicultural community. Pupils recognise their similarities and celebrate their differences. Pupils learn how to respect the rights of others. The pupils who I spoke to told me that they are happy at this school.

Leaders have high expectations for what pupils can achieve, academically and personally. Pupils are proud of their school. They achieve well and grow in confidence.

Pupils behave well and show genuine care for each other. Older pupils relish the different roles that they play in school. These include 'Clarendon Carers', school council members and playground leaders. At playtimes and lunchtimes, pupils include everyone in their games. In class, they behave well.

Pupils enjoy studying a wide range of curriculum topics. They said that learning is exciting. They enjoy reading every day. Pupils enjoy the trips that support their learning. They take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities and exciting trips.

Pupils said that bullying is rare. When it does happen, staff deal with it successfully. Pupils said that they feel safe in school.

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

Leaders have designed a curriculum that inspires and motivates pupils. It provides pupils with a range of experiences to develop their skills and knowledge across a range of subjects. As a result, all pupils achieve well. The learning of new vocabulary is woven into all aspects of the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those pupils who are disadvantaged, are well supported and encouraged to become independent learners.

Many subjects, such as history and geography, are well planned and delivered. Pupils are interested in their learning. They remember a lot of relevant knowledge from the topics that they have studied. For example, during a history topic, Year 2 pupils gained a deep understanding of Bolton at the time of the Industrial Revolution.

Not all subjects are as well developed. Plans for art and design and technology are new. Teachers do not always present subject content in the best order so that pupils' learning builds up over time. As a result, pupils are not helped to learn and remember more.

Reading is given a high priority. Leaders foster a love of reading among the pupils. This begins in the early years. The early years curriculum is well designed. There is a strong focus on developing children's vocabulary from the day that they start school. Leaders make sure that pupils read books that are well matched to the sounds that they are learning. Staff have strong subject knowledge. They teach phonics systematically. Pupils who struggle to learn to read receive effective extra support.

Leaders have improved the mathematics curriculum. They have provided staff with training to develop their mathematics knowledge and skills. However, the planned curriculum does not always match the needs of the pupils. On occasions, pupils struggle to tackle challenging problems. This is because some pupils lack the prior knowledge to help them do so. Pupils are not confident at remembering and applying their multiplication and division facts to new learning.

Visits to art galleries, the beach and the theatre help to develop pupils' understanding of life in modern Britain. Pupils' mental health is a priority. One of the mental health ambassadors told me that every class has a 'worry monster', who eats all of the pupils' worries. Assemblies help the pupils understand how to care for others. As one pupil told me, 'We learn how to be good friends.' Pupils enjoy their learning. They work hard and cooperate with each other.

Leaders are dedicated to the development of the school. Staff feel valued. They said that their well-being is a priority for leaders. Staff described working at this school as being part of one big family, with pupils at the heart of all they do. Leaders make sure that the families of pupils who speak English as an additional language receive effective support so that they can help their children at home.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. School policies and records are detailed and fit for purpose. All necessary checks are made on adults working at the school. Staff are well trained. They know how to spot any concerns about a pupil's welfare. Staff work closely with families and external agencies to support vulnerable pupils. Governors are aware fully of their safeguarding duties and have attended the required training.

Leaders have a thorough understanding of the risks in the local area. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including when they are online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school has designed a mathematics curriculum which has already had an impact on standards in arithmetic at the end of key stage 1. However, at key stage 2, aspects of pupils' basic arithmetical skills in solving problems are less secure. This is because pupils have gaps in their knowledge of some basic calculation skills. Leaders need to ensure that the curriculum at key stage 2 allows pupils to gain a secure understanding of key calculation strategies, especially for multiplication. This will enable pupils to become fluent and confident when solving mathematical problems.
- Leaders have developed effective plans for all areas of the curriculum. These are woven together to provide the pupils with a rich educational experience. However, the detailed curriculum planning and assessment procedures have not had sufficient time to become embedded in practice across the school in some subjects, such as art and design and technology. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum plans are implemented successfully so that pupils can achieve well in all curriculum subjects.

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 1–2 March 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 the school and 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	105153
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	10111073
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	472
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Corinne Davoy-Wood
Headteacher	Vicky Chatterjee
Website	www.clarendon.bolton.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	1–2 March 2016

Information about this school

- There have been no significant changes since the previous inspection.

Information about this inspection

- I held meetings with the headteacher and senior leaders.
- I held meetings with teachers, support staff and subject leaders. I met with four members of the governing body and held a meeting with a representative of the local authority.
- I spoke to pupils about behaviour and expectations in the school and observed behaviour around the school and in lessons.
- I reviewed the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, minutes of governing body meetings and information on the school's website. I examined records in relation to safeguarding.
- I considered the 12 responses to Ofsted's free-text facility. I spoke to parents and carers at the start of the school day. I took account of the 45 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and the 116 responses to the pupil survey.

- As part of this inspection, I did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. During these activities, I met with subject leaders and visited lessons. I also spoke with teachers and pupils. I looked at examples of pupils' work and listened to pupils read.

Inspection team

Andrew Morley, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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