

Inspection of The Friars Primary School

Cannon Street, Salford, Greater Manchester M3 7EU

Inspection dates:

3–4 March 2020

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a diverse school community where everyone is welcomed with open arms. Pupils are proud to belong to their school. They are nurtured by caring adults. Pupils, including those with complex special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), benefit from effective emotional and pastoral support. This is equally true for pupils who speak English as an additional language.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They behave well and they feel safe. The pupils that we spoke to told us that staff deal with incidents of bullying well.

Pupils enjoy learning and they have fun at school. They are supported to develop a wide range of interests. Pupils like being active. At breaktimes, they make up their own games, using equipment creatively. They love the regular adventurous activities that all classes take part in. Some pupils thrive in collaborative learning in the forest area in the school grounds.

Children in the early years are enticed to learn many new things by skilled staff. They achieve well. However, leaders do not ensure that all pupils in the rest of the school build on this good start. Leaders do not have high enough expectations of pupils. Consequently, as pupils progress through the school, too many of them do not achieve as well as they should.

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

A high number of pupils at The Friars face challenges that make learning more difficult. For example, there are many pupils who speak English as an additional language. There are also a number of pupils in the school with complex and significant additional needs. Leaders have not ensured that the curriculum supports all pupils, including those with additional needs, so that they achieve well. This is especially the case in reading. Governors have not held leaders to account as effectively as they should have for the quality and impact of the curriculum.

That said, leaders have now begun to improve the curriculum. More recently, there has been a stronger focus on reading and writing. Some improvements to the curriculum are beginning to have a positive effect. This is most noticeable in mathematics and in pupils' writing in upper key stage 2. However, the curriculum still lacks ambition. In some subjects, leaders have not defined the knowledge that pupils need to know and remember. Some of the improvements made to the curriculum are in their infancy.

Leaders do not ensure that some vulnerable pupils achieve as well as others across the curriculum. This is particularly the case for disadvantaged pupils. In 2019, disadvantaged pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 was low.

Weak achievement was not just limited to disadvantaged pupils. In 2019, the progress that all pupils made between key stages 1 and 2 in reading and writing was

below the national average. Pupils' attainment in reading also declined at the end of each key stage, including in the early years. Too few pupils achieved the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check.

Despite the weak outcomes seen in 2019, there are signs that leaders' actions are starting to improve reading in the school. For example, current pupils are now beginning to build on the strong start that they make in the early years. This is because children begin to learn phonics well in the Nursery class. They build up their knowledge effectively through well-structured and focused teaching. Children in the early years who start to fall behind in their reading are supported to catch up.

The books used in key stage 1 to practise reading are now well matched to pupils' reading abilities. Regular structured reading lessons in key stage 2 have begun to help pupils build up their fluency and accuracy. However, teaching staff in key stages 1 and 2 do not consistently use the agreed strategies to support pupils who need extra help with their reading. Some older pupils do not practise reading regularly enough.

Pupils with complex needs are well cared for in the 'yellow room'. However, there is a lack of ambition for pupils with SEND across the school. Leaders do not make enough checks on the work of staff who support pupils with SEND. Pupils with SEND achieve as well as they should.

In the early years, leaders ensure that no opportunity to learn is lost. Teachers provide exciting learning activities that capture children's interest. Children develop positive attitudes to learning. Older pupils are also well behaved in lessons.

The school is a place of safety and tranquillity for many pupils. Pupils treat each other with respect. Pupils are supported to develop a healthy mind and body. Leaders ensure that pupils try new things in their local community. Pupils visit local places of interest such as museums, theatres, places of worship and art galleries. These visits help them to develop an appreciation of their local and national culture.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is given a high priority at the school. Leaders keep pupils safe. Leaders work with a wide range of different agencies to ensure that the right support is in place for pupils at the school.

Staff follow the school's robust procedures. Leaders check that any additional support agreed is in place for the pupils who need it. Pupils understand that keeping safe is important. They understand their own role in this. They follow the advice that they have learned about at school. They keep personal information private when online. They tell trusted adults if they have any worries.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum does not meet the needs of some pupils well enough. A significant number of pupils do not develop the knowledge in reading that they need to access the curriculum easily. Consequently, pupils underachieve. Leaders need to continue developing a reading curriculum that supports all pupils to read with accuracy and fluency. They also need to make sure that staff carry out agreed actions to support pupils who are struggling to read.
- Too many disadvantaged pupils do not attain the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Disadvantaged pupils do not make the progress that they should from key stage 1 to key stage 2, in reading and writing. This means that some of these pupils struggle to access the wider curriculum. Governors need to ensure that leaders plan their curriculum effectively so that disadvantaged pupils achieve well.
- Leaders do not have high enough expectation for some pupils. These pupils include pupils with SEND and pupils who speak English as an additional language. Some of these pupils do not achieve as well as they should across subjects. Leaders need to ensure that expectations are equally high for all pupils.
- Not all leaders ensure that there is an ambitious curriculum in their area of responsibility. Pupils do not build up their knowledge equally well in different subject areas. This includes the curriculum for pupils with SEND. All leaders need to ensure that pupils experience a high quality of education in their curriculum area or area of responsibility.

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

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| Unique reference number | 105896 |
| Local authority | Salford |
| Inspection number | 10087915 |
| 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 | 338 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Anne Kimber |
| Headteacher | Michael Earnshaw |
| Website | www.friarsprimaryschool.co.uk/ |
| Date of previous inspection | 19 May 2015 |

Information about this school

- There has been a new headteacher appointed since the previous inspection. He has been in post since September 2018. There has also been a new chair of governors appointed recently.
- The school has increased from one class to two classes for each year group over the past few years. This means that the numbers on roll have risen significantly during this time.
- The school has a resourced provision unit that caters for up to 10 pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Some of these pupils have complex needs.
- The school supports a significant number of pupils who are new to the country. Many of these pupils are at the early stages of learning to speak English.
- There are high numbers of disadvantaged pupils at the school.

Information about this inspection

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

- We spoke with the headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, a group of governors and a representative of the local authority.
- We looked at a range of documentation for safeguarding, including the record of the required checks carried out on school staff. We spoke with pupils about safeguarding. We also reviewed staff training logs and case files. We met with the person responsible for safeguarding to discuss how the school works to keep pupils safe.
- We observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes. We also observed them as they moved around the school.
- We spoke with pupils about their experiences at school.
- We looked at the 31 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. We also took account of the 31 free-text responses to Parent View. We spoke with parents as they dropped their children off.
- We carried out deep dives into reading, geography, religious education and mathematics. We talked with the leaders of these subjects. We looked at curriculum plans, visited lessons and we looked at examples of pupils' work. We talked with teachers and pupils about what pupils were learning. We also took account of other curriculum areas across the school.

Inspection team

| | |
|--------------------------------|------------------|
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| David Woodhouse | Ofsted Inspector |
| Joan Williamson | Ofsted Inspector |

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