

Inspection of a good school: Briercliffe Primary School

Delamere Road, Briercliffe, Burnley, Lancashire BB10 2JU

Inspection dates:

5–6 February 2020

Outcome

Briercliffe Primary School continues to be a good school.

However, inspectors have some concerns that standards may be declining, as set out below.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy school. They are polite and well-mannered and behave well in lessons. Pupils I spoke with said they feel safe in school. They told me school is a happy place where everyone tries to get along. Pupils say that bullying is very rare. Any falling out is dealt with by staff. Pupils' attendance has recently improved. However, a minority of pupils are still persistently absent from school.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of after-school clubs and activities. Pupils are proud of their school. Year 6 have recently taken part in a 'careers carousel'. They are aspirational about the jobs they would like to do in later life. Older pupils enjoy reading to younger pupils and organising events for charity. This prepares them well as future citizens.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils. However, these expectations have not been realised at the end of key stage 2 over time. Some Year 6 pupils have not been well prepared for the next stage of their education.

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

Pupils study a broad curriculum. It is planned so that pupils make links in their learning and improve their knowledge over time. Teachers are supported well and feel valued. Staff say that leaders care about their well-being. They get many opportunities for training and development.

Leaders have raised the importance of reading across the school. There are well-thought-out reading corners in classrooms and books link well to pupils' work across the curriculum. Older pupils are familiar with a wide range of texts and authors. They deepen their knowledge through independent reading. The phonics curriculum is taught in a logical way. Teachers have clear expectations. Books are well matched to the sounds that pupils know. This helps pupils to develop early reading skills well. The majority of pupils

meet the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Those who fall behind receive support to help them catch up. Pupils at the end of key stage 1 attain as well as other pupils nationally in reading. However, standards in this subject at the end of key stage 2 have been inconsistent over time.

Leaders have changed the mathematics curriculum. It is now well planned and organised in a logical way. Teachers use assessment information well. Their planning builds on pupils' prior learning. The focus on the teaching of reasoning, explanations and problem-solving is evident in pupils' work. Teachers have a clear understanding of what they want pupils to know. Pupils use a range of resources to help them work out problems. Children in the early years explore numbers through activities that give them a secure base to build mathematical knowledge on. They explore number with high levels of curiosity and excitement. A consistent approach to the teaching of mathematics is now securely embedded. The efforts of leaders' work are showing signs of sustained improvement. However, this has not yet impacted on some pupils' readiness for the next stage of education. Historically, pupils in Year 6 have not achieved as well in mathematics as other pupils nationally.

In other subjects, leaders have a clear vision for the implementation of the curriculum. The curriculum is well sequenced. Teachers are clear on how activities are part of a bigger curriculum picture that builds on pupils' previous knowledge. Leaders have thought about how pupils' learning should be organised to help them to remember more. This enables pupils to discuss and understand concepts of increasing complexity. For example, in history, lower key stage 2 pupils were able to talk about bartering and farming in ancient civilizations.

The school supports pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. Leaders make sure that all pupils can take part in all the activities on offer. Leaders ensure that staff receive training so that pupils with SEND get the help that they need.

Leaders provide a broad range of opportunities for pupils. Older pupils often run their own clubs for younger pupils, such as brick-building and art clubs. There are a large number of activities on offer during and after school. Pupils particularly enjoy the many sports clubs. Pupils appreciate that adults will always make time to listen to their concerns. In class, pupils behave well and they work hard. They persevere with their learning. There is little disruption to their learning from other pupils' behaviour.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive regular training in safeguarding and are kept up to date. They are aware of the dangers faced by the pupils in their care. They are clear in their responsibilities for recording and documenting any concerns. The safeguarding team keep careful records of their safeguarding work. They work with an extensive range of other professionals. This helps leaders to ensure that pupils receive relevant support. Leaders have ensured that pupils have a strong awareness of how to stay safe. This is taught through the curriculum

and through assemblies and visitors to school. Pupils are knowledgeable about staying safe while online and when away from school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A minority of pupils are persistently absent from school. This prevents these pupils from learning all that they could. Leaders should ensure that the attendance of this group of pupils continues to improve.
- Over time, pupils have not consistently reached the standards that they should in reading and mathematics at key stage 2. A greater emphasis on reading, plus new approaches to how mathematics is taught, is showing positive signs. Leaders should build on their recent work to make sure that pupils are well equipped for the next stage of their education.

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 10–11 May 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	119168
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10122106
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	318
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Diana Greaves
Headteachers	Rob Blanchet and Laura Addy
Website	www.briercliffe.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	10–11 May 2016

Information about this school

- This academic year, the deputy headteacher has taken up post as co-headteacher with the substantive headteacher.

Information about this inspection

- During this inspection I met with the headteachers and senior leadership team.
- I met with subject leaders and class teachers. I met with a representative of the local authority and I met with four governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- I spoke with parents, considered the 38 responses to Ofsted’s free-text survey, 63 responses to Ofsted’s pupil survey and the 28 responses to Ofsted’s staff survey.
- I spoke with teachers and support staff about their workload and well-being.
- I examined the single central safeguarding record and scrutinised a range of documentation in relation to safeguarding.
- I spoke with pupils about behaviour and attitudes. I observed their behaviour in lessons and around school.
- As part of this inspection, I evaluated the school’s approach to the teaching of phonics and early reading. I examined how the history and mathematics curriculums have been

organised. I spoke with subject leaders, visited lessons and spoke to pupils and teachers. I scrutinised pupils' work in these subjects.

Inspection team

Simon Hunter, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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