

Inspection of a good school: Peel Brow School

Fir Street, Ramsbottom, Bury, Lancashire, BL0 0BJ

Inspection dates:

10 June 2021

Outcome

Peel Brow School continues to be a good school.

However, inspectors have some concerns that one or more areas may be declining, as set out below.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy their time at this small, friendly school. They enjoy extra-curricular opportunities, such as the Year 6 residential trip. Pupils are safe, cared for and well supported. Despite this, pupils do not achieve as well as they are able.

The new executive headteacher is ambitious for all pupils. This is reflected in leaders' recent improvements to the school's curriculum plans. The previous curriculum has not helped pupils to learn what they need to build their subject knowledge.

Pupils understand the behaviour policy and think it is fair. Pupils, mainly, behave well during lessons and at breaktimes. They play happily together on the school's attractive and spacious playgrounds. Pupils are sensible and calm when moving around the school.

Bullying is rare at the school. When it does happen, staff are quick to take action to resolve any issues.

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

In some subjects, such as reading and mathematics, leaders have carefully considered what subject content pupils will learn and in what order. For example, in mathematics, in all year groups, pupils build their knowledge of how to calculate with accuracy. By Year 6, they are well prepared for the challenges of secondary school mathematics. However, in other subjects, pupils are not taught the knowledge in an order which helps them to remember it and build up an understanding of the subject. This is because the previous curriculum plans did not set out the knowledge pupils needed to learn in order. Teaching has not always helped pupils to build their knowledge in appropriate steps. Consequently, pupils struggle to remember some of their previous learning.

Leaders have changed the curriculum plans in all subjects to help pupils to learn and remember important knowledge. These changes are ongoing and at an early stage of implementation.

Some subject leaders have not been effective in improving the curriculum. They have not checked that teachers are following curriculum plans. In some subjects, leaders do not know how well pupils learn. Subject leaders are benefitting from working closely with subject specialists in a partner school. This recent partnership work is improving leaders' skills to check that the revised curriculum is taught as planned. This is helping pupils to learn more and remember more. Leaders have planned a new system to check pupils' progress.

Teachers make useful adaptations for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), such as using practical resources in mathematics. However, except in reading, teachers do not make accurate checks to see how well pupils with SEND are learning over time. This means that teachers miss opportunities to identify precisely where some pupils may benefit from extra support.

In the Nursery and Reception classes, staff share a wide range of stories and books with children. Older pupils enjoy the books their teachers read with them. Pupils, including those with SEND, develop as confident readers. They read with fluency. Staff ensure that pupils read regularly with an adult. Most reading books are carefully matched to pupils' reading knowledge. Staff are more confident and competent in teaching phonics due to recent training. Pupils learn the letters and sounds that build on those they already know. This helps pupils to become confident and fluent readers. Teachers check regularly to make sure pupils are learning well. Any pupils falling behind in their reading are given a range of effective support to help them catch up.

Pupils are polite and welcoming to visitors. In lessons, most are keen to try their best and follow teachers' instructions. This helps pupils learn. From Nursery, children learn to work cooperatively.

Before the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, pupils enjoyed a range of opportunities to enrich their learning. For example, pupils told us how much they enjoyed the many after school clubs provided by staff. Staff are determined to resume the usual range of activities and plans are in place for this. Year 6 pupils were delighted to attend an outdoor and adventurous trip this term. Pupils told us how much they were looking forward to taking part in inter-school football activities this month.

The executive headteacher leads with determination and vision, and has won the confidence of staff, parents and carers in a short time. Leaders are now ambitious to reinvigorate the curriculum and improve learning. Leaders show consideration for the well-being of staff. Staff appreciate the useful opportunities leaders give them to develop professionally. Leaders are considerate of staff workload when making decisions.

In discussion with the executive headteacher, we agreed that reading, mathematics, history and geography may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have taken effective steps to improve the safeguarding culture in the school. Staff are now more vigilant and skilled in spotting any signs of abuse. Leaders work with other professionals to ensure that pupils and their families get timely and appropriate support when needed.

Pupils' know about different risks. For example, visitors to school have taught pupils about the dangers of drugs, alcohol and knife crime. Staff teach pupils about online safety, including how to protect their privacy and treat others with respect.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils have not benefited from well-sequenced plans in all subjects. This has led to pupils forgetting important learning and not achieving as well as they should. Leaders should ensure that the new curriculum plans are delivered as intended by leaders.
- Some subject leaders lack the expertise to lead and monitor their subject effectively. This has led to variability in how effectively teachers deliver the curriculum plans. Leaders need to ensure that subject leaders have the skills and knowledge necessary to ensure that the revised curriculum plans are taught consistently.
- Checks on how well pupils are learning the curriculum lack precision. This means that teachers do not have an accurate view of what help pupils need to learn more and remember more. This includes pupils with SEND. Leaders should ensure that assessment systems are used precisely to identify how well pupils are learning the curriculum. This will give teachers the information they need to ensure that their teaching and support is closely matched to pupils' knowledge.

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 or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that a good 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 30 June to 1 July 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	105368
Local authority	Bury
Inspection number	10194661
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	146
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Christie Finegan
Headteacher	David Waites (executive headteacher)
Website	http://www.peelbrowschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 June – 1 July 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The new executive headteacher was appointed in March 2021.
- The school uses no alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the 2020-21 COVID-19 pandemic. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school, and have taken that into account in our evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, inspectors spoke formally with pupils about their work and school life. Inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher, senior leaders, middle leaders, governors, teachers and support staff. We spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors reviewed documentation, which included the leaders' evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for improvement.
- Inspectors considered the views expressed by parents in the 22 responses to Ofsted's survey Parent View, as well as the 19 comments received via the text facility.

Inspectors considered the 12 responses to the questionnaire for pupils and the 12 responses to the staff questionnaire.

- Inspectors focused deeply on mathematics, reading and geography. In these subjects, inspectors met with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with pupils, met with teaching staff and looked at pupils' work. Inspectors also looked at pupils' work and met with teaching staff for history.
- We observed pupils at breaktime.
- We reviewed a range of documentation about safeguarding and spoke with staff to understand how pupils are kept safe. We also reviewed the school's record of checks undertaken on newly appointed staff.

Inspection team

Elizabeth Stevens, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jackie Stillings

Her Majesty's Inspector

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