

# Inspection of a good school: Higher Lane Primary School

Egerton Road, Whitefield, Manchester M45 7EX

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Inspection dates:

16 and 17 November 2021

## **Outcome**

Higher Lane Primary School continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils are proud to attend this school. Leaders have high expectations of pupils' learning. Pupils live up to these expectations. Most achieve well.

Pupils are very knowledgeable about cultures and lifestyles which are different to their own. They approach people's individuality with respect and enthusiasm. Pupils show an exceptionally caring attitude, particularly to those who may be facing challenging circumstances.

Pupils behave very well in lessons and at social times. They know that staff will accept no less. In lessons, pupils are fully engrossed in their work, and they are very proud of their achievements.

Pupils feel safe and happy in school. They know who to talk to if they have concerns about themselves or others. They trust staff to deal with problems. Pupils told the inspector that bullying is rare. They are confident that staff would act quickly to stop bullying, should it occur.

Pupils enjoy a varied range of enrichment activities. They are keen to take part in the extra-curricular clubs that are on offer.

Older pupils take leadership responsibilities very seriously. The school council gives each class the opportunity to be represented by two classmates when decisions are made that affect pupils.

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

Leaders have designed a curriculum that covers the full range of national curriculum subjects. It is suitably ambitious. As well as allowing pupils to achieve well academically, the curriculum successfully develops pupils' wider personal development. For example, it develops their social skills and their cultural awareness.

Leaders and teachers have an effective curriculum recovery plan in place. It is ensuring that pupils catch up quickly with any learning that they have missed or forgotten following the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In all subjects, including English and mathematics, leaders and teachers have planned a curriculum which enables them to present new knowledge in a logical order. Teachers regularly revisit what pupils have learned before. They enable pupils to build up a secure body of subject knowledge. Leaders' well-planned curriculum is particularly effective in enabling pupils to make connections between different concepts across a range of subjects.

Staff quickly identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders ensure that these pupils are given the help that they need to achieve their best. With additional support from staff, as well as extra resources, these pupils benefit from the same learning opportunities as their peers. Pupils in the specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND also progress well through the curriculum. Staff involve the parents and carers of pupils with SEND in planning additional support to help them access the curriculum.

The school has an effective ongoing training programme for teachers. Teachers have strong knowledge of the subjects that they teach.

Reading is central to the life of the school. Teachers read enthusiastically to pupils every day. Pupils look forward to choosing books frequently from the very wide range provided by the school.

Overall, the phonics programme is well delivered. It ensures that most pupils become fluent readers by the end of key stage 1. Even so, a small number of pupils find reading particularly difficult. Some teachers do not use their checks on how well pupils are learning phonics knowledge effectively enough. As a result, some pupils do not catch up with their reading as quickly as they should.

Pupils read books that are closely matched to the sounds that they have learned. As pupils move up the school, teachers successfully develop pupils' fluency in reading and their comprehension skills. Each year group also has class novels related to different curriculum areas. These well-chosen books allow teachers to reinforce pupils' reading comprehension skills while developing their subject-specific knowledge.

The curriculum in the early years is well planned. It successfully develops children's knowledge and use of language and number alongside their wider social and physical skills. Children settle in quickly in the early years and they enjoy learning. Leaders have thought carefully about how the early years curriculum links to the Year 1 curriculum, particularly in reading and mathematics. This contributes well to the positive start that pupils make in Year 1.

The school is calm and orderly. In lessons, most pupils listen carefully to each other and to adults. Leaders have put in place effective support for the small number of pupils who

find it more difficult to concentrate during lessons. Pupils receive high levels of pastoral support.

Pupils enjoy attending activities after school, such as sports clubs and choir. Many are learning to play musical instruments.

Staff enjoy working at the school. They said that leaders, including governors and trustees, care about them and take their workload and well-being into account.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders, including governors and trustees, prioritise the safeguarding of pupils. The school has well-developed policies and procedures, which are understood and efficiently implemented by all staff at the school. Leaders work well with other agencies to support pupils and their families.

Staff understand the safeguarding risks that pupils may face. They teach pupils to be aware of the potential dangers around them, including those posed by the internet.

Leaders and staff take part in regular safeguarding training. They know how to spot if a pupil is in difficulty and how to manage risks to pupils' safety.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Some teachers do not use their checks on how well pupils are learning phonics knowledge to support those who are falling behind with their reading. As a result, these pupils do not catch up as quickly as they should. Leaders should ensure that teachers make better use of their assessments to plan learning which addresses any gaps in pupils' phonics 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 evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Higher Lane Primary School, to be good in November 2014.

## **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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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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| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 144575   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Bury   |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10200766   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Academy converter  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 4 to 11  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 457  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | Board of trustees  |
| <b>Chair of trust</b>                      | Laurence Goldberg  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Ian Tetlow   |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.higherlaneprimary.co.uk">www.higherlaneprimary.co.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | Not previously inspected   |

## Information about this school

- The school became an academy in September 2017, and is part of the Vision Multi-Academy Trust.
- Vision House specially resourced provision is part of Higher Lane Primary School. It welcomes up to 12 pupils from across Bury local authority. These pupils present with a primary need of social, emotional, mental health and learning needs. Currently, seven pupils attend Vision House specially resourced provision.
- No pupils attend alternative education.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection of the school since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the school's response to the pandemic with school leaders and took this into account in her evaluation.
- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, assistant headteachers and the special educational needs coordinator.

- The inspector also spoke to the chief executive officer of Vision Multi-Academy Trust and to the chair of governors.
- The inspector conducted deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. This involved discussions with subject leaders and teachers, as well as talking to pupils about their work. The inspector visited lessons in these subjects and looked at curriculum plans and pupils' work. She also listened to pupils read to an adult familiar to them.
- The inspector analysed the school's records of recruitment checks on staff. She spoke to staff and leaders about the school's procedures and systems for safeguarding pupils.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms and at social times.
- The inspector considered the responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. This included the free-text responses. She also reviewed the responses to Ofsted's survey for staff and the responses to Ofsted's pupils' survey.

### **Inspection team**

Liz Kelly, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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