

Inspection of a good school: East Ward Community Primary School

Willow Street, Bury, Lancashire BL9 7QZ

Inspection dates:

23 and 24 November 2021

Outcome

East Ward Community Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

East Ward is a happy school that sits at the heart of the community it serves. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They work hard and behave well. School leaders promote and celebrate individuality and diversity. They share high ambitions and expectations for each and every pupil. Leaders have created an environment in which pupils are able to learn and flourish.

Pupils are safe and well cared for in school. They show positive attitudes to learning, listen well to their teachers and classmates and settle quickly to work. Around school, they are polite and friendly towards visitors. Pupils get on well with each other. They understand what bullying is and they acknowledge that it does happen occasionally. However, they know that leaders have effective systems in place to sort out friendship issues or incidents of bullying. Pupils trust their teachers to deal with any problems they may have.

Pupils enjoy taking part in a good range of opportunities beyond the classroom. They like attending clubs, such as choir, football and book club. They also enjoy getting involved in community projects. For example, during the inspection the 'values ambassadors' were helping a local community group to keep the area near the school tidy and free from litter.

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

Leaders have made reading a key priority at East Ward. Staff are well trained in the teaching of phonics. They have strong subject knowledge. Phonics is taught in a very well organised, consistent manner. This is having a positive impact on pupils' early reading development. Children in the early years and pupils in key stage 1 are progressing well through the school's chosen phonics scheme. Teachers check regularly how well pupils are learning to read and make sure that extra support is given to those who need it, including those pupils who are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. Teachers have identified a core set of high-quality texts to be shared in each year group. They read regularly to children and pupils of all ages. Older pupils become keen,

confident readers who are eager to discuss their opinions about a range of books and authors.

Leaders have planned an ambitious and engaging curriculum for all pupils. The curriculum plans for most subjects give clear guidance on the key knowledge and vocabulary that pupils need to learn. Teachers help pupils to remember what they have been taught before and to make links with new content. As a result, pupils build well on what they know as they move through school. In a small number of subjects, current curriculum plans are less clear. Where this is the case, teachers are not as sure about the content that they need to deliver. This hinders some pupils from building on their previous learning.

Children get off to a good start in early years. The curriculum is shaped well to support children's early learning and development. Staff ensure that children have plenty of opportunities to develop their early language, reading and mathematical knowledge. Leaders have made sure that there is a smooth transition from the early years curriculum into Year 1. This allows children to capitalise on all they have learned during their time in early years.

Leaders ensure the accurate identification of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They use a range of assessments and observations to make sure that support is provided for those who most need it. This means that pupils with SEND enjoy the same ambitious curriculum as their peers.

Pupils are very positive about their time at East Ward. They thrive in the school's calm and nurturing environment, and their learning is seldom disturbed by off-task behaviour in class. They benefit from a good range of opportunities that enhance their personal development and encourage them to become good neighbours and friends. They appreciate being able to take part in different after-school activities and school trips.

School leaders are outward looking. They are keen to find new ways to further enhance provision, to learn from best practice and research and to share their own school's expertise. Staff training and development is given a high profile in the school and staff benefit from a wide range of opportunities to develop their practice. Governors and trustees provide a good mix of support and challenge for leaders.

Staff enjoy working at the school. In their responses to the Ofsted survey, staff commented on how proud they were to be part of the school team. They also confirmed that school leaders were considerate of their workload and well-being.

Partnership with parents and carers is a key strength of the school. School leaders have developed a broad offer of support for parents, particularly for those at an early stage of learning English or who are recently arrived in the area. Parents are highly appreciative of the school's work and almost all who responded on Ofsted Parent View would recommend the school to other parents.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have made safeguarding a key priority for the school. Staff receive regular training and updates and have a good understanding of procedures for keeping pupils safe. Record-keeping is thorough. Where a concern is raised, the safeguarding team is diligent in following it up.

Pupils have a good understanding of areas such as internet safety. They are proud of the different safety posters that they have designed for display around school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, curriculum plans do not make it clear to teachers what subject leaders expect them to teach and pupils to learn. Where this is the case, the delivery of the curriculum lacks depth and is not well linked to pupils' prior learning. Leaders should refine curriculum plans in these subjects to make sure that teachers understand what they are expected to teach so that pupils' can build their knowledge and make links to what they have already learned.

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, also called East Ward Community Primary School, to be good in January 2011.

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

Unique reference number	144572
Local authority	Bury
Inspection number	10200769
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	433
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Richard Walthall
Headteacher	David Waites
Website	www.eastwardprimary.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school became an academy in July 2017. It is part of the Vision Multi-Academy Trust.
- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club that are managed by the governing body.
- Early years provision includes a Nursery class for three- and four-year-old children who attend part time or full time, and two Reception classes. The Nursery class is situated a short walk from the main school building in the Little Oaks Centre.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation.
- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher, the designated safeguarding lead and other school leaders, including the deputy and assistant headteachers and the special educational needs coordinator.

- The inspector spoke to members of the governing body, and to representatives of the multi-academy trust and local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. These deep dives involved discussions with subject leaders and teachers, visiting lessons and talking to pupils about their work in these subjects. The inspector also looked at curriculum plans and pupils' work. He observed a number of younger pupils reading to their teacher.
- The inspector looked at curriculum plans and pupils' work in other subjects.
- The inspector made checks on the school's records for safeguarding and staff recruitment, and spoke to staff about the school's procedures for safeguarding pupils.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms and around school, including at breaktimes and lunchtimes and during after-school activities.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents through the responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. This included any free-text responses. The inspector also considered the outcomes of the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Neil Dixon, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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