

Inspection of a good school: Ballifield Primary School

Handsworth Grange Road, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S13 9HH

Inspection dates:

23 and 24 March 2022

Outcome

Ballifield Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Children enjoy coming to school and seeing their friends. They especially enjoy their richly resourced outdoor playground. They have several areas where they can run around, play sports or simply sit and chat. These sectioned areas help pupils to behave well at playtimes.

Bullying is infrequent. If it happens, pupils know that adults will sort this out. When some pupils experience fallouts, adults listen to all sides. Discussions take place so children can understand how their actions may affect others' feelings. Pupils say that they feel their opinions are important and they are fairly treated.

There are several roles that pupils can benefit from. These include being a playleader or a school councillor. Pupils take pride in these roles and in representing their peers.

Leaders have worked hard to create a calm and purposeful learning environment. Pupils appreciate this. They support and encourage each other in class. Most pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. However, there are occasions when some pupils disrupt the learning of others. Adults work with pupils who need extra help to manage their emotions to find ways that will help them. This is successful.

Leaders have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Pupils rise to meet these. This is particularly the case in mathematics. Pupils enjoy mathematical activities and tackle these with success. Leaders know that some subjects need their plans refining. Leaders are working on this.

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

Pupils learn the full range of subjects in the national curriculum. With the recent return of out-of-school trips, the school is gradually enhancing the curriculum by providing pupils with additional experiences. This complements the school's breadth of curriculum offer.

Where staff's subject knowledge is strong, teachers think carefully about how to organise the curriculum. They ensure that teaching activities match the content that is being taught. During these lessons, pupils speak confidently about what they have learned. They can remember and articulate this knowledge successfully. This was particularly evident in one year group where pupils could share what they knew about the rainforest and how that compares to their way of living in the United Kingdom.

There are inconsistencies in how the curriculum is constructed in some subjects. In these curriculum plans, teachers are not precise about what they want to teach pupils and in what order. As a result, pupils are not taught the specific knowledge and skills that they need to know to be able to access follow-up lessons. This is resulting in gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding of some subjects.

Leaders have created an environment that promotes reading from the early years. They understand that pupils need to be fluent in reading to be able to access the full curriculum. Staff have embarked on an approach to teaching reading that is consistent throughout the school. Most children are familiar with the strategies they are taught. As a result, most can read books matched to the sounds they are learning. Children who are falling behind are given more opportunities to practise their reading. This is helping them to catch up quickly. Staff are well trained and knowledgeable in the school's chosen phonics programme.

Teachers show their enthusiasm for reading through story time. The book choices for story time are interesting for pupils. This contributes to how much pupils enjoy these sessions. Indeed, some pupils who were not, in the past, avid readers are beginning to read regularly at home.

Where there is any slight disruption to pupils' learning, pupils are quickly reminded of how they should behave. Pupils understand what is expected of them, and they comply when instructed. Consequently, the school is a calm place, and pupils focus well in class.

Sometimes, the curriculum does not promote pupils' appreciation of other cultures and religions consistently well. Some pupils do not have a fully secure understanding of life in modern Britain or a deep knowledge of the wider world.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers adapt how they teach the curriculum so these pupils can achieve well. Teaching assistants help to prepare pupils for lessons with some teaching in advance. Although most pupils with SEND participate in lessons successfully, sometimes activities are not completed by these pupils.

Leaders are considerate of staff's workload. They have created a working environment where staff feel appreciated. Staff spoke about their collaborative working relationships and support for each other.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that staff have a clear understanding of how to keep pupils safe. Staff know the signs to look out for and the channels to follow to address any concerns. Staff are swift to act. They have all received the appropriate training. Leaders work with several external services to make sure the right people are involved to offer the right support to pupils who need this.

Pupils are comfortable talking to any adult in school. Pupils trust their teachers. They know that if they have a problem, adults will listen and help. Consequently, pupils feel safe, and parents agree. As one parent stated, 'My children have been very well supported and feel safe and happy at school.' This is typical of many comments from parents.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum is not coherently organised across all subjects. This means that pupils do not acquire some of the crucial core knowledge that they should. In some subjects, pupils have gaps in their knowledge and cannot apply the knowledge they should know automatically. Leaders should review specific curriculum subjects and ensure that precise content is delivered in the right order.
- On occasion, leaders have not ensured that the wider curriculum supports pupils' appreciation of other cultures and religions. Pupils' knowledge of cultures and religion is not consistently strong. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum supports pupils' understanding in these areas more fully.

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 second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2012.

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	107047
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	10211401
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	473
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Andy Wynne
Headteacher	Joanne Eagleton (Interim Executive Headteacher)
Website	www.ballifield.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	8 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school is part of The Crucible Co-operative Learning Trust.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the interim executive headteacher, senior leaders and subject leaders.
- A virtual meeting was held with the leader for special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The inspector met with the school improvement partner, the chair of governors, the vice-chair of governors and a parent governor.
- Deep dives in reading, mathematics and geography were carried out. In each of the deep dive subjects, inspection activities included: meetings with subject leaders;

looking at curriculum plans; visiting sample lessons; scrutiny of pupils' work; and discussions with staff and pupils.

- The inspector observed pupils reading to an adult. Plans and pupils' work in history were also looked at.
- Governors' minutes and a range of other information and documentation were also considered by the inspector.
- The inspector considered the 78 responses to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View.
- The inspector also considered the 24 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire and 139 responses to Ofsted's online pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Larissa Thorpe, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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