

Inspection of a good school: Wilbraham Primary School

Platt Lane, Fallowfield, Manchester M14 7FB

Inspection dates:

14 and 15 September 2022

Outcome

Wilbraham Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Wilbraham Primary School is a vibrant and diverse community. Pupils, regardless of their race, gender or culture, thrive at this happy and welcoming school.

Pupils, including children in early years, behave well. They live up to their teachers' expectations of them, both academically and socially. They treat staff and each other with respect. They know that there are trusted adults whom they can go to if they have any worries or concerns. Pupils are confident that if any bullying happens, staff will sort it out quickly and effectively.

Pupils are proud members of their school. They enjoy participating in a range of musical and sporting activities. These include learning to play the steel pans and representing the school in sporting events. Pupils appreciate the many trips and visits that leaders provide for them.

Parents and carers who spoke with inspectors said that they value the strong relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils feel happy and safe.

Pupils, and children in early years, benefit from a well-thought-out curriculum in most subjects. This enables pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to achieve well.

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

Leaders have developed an engaging and ambitious curriculum. They have ensured that the curriculum matches the needs of the pupils at the school. This includes pupils with SEND. In most subjects, leaders have thought carefully about the knowledge that pupils, including children in early years, will learn and the order in which they will learn it.

Leaders ensure that staff are well trained to deliver the curriculum effectively. Teachers introduce new subject matter to pupils clearly. In most subjects, teachers design activities

that help pupils to build on what they already know and can do. Teachers use assessment strategies effectively. Pupils recognise how their new learning in most subjects builds on what they have learned previously. They told inspectors that, 'our memories are like libraries – we just need to find the right book'. However, in a few subjects, until recently, leaders did not think about the most important knowledge that pupils will learn clearly enough. This sometimes hinders pupils' ability to make sense of new learning. Pupils do not learn as well in these subjects.

Children in early years are well supported by knowledgeable staff. Staff grasp every opportunity to develop children's language skills. Right from the start, children enjoy listening to stories. They join in enthusiastically with nursery rhymes and songs. Staff follow the school's phonics programme consistently well. Staff match the books that pupils, including those with SEND, read to the sounds and words that pupils are learning. By the end of Year 6, most pupils are fluent readers. They enjoy talking about the books that they have read and their favourite authors.

Pupils are kind and considerate to each other. They can learn without disruption. Highly skilled staff ensure that the needs of pupils with SEND across the school are identified quickly. Teachers carefully adapt the delivery of the curriculum through additional support and resources to ensure that these pupils, as much as possible, access the same learning as their friends. Pupils with SEND engage well with their peers and teachers.

Pupils take part in a range of activities beyond the academic curriculum to enrich their wider development. They told inspectors that they enjoy visiting art galleries and attending clubs. Pupils have a secure understanding of other faiths and cultures. They eagerly spoke about visits that they have made to the local church, mosque and temple.

Through the curriculum, pupils develop a strong understanding of British values such as democracy. Pupils enjoy voting for school councillors to represent their class.

Governors and trustees work closely with leaders to continually improve the school. They engage in regular training to keep their skills up to date. Leaders and governors are mindful of teachers' well-being and workload.

Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They feel well supported. Staff appreciate leaders' actions to ensure that they have an appropriate work-life balance.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff have ensured a strong culture of safeguarding. They leave no stone unturned to ensure that pupils are safe and well cared for. Staff are highly vigilant.

Leaders make sure that staff receive regular safeguarding updates. As a result, staff have a strong understanding of the signs to watch out for if a pupil is at risk of harm or abuse. Leaders are resolute in their determination to engage with external agencies to ensure that pupils and their families quickly receive the support that they need.

Pupils are made aware of the dangers of knife crime and of gang culture in an age-appropriate manner.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, leaders' curriculum thinking is not as well developed as in other subjects. Leaders have only recently begun to refine their curriculums in these subjects so that the most important knowledge that pupils should learn is clearly identified. This hampers how well some pupils learn in these subjects. Leaders should ensure that teachers design and deliver these newer curriculums effectively so that pupils know more and remember more in these subjects.

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 an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Wilbraham Primary School, to be good in July 2013.

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.

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	145439
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10241410
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	660
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Steven Boyd
Principal	Andrew Marchant (Acting Principal)
Website	www.wilbrahamprimary.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Wilbraham Primary School converted to become an academy school in April 2018. When its predecessor school, Wilbraham Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has become part of the Aspire Educational Trust.
- The acting principal and assistant chief executive officer (CEO) both took up their posts at the beginning of this school year. The assistant CEO, until recently, was the principal of the school.
- Leaders provide a breakfast club and an after-school club.
- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.
- A large proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders, and they have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, middle leaders and class teachers.
- Inspectors spoke with a representative of the local authority. Inspectors met with governors, including the chair of the governing body. Inspectors also met with the assistant CEO of the multi-academy trust.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also spoke to several parents at the end of the school day.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. There were no responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils.
- Inspectors met with those responsible for safeguarding at the school. They scrutinised a range of documentation in relation to safeguarding. Inspectors spoke with staff, parents and pupils about safeguarding.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at playtimes. They spoke with pupils about bullying, behaviour and leaders' expectations of pupils' conduct.
- As part of this inspection, inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, discussed curriculums, visited a sample of lessons, met with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning, and reviewed some samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also listened to pupils reading and spoke to other subject leaders about their curriculums.

Inspection team

Louise McArdle, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Deborah Bailey

Ofsted Inspector

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