

Inspection of a good school: Brookhouse Primary School

Troy Street, Blackburn, Lancashire BB1 6NY

Inspection dates:

11 and 12 October 2022

Outcome

Brookhouse Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

From the moment that children join the school in the early years, caring staff set clear routines for them. Pupils and children have a strong sense of security and belonging. They behave well. This is because staff make their high expectations for learning and behaviour clear.

Pupils feel happy and safe, and they learn well. Bullying is not tolerated by leaders and staff, and these concerns are resolved at the earliest possible stage. Parents and carers said that their children love coming to school.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' academic achievement, and staff are ambitious for every pupil, including for those with special educational needs and/or abilities (SEND). Pupils are benefiting from leaders' ongoing work to refine the curriculum and strengthen further how well pupils learn in all subjects.

Pupils know and understand the school's values, such as respect and perseverance. They try their best to live up to these values in daily school life. They cherish when their successes are celebrated during weekly assemblies.

Pupils appreciate learning about the ways that people can be different. They are given many opportunities to explore varied and exciting experiences. Pupils talked positively about taking part in musical events and clubs, such as cooking. They are also eager to carry out roles of responsibility, including positions as head girl and boy.

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

Leaders have made sure that there is a well-designed and ambitious curriculum in place for all pupils, including children in the early years. Pupils behave well in lessons and there is little disruption to learning. When there is low-level disruption, this is short-lived because it is managed well by staff. Pupils enjoy their learning and achieve well. They live

up to their teachers' high expectations. In the early years, including in the provision for two-year-olds, staff prepare children well for the next stage of their education. For example, staff develop children's communication skills by talking with them about their learning experiences.

Reading underpins pupils' and children's learning throughout the school. The reading curriculum is delivered well by staff. All staff are well trained in the teaching of phonics. This ensures that children and pupils learn and practise the right phonics knowledge at the right time. Leaders make sure that the books that pupils read match the letters and sounds that they are learning in class.

Staff introduce pupils and children to different authors, and pupils confidently talk about their favourite writers. Staff assess pupils' progression in reading often. Leaders take a 'keep up, not catch up' approach to reading. This means that most pupils become fluent readers as quickly as they should. Effective support from staff helps those pupils who have fallen behind in their reading to catch up. Pupils, including older pupils, read widely and often at school and they spoke with enthusiasm about the introduction of reading champions.

In other subjects, leaders have given much attention to refining the curriculum. They have carefully considered the knowledge that pupils need to learn and the order in which they should learn it. Subject leaders and staff in the early years liaise closely to ensure that children gain the knowledge and vocabulary to prepare them well for Year 1.

In most subjects, teachers are equipped to deliver the curriculum well. They assess pupils' knowledge regularly. Lessons often start with a recap on earlier learning, and staff prompt pupils to use what they already know to make connections with new learning. That said, in some subjects, a few aspects of teachers' assessment of pupils' learning are better developed than others.

The needs of pupils with SEND are quickly identified by staff. Working with parents, leaders provide appropriate support for pupils with SEND. Leaders ensure that staff are well trained to deliver a range of strategies that meet pupils' individual needs. Leaders review regularly how well teachers' strategies of support are working and make adaptations if required. Pupils with SEND access the same curriculum as their peers and they achieve well.

Leaders have designed a well-thought-out personal development curriculum to teach pupils about being respectful and helpful to others. Pupils are also developing an age-appropriate understanding of how to stay healthy. They also learn about different faiths and religions. For example, pupils know why values such as democracy are important to society. Pupils benefit from a range of activities to support their learning. These include visits to museums and geography field trips.

Staff value and appreciate leaders' care and support for their well-being and workload. Governors share leaders' vision to provide a high-quality education for pupils. While

governors increasingly hold leaders to account, from time to time, they pay insufficient attention to some of the information presented to them by leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding leaders and staff are well trained to identify and respond to any safeguarding concerns. Frequent training updates for staff ensure that safeguarding is always at the forefront of their minds. Concerns are reported by staff promptly and leaders act quickly to make sure pupils and families get the support they need. Leaders keep detailed records of any concerns raised, tracking cases carefully until they are resolved.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, including when they are online. Pupils speak highly of the sources of support available to them, such as the class worry box.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, leaders do not ensure that teachers are using assessment strategies consistently well to check how well pupils are learning over time. This hinders leaders from checking how well pupils are learning the most important knowledge in the curriculum. In these subjects, leaders should ensure that teachers are supported to use assessment strategies well to help pupils to secure earlier learning and build on what they know already.
- On occasion, the governing body does not provide a sufficient level of challenge to leaders about how they check on the quality of education for pupils. This means that governors do not have a consistently accurate view of how well pupils achieve across the curriculum. Governors must ensure that they hold leaders to account fully for how well pupils learn and remember the intended curriculum across all 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 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.

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	119344
Local authority	Blackburn with Darwen
Inspection number	10212387
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	259
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Kevin Hegarty
Headteacher	Kathryn Forsyth
Website	www.brookhouseprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	10 November 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not use alternative provision for pupils.
- The school has Nursery provision for 2-year-olds.

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 leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and other members of the leadership team. Further meetings were held with staff and pupils.
- Meetings were held with a representative of the local authority and with members of the governing body.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, history and science. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with pupils, and looked at examples of pupils' work. The inspector also spoke with the curriculum leader and the SEND leader.

- The inspector met with the safeguarding lead to discuss their actions to keep pupils safe and spoke with staff about safeguarding.
- The inspector talked to pupils about their experiences at school. The inspector also observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, breakfast club and during playtime and lunchtime.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, as well as the pupil and staff surveys.

Inspection team

Julie Brown, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022