

Inspection of a good school: Bolton Brow Primary Academy

Bolton Brow, Sowerby Bridge, West Yorkshire HX6 2BA

Inspection dates:

2 and 3 November 2022

Outcome

Bolton Brow Primary Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders, staff and parents are united in their vision that every pupil will succeed at this inclusive and welcoming school. Working together, they ensure that this vision is realised. The community is 'Proud to be Brow'. Leaders' high ambitions ensure that pupils are ready for their next steps in education. One parent told the inspector, 'My children are challenged and supported. I cannot speak highly enough of the team at Bolton Brow.' This view is echoed by many others.

Pupils know the school rules and that they should treat others as they wish to be treated. Parents, staff and pupils are overwhelmingly positive about behaviour in school and the scarcity of bullying. Pupils are confident to report any concerns they might have. They know that kind staff will always help them.

Pupils benefit from the opportunities to contribute to their school and local community. Some pupils are elected to the school council and work with leaders to review child-friendly policies. Others enjoy the responsibilities they have as librarians or as members of the 'well-being team'. Children in Reception form strong relationships with Year 6 pupils as part of the 'buddy system'. Year 6 pupils enjoy the responsibility of helping their buddies to quickly feel part of this school family.

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

Leaders continue to develop the curriculum. Plans are in place in many subjects that start from the early years. Subject leaders are enthusiastic about refining these further. Teachers welcome these changes. They work closely with teaching assistants to ensure that there is an engaging learning environment that captivates pupils' interest. However, on occasions, teachers plan learning activities that do not help pupils to learn what they need for their next steps.

In many subjects, leaders have clearly identified the important knowledge that they want pupils to learn. Leaders ensure there are opportunities for pupils to revisit this knowledge

over time. Where this happens consistently, pupils remember what they have learned and achieve well. However, in a few subjects, teachers do not consistently check that pupils have learned this information over a longer period. Some pupils have gaps in their knowledge. This includes in personal, social and health education (PSHE).

Leaders think carefully about the vocabulary they want pupils to use. Words are modelled effectively by teaching staff and displayed on subject 'working walls'. As a result, pupils increasingly use subject-specific words in their responses to questions and in their own writing. Children in Nursery explore words and language through stories that are thoughtfully chosen by their teachers. They excitedly told the inspector what it means for animals to hibernate and were insistent that they should have an autumn story read to them.

Leaders know how important it is for pupils to enjoy reading. Those at the earliest stages of learning to read are well supported by trained staff. There is a consistent approach to the teaching of early reading. Children in Reception enthusiastically take part when learning new letters and their sounds. Those who need extra support with their reading are swiftly identified. Effective additional sessions help them to quickly catch up with their peers. As a result, these pupils quickly learn to read.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported to access the same curriculum as their peers. Trained teaching staff have the information they need to be able to help pupils with SEND. This caring and supportive approach extends to all pupils and their families. Events such as 'Tea and Toast', where families are invited in to have refreshments with staff, further enhance the strong relationships that exist. Staff signpost additional support and advice to families who need them.

The great majority of pupils meet leaders' high expectations for behaviour. Leaders put in place additional help and support for those very few pupils who occasionally distract others from their learning. Leaders help these pupils to make better choices. Pupils demonstrate high levels of respect for adults and for each other. Pupils learn about the principles of respect and other important information such as healthy friendships through assemblies and PSHE lessons.

Staff are proud of the school. They know that leaders, including governors and staff belonging to the wider trust, have their well-being at heart. Governors know the school well. They support and challenge school leaders and check that any changes have a positive impact on pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that all staff receive regular safeguarding training and updates. Staff know the signs that suggest a pupil may be at risk of harm. Staff promptly report any safeguarding concerns that they have. Leaders act quickly in response. They make timely referrals to wider safeguarding partners and tenaciously follow these up to ensure that pupils and their families receive the help they need.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves mentally, physically and emotionally healthy. The work that the school does about well-being supports this. The youngest children are taught about the language of feelings. Pupils are confident to report any concerns that they have. They know that adults will act quickly to keep them safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, leaders have not ensured that the learning activities chosen from the resources available consistently help pupils to learn what leaders intend. Sometimes pupils are engaged with learning that does not help them reach the identified curriculum endpoints. Leaders should ensure that teachers have the precise information they need to plan sequences of lessons that help pupils to achieve what leaders intend.
- There is not a consistent approach to ensuring that pupils have the opportunity to regularly revisit the important knowledge that leaders want them to remember. As a result, some pupils struggle to recall what they have learned before. Some pupils have gaps in their knowledge. Leaders should ensure that there are regular opportunities for pupils to practise and rehearse what they have previously learned. This will enable pupils to recall the important knowledge that leaders have identified.

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 March 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

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| Unique reference number | 137392 |
| Local authority | Calderdale |
| Inspection number | 10242028 |
| 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 | 235 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Jan Wallis |
| Headteacher | Paul Kelesidis |
| Website | www.boltonbrow.com |
| Date of previous inspection | 18 October 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, a new headteacher and a new deputy headteacher have been appointed. The current chair of governors recently took up post.
- The school runs a nursery for children aged three to four years. At the time of the inspection, 15 children were attending this setting.
- The school does not make use of any alternative providers.
- The school is a member of the Together Learning Trust multi-academy trust.

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 senior leaders. Meetings were held with representatives of the governing body and the trust, including the chair of governors and the chief executive officer.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, history and science. The inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, talked to teachers about their subject and met with pupils to discuss their learning. The inspector reviewed samples of pupils' work and listened to pupils read.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector scrutinised a range of documents, including important safeguarding records. The inspector reviewed the single central record and checked that there were thorough systems in place when recruiting new members of staff.
- The inspector considered the views of staff through meetings, informal discussions and their responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- The inspector met with groups of pupils both formally in meetings and at social times. Their responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils were reviewed.
- The inspector considered the views of parents through the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Eleanor Belfield, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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