

Inspection of a good school: Hey-with-Zion Primary School

Rowland Way, Lees, Oldham, Lancashire OL4 3LQ

Inspection dates:

15 and 16 November 2022

Outcome

Hey-with-Zion Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and enjoy learning. They are proud of their school and approach each day with a positive attitude. Staff know pupils well and care for them as individuals.

Pupils are polite, hard-working and generous. They look out for each other and get along well with staff. They behave well in lessons and around the school site. The pupils who spoke to the inspector feel safe and say that bullying is exceptionally rare. This is because they believe that it is 'cool to be kind'. Staff deal with rare instances of bullying thoroughly and fairly.

Leaders and staff expect pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to try their best and learn well. Pupils rise to these expectations. In lessons, they work hard and answer questions thoughtfully. They listen intently to what others have to say. They embrace difference and are committed to making the world a fairer place.

Pupils enjoy many opportunities to pursue interests and develop talents. For example, all pupils learn to play a brass instrument and see a play at the theatre. Pupils also take part in many sports, such as football, dodgeball and hockey.

Pupils play an important role in decision-making. Recently, the school council worked with the local community to make traffic around the school safer.

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

Leaders have designed a vibrant and ambitious curriculum. They have thought carefully about the topics that staff teach in each subject, when they teach them and how they link together. This ensures that children in the early years and pupils in key stages 1 and 2 learn well across the curriculum.

In most subjects, leaders have identified the precise knowledge that they want pupils to acquire. Where this is the case, teachers plan learning that builds upon what pupils have learned in the past. They assess precisely what pupils have learned well and what they need extra support with. In a small number of subjects, leaders have not identified the specific knowledge that teachers should teach. As a result, teachers do not link new knowledge to what pupils have learned in the past. This limits pupils' learning.

Leaders have thought carefully about what children learn in the early years. Staff make sure that the curriculum in the early years prepares children to follow the key stage 1 curriculum well. Teachers in the early years provide children with a range of opportunities to deepen their knowledge of what teachers teach pupils directly. For example, during the inspection, staff encouraged children to find and draw different shapes to consolidate their formal learning in mathematics.

Leaders have made reading a top priority. Staff are relentless in their promotion of reading. This helps pupils to appreciate the joy of reading. In recent years, pupils have learned phonics well because staff are experts in early reading. This year, leaders have introduced a new early reading curriculum to improve pupils' reading further. Pupils read books that are closely matched to their knowledge of phonics. Staff quickly identify children and pupils who fall behind their peers. Despite this, teaching does not support these pupils as well as it did in the past. This is because teachers are still introducing the new curriculum and not all staff are trained fully in the new approach.

Staff identify when a pupil may have SEND. They use their information on these pupils to remove identified barriers to learning. As a result, pupils with SEND have access to the same ambitious curriculum as others and they learn well.

Pupils show genuine interest during their lessons. They are keen to participate. They very rarely disrupt lessons. They cooperate well and are keen to do their best.

Leaders prioritise pupils' wider development. All pupils support a partner school in The Gambia and learn the recorder. They take part in an array of extra-curricular activities, from film club to choir. Leaders track participation in these activities so that they can take deliberate action to ensure that all groups of pupils take advantage of the opportunities on offer. For example, a number of female sportspeople, including swimmer Rebecca Adlington, have recently spoken to pupils. This has reversed a slight decline in girls' participation in sports.

Governors and leaders know the school well. Leaders are considerate of staff's well-being. They have taken positive steps to reduce staff's workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that safeguarding is prioritised. Staff use their training to spot any signs that a pupil may be at risk from neglect or harm.

Leaders make sure that pupils are safe. They keep detailed safeguarding records. They follow up concerns with other agencies where necessary and ensure that families are supported.

Leaders are thorough in their work to ensure that staff and other adults are suitable to work with children.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including online. They understand about healthy relationships. They are also educated about the dangers of criminal activity and gangs.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- As staff introduce the new early reading curriculum, they do not support the weakest readers as well as they have in the past. This is because teaching and additional support do not consistently meet pupils' needs. Leaders must therefore ensure that the weakest readers receive timely and effective support that will enable them to catch up with their peers and become accurate readers.
- In a small number of subjects, leaders have not identified the essential component knowledge that they want pupils to acquire. As a result, teachers are sometimes uncertain as to how their teaching builds on prior knowledge and prepares pupils for future learning. This reduces the amount that pupils learn and remember over time. Subject leaders should make sure that they identify the key knowledge that teachers should teach so pupils' learning is maximised in 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 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

Unique reference number	105694
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	10240901
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	296
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Malcolm Milwain
Headteacher	Andrew Clowes
Website	www.heywithzion.oldham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 July 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The most recent Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools was undertaken in February 2019 under section 48 of the Education Act 2005.
- Leaders do not use alternative provision for pupils.

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 his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and other leaders in school. He also spoke with a range of staff.
- The inspector met with four members of the governing body, including its chair. He also met with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector spoke with parents and carers before the start of the school day.
- The inspector considered a range of documentation, including that relating to safeguarding. He spoke to staff about safeguarding and their workload and well-being.

- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour as they moved around the school and at break and lunchtime.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. The inspector also considered responses from staff and pupils to the Ofsted surveys.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. He met with subject leaders and teachers and visited a sample of lessons. The inspector spoke with pupils and looked at examples of their work. He considered the curriculum in some other subjects. He also observed pupils reading to adults.

Inspection team

Will Smith, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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