

Inspection of a good school: Blackburn Primary School

Baring Road, Blackburn, Rotherham, South Yorkshire S61 2BU

Inspection dates:

7 and 8 December 2022

Outcome

Blackburn Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending this welcoming school. They understand the school rules and meet the high expectations that adults have for them. On the playground, pupils are kind to one another. Bullying is rare. If pupils have any worries, including about bullying, they know that staff will help them. This helps pupils to feel safe.

Leaders have ensured that pupils study an ambitious curriculum. Teachers make learning purposeful for pupils. Pupils work hard in lessons. They show resilience when work is challenging. Pupils gain the knowledge they need and are well prepared for their next steps.

Leaders provide pupils with opportunities to develop their talents and interests. They can take part in after-school clubs, such as art, music and eco-club. Pupils participate in inter-house sports competitions, such as orienteering. They can represent their school in tournaments with local schools.

Pupils learn to be responsible citizens. For example, house captains lead games at lunchtimes for younger children and share books with different classes to inspire them to read. Eco-councillors make sure that the school grounds are free from litter and recycle paper to reduce the school's impact on the environment.

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

Leaders have made reading their top priority. The school is flooded with enticing reading areas that encourage pupils to read. Pupils like picking books from the library and listening to adults read to them. This helps pupils to build a deep knowledge of different authors and books.

Leaders have introduced a new programme for the teaching of early reading. Staff receive regular training and coaching to make sure they teach reading well. Teachers provide opportunities in lessons for pupils to practise reading the sounds that they are learning in

words and sentences and in the books that they read. Leaders ensure that those pupils still at the early stages of learning to read get the help that they need through regular catch-up sessions. As a result, pupils quickly learn to read with fluency and confidence.

Leaders have thought carefully about the curriculum that pupils follow. Subject leaders have worked with external specialists to identify the important knowledge that pupils should learn. They have carefully sequenced knowledge to build on what pupils already know. Subject leaders check the teaching of their subjects regularly. They use what they find out to provide further support and training for staff to ensure that subjects are taught well. Teachers use resources and pictures well to help pupils understand what they are being taught. Teachers check pupils' knowledge regularly and provide additional support for pupils who need extra help. For example, in mathematics, some pupils take part in extra sessions that prepare them for learning new content.

Most pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported in lessons. They have additional guides, such as vocabulary sheets with pictures, that help them to access learning. However, for a small number of pupils with complex social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs, guidance is less clear. This means that some staff do not have a clear understanding of the strategies to use to support these pupils. As a result, some pupils struggle to fully engage in lessons.

Leaders ensure that pupils develop their understanding of British values. For example, pupils in the early years exercise democracy by voting for the book that they want to have read to them. Pupils learn that people should be treated fairly, regardless of their differences. However, pupils' understanding of what makes people different is not well developed. For example, pupils struggle to talk about what is important to people who follow different religions. This limits pupils' understanding and appreciation of these differences.

Governors understand the strengths and areas for improvement that school leaders are working on. Governors are given detailed information by school leaders and undertake visits to school to find out more information if needed. Thorough reports of governor visits are shared with the full governing body. This creates a shared understanding of the effectiveness of the school and helps the governing body to hold leaders to account. Staff are proud to work in the school. They feel well supported by leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff are well trained. Weekly safeguarding updates help staff to recognise if a pupil is at risk of harm. Staff understand how to raise concerns about pupils' safety. Records show that they do so quickly. When safeguarding leads are aware of a concern, they act appropriately, involving other agencies when necessary. Appropriate checks are undertaken of staff who work with children in the school, including supply staff and contractors.

Pupils learn how to manage some of the risks they might face. They understand some of the steps to take to keep safe when using the internet. They also learn about road safety and the potential dangers caused by strangers.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils do not revisit content about different people in modern Britain frequently enough. As a result, they do not develop a deep understanding of some protected characteristics, such as race and religion. Leaders should ensure that pupils have frequent opportunities to learn about people who are different to themselves to better prepare them for life in modern Britain.
- Teachers are not provided with sufficiently clear strategies on how to support some pupils with SEMH needs. As a result, some pupils struggle to fully engage in lessons. Leaders should ensure that teachers are better prepared to support pupils with complex SEMH needs.

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 school to be good in May 2017.

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	106834
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	10228157
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	232
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Claire Sneath
Headteacher	Mark Bennett
Website	www.blackburnprimaryschool.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	10 and 11 May 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.

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.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. They 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.
- The inspector also looked at curriculum plans and pupils' work in geography and design and technology.

- The inspector scrutinised documents related to safeguarding and spoke to the school's designated safeguarding leads. The inspector spoke to staff and pupils about their safeguarding knowledge.
- 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 in meetings and at social times.
- The inspector considered the views of parents through the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Tim Scargill-Knight, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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