

Inspection of a good school: Whittlefield Primary School

Tabor Street, Burnley, Lancashire BB12 0HL

Inspection dates:

13 and 14 December 2022

Outcome

Whittlefield Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, and children in the early years, enjoy school. They are excited to come to school each morning, and they are welcomed warmly by staff. Pupils feel a strong sense of belonging to their school community.

Pupils explained that staff care for them well. This helps children and pupils to feel happy and safe. Pupils said that staff take bullying seriously. They are confident that staff deal with bullying swiftly and effectively on the rare occasions that it happens.

Leaders are ambitious for what all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), can and should achieve. Overall, pupils learn well. Children in the early years are well prepared for the demands of Year 1.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils rise to these expectations and are well behaved in class and during social times. They are kind to adults and to each other. Pupils appreciate the rewards that they receive when they display positive behaviours. For example, pupils are proud to see their names on the shout out boards in classrooms.

Pupils in Year 6 take their responsibility for looking after younger children and pupils seriously. For example, they support children and pupils at breaktimes and lunchtimes in their role as play leaders. Pupils spoke positively about extra-curricular clubs that they have access to. They particularly enjoy tag rugby and gardening club.

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

Leaders are in the process of revising their subject curriculums. For the most part, they have identified the essential knowledge that they want pupils, and children in the early years, to learn. However, in a few subjects, leaders' refinements to the curriculum are incomplete. This means that, in these subjects, pupils do not build on their knowledge as well as they should.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They present information to pupils clearly. In lessons, teachers frequently check that pupils have understood new learning. If pupils have any misconceptions, teachers ensure that these are quickly addressed. This helps to make sure that pupils know more and remember more over time.

Pupils have a real love of reading. Their eyes light up when they talk about the books that they have read in class. Pupils spoke with enthusiasm and empathy about stories and characters that they have been introduced to. Pupils enjoy the time that they spend reading, for example in their library bus.

Leaders have provided staff with regular training so that they can deliver the phonics programme well. Children and pupils read books that help them to practise the sounds that they have learned. Teachers check on pupils' reading knowledge regularly. They put appropriate support in place for any pupils who fall behind so that they can catch up quickly.

Leaders identify pupils with SEND quickly and accurately. Staff are skilled at giving children and pupils with SEND the support that they need to learn well alongside their peers.

Pupils take pride in their work. They focus well on their learning. Positive relationships between pupils and staff contribute to calm and purposeful classrooms. As a result, pupils' learning is rarely disrupted by poor behaviour.

The majority of children and pupils attend school regularly. Leaders work closely with parents and carers to remove any barriers that may affect pupils' rates of attendance. However, despite leaders' efforts, a minority of children and pupils do not attend school as regularly as they should. This affects how well these children and pupils learn.

Governors hold leaders fully to account for the quality of education that pupils receive.

Staff were overwhelmingly positive about the consideration that leaders give to their workload and well-being. Staff feel valued as a result.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff know their school community well. Leaders ensure that staff receive regular safeguarding training. Staff are vigilant to the signs that could indicate that a child or pupil may be at risk of harm. Staff report any concerns that they may have about a pupil's welfare diligently.

Leaders act on any safeguarding concerns swiftly and effectively so that children, pupils and their families receive the timely and appropriate support that they need. Governors regularly review the safeguarding procedures in school. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including when online and in the local community.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a very small number of subjects, leaders are still refining their curriculum design. As a result, some children and pupils do not learn these subject curriculums as well as they should. Leaders should ensure that all curriculums are complete and logically ordered, and that they set out the knowledge that children and pupils should know and remember.
- Some children and pupils do not attend school as regularly as they should. This means that they miss out on important knowledge, which hinders how well they learn. Leaders should ensure that they continue to support these children and pupils to improve their rates of attendance.

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 February 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	119262
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10226077
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	228
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Pauline Lucarz
Headteacher	Debra Boughen
Website	www.whittlefield.lancs.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	7 and 8 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not make any use of 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 this into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector spoke with the headteacher, other leaders and members of staff. She also spoke with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector looked at a range of leaders' documentation, including self-evaluation and safeguarding documents. The inspector spoke with leaders about the school's safeguarding procedures.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. She talked with curriculum leaders, visited lessons, looked at examples of children's and pupils' work, held discussions with teachers and talked with children and pupils. The inspector also observed some pupils reading to trusted staff.

- The inspector observed children and pupils' behaviour in class and as they moved around school. She also observed pupils playing at breaktimes.
- The inspector spoke with groups of children and pupils about their experiences at school.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. She also met with parents before school to find out their views of the school.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- There were no responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils.

Inspection team

Rebecca Sharples, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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