

Inspection of a good school: Cuerden Church School, Bamber Bridge

Station Road, Bamber Bridge, Preston, Lancashire PR5 6ED

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 January 2023

Outcome

Cuerden Church School, Bamber Bridge continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Cuerden Church School is a happy and caring place to learn. The school's values of love, hope, trust, respect, compassion, courage and forgiveness underpin how pupils behave towards each other and to staff. The school community looks forward to celebrating these values each week as part of 'Being Brilliant' assemblies.

Leaders encourage pupils, including children in the early years, to treat each other with respect and dignity. Pupils' behaviour is calm and purposeful. They work together sensibly and share their ideas eagerly. Pupils persevere when they find things difficult. They said that teachers will help them if they need it. Pupils are keen to earn behaviour points that count towards gold and platinum behaviour awards.

Pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well across a range of subjects. Most pupils live up to the high expectations and aspirations that leaders have for them.

Pupils are proud of their school. They appreciate leaders' support for their well-being. Pupils know what bullying is and why it is wrong. Leaders act quickly to resolve any problems that arise. This helps pupils to feel safe in school.

At breaktimes, pupils play well together, having fun as they make use of the equipment and the activities that staff provide for them. Older pupils relish opportunities, such as leading assemblies and acting as school councillors. Pupils enjoy visits from members of the community, which helps to broaden their knowledge of the local area.

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

Leaders have designed a curriculum that reflects their high aspirations for all pupils, including pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils. This starts in the early years. In most subjects, leaders have organised the curriculum so that pupils' learning builds on what they know already in well-ordered steps as they move through the school.

Teachers are clear about what they want pupils to know and remember. They use their expertise to provide clear explanations for pupils. Teachers routinely revisit earlier learning to ensure that pupils' knowledge is secure. This helps pupils to readily apply prior knowledge to new concepts and ideas. Added to this, teachers quickly identify and remedy pupils' errors. As a result, pupils learn well.

In a small number of subjects, leaders have not considered fully the essential knowledge that pupils should learn. This means that some teachers are less certain about the knowledge that should be taught. Over time, gaps emerge in some pupils' learning in these subjects.

Leaders have placed a high priority on the teaching of reading. Teachers across the school regularly share a wide range of books with pupils. Pupils told the inspector that they love reading and that their favourite part of the day was story time.

Children in the early years quickly learn the sounds that letters represent. Teachers introduce new sounds to pupils in a logical order. As pupils begin to read independently, staff ensure that their reading books are closely matched to the letter sounds that pupils are learning in class. This helps pupils to become more confident readers. Leaders keep a check on how well pupils know and remember sounds. Staff provide extra support for those pupils who fall behind. Leaders have recently implemented a new phonics curriculum and ensured that staff have received training to deliver this new approach. A minority of staff require some additional support to deliver this new programme consistently well.

Leaders know pupils well and are quick to identify the additional needs of pupils with SEND. Leaders work closely with parents to ensure that the needs of pupils with SEND are fully met. Teachers deploy a range of effective approaches to enable these pupils to access a full curriculum and to achieve well.

Pupils, including children in the early years, have positive attitudes to learning. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers and show respect for their peers. These behaviours ensure that pupils work diligently and that their learning is rarely disrupted.

Leaders ensure that pupils benefit from a rich and broad range of experiences beyond the taught curriculum. Pupils take part in many extra-curricular clubs and sports. These opportunities help pupils to become more confident and encourage them to develop their leadership skills. Pupils spoke proudly about how they have made a positive contribution to the school and the wider community.

Staff spoke positively about the support that they receive from leaders and governors. Leaders ensure that the workload and well-being of the staff are carefully considered. Governors use their knowledge well to support and challenge leaders to develop further the quality of education that pupils receive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are vigilant to any signs that pupils may be at risk of potential abuse or neglect. Leaders provide regular safeguarding training and briefings. They ensure that all staff and governors have a clear and robust understanding of their safeguarding duties.

Staff know how to record and report any safeguarding concerns. When necessary, leaders work effectively with external agencies to ensure that pupils and their families get the timely support that they need.

Pupils have a secure awareness of how to keep themselves safe both online and more widely in their community. They know the importance of reporting any concerns to adults.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have recently introduced a new phonics curriculum. Some staff are still honing their expertise in delivering this programme. This means that on occasion, some aspects of the phonics programme are not delivered as leaders intend. Leaders should ensure that staff are supported to deliver the phonics programme consistently well.
- In a small number of subjects, leaders have not finalised the knowledge that they want pupils to learn. As a result, some teachers are not clear enough about the most important knowledge that should be taught and checked. This leads to gaps in some pupils' knowledge over time. Leaders should make sure that teachers are clear about the knowledge that pupils should learn and when this should be taught.

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 February 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	133645
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10240479
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	199
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	David Evans
Headteacher	Nicola Sherry
Website	www.cuerden.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 June 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher and deputy headteacher have been appointed.
- This is a voluntary-aided Church of England school in the Diocese of Blackburn. The last section 48 inspection took place in December 2022.
- Leaders do not currently make use of alternative provision for any 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.
- During the inspection, the inspector held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders and members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. He also spoke with a representative of the local authority and a representative of the diocese.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. This involved visiting lessons with subject leaders, discussing subject curriculums, talking to

pupils and teachers and looking at pupils' work. He also observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.

- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes, lunchtime and during lessons. He also talked to pupils about their views on the school.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. He also considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys for pupils and for staff.
- The inspector checked leaders' safeguarding procedures. He scrutinised a range of safeguarding documents and considered how safeguarding incidents are managed and recorded.

Inspection team

James Blackwell, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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