

Inspection of Lever Edge Primary Academy

Lever Edge Lane, Bolton, Lancashire BL3 3HP

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 March 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Lever Edge Primary Academy as an academy school under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections.

Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection of the predecessor school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders and staff ensure that pupils feel part of a friendly community. Pupils are taught to appreciate the importance of treating everyone with respect and care. All pupils are valued regardless of their differences. They benefit from positive relationships with staff and their peers. Pupils told inspectors that they value the strong friendships they have in school. This makes pupils feel safe and happy.

Leaders and staff are ambitious for all pupils to be successful. Pupils are resilient and work hard to meet the high expectations that leaders and staff have of them. They achieve well.

Pupils are attentive and behave well in lessons. There are systems in place to identify bullying. If bullying should happen, leaders deal with it quickly and effectively.

Pupils are eager to take on additional responsibilities within the school and to support their local community. Pupil librarians take pride in overseeing the running of the school library. They work with leaders to ensure that pupils have access to a broad range of texts. Members of the choir share their talents in the local community, such as the nearby residential care home. Such opportunities build pupils' confidence and prepare them well for life beyond the classroom.

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

Leaders have established a curriculum that is ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders have identified the important knowledge that pupils should learn and when this should be delivered by teachers.

The early years curriculum is ambitious and highly effective. Leaders have considered what children learn in the provision for two-year olds and build on this well in Nursery and Reception. As a result, at the end of the early years, most children are ready for the demands of the Year 1 curriculum.

Teachers deliver the curriculums for English and mathematics consistently well. They introduce new learning to pupils effectively. Teachers check what pupils know and remember from previous lessons. They provide opportunities for pupils to revisit prior concepts, when needed, before moving on to new learning. At the end of Year 6, most pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education in these subjects.

In other curriculum subjects, the majority of teachers have the expertise they need to introduce new learning to pupils effectively. Support from experienced leaders and subject specialists enables teachers to further develop their expertise across different subjects.

In a small number of subjects, leaders have not assured themselves that the curriculum is being delivered as intended by all teachers. Some teachers do not ensure that the important vocabulary set out in the subject curriculums is taught well. Consequently, some pupils lack the vocabulary they need to access future learning.

Leaders ensure that staff deliver the phonics programme consistently well. Leaders and teachers check on what pupils understand and have learned in phonics sessions. Extra support is quickly put in place for pupils who need it. This helps them to catch up with their peers. New arrivals to the school, including those pupils who speak English as an additional language, begin to learn phonics as soon as they join the school.

Leaders promote reading well across the school. Developing a love of books begins in the early years. Leaders and staff ensure that high-quality books form an essential part of learning for all children. Staff have expertise in developing children's language skills. This is a focus across the purposeful and highly engaging learning activities that children experience. Pupils in key stage 1 read books that are closely matched to the sounds they are learning. As a result, they experience success when reading. Pupils in key stage 2 access a range of engaging texts, including novels and non-fiction. They read widely and often.

There are effective systems in place to identify the additional needs of pupils with SEND. Leaders work effectively with external organisations to secure additional support in a timely manner.

Pupils regularly display good manners. They do their best to treat others in the same way that they would like to be treated themselves. They are courteous and lead by example. Children in the early years are exceptionally well behaved. Leaders and staff ensure that children understand and enact the qualities of sharing and cooperating.

Pupils experience an exemplary range of opportunities that enhance their personal development. Pupils develop a deep and meaningful understanding of British values, such as democracy. They value the importance of treating everyone equally. Leaders ensure that pupils learn about the signs of healthy relationships. As a result, pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain.

Trustees are ambitious for all pupils. They support and challenge leaders appropriately about the quality of education.

Leaders are considerate of staff's workload and well-being. Staff are positive about working at the school and value the support that leaders provide.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff benefit from regular training that helps them to identify pupils at risk of harm. They follow clear procedures to report any concerns they have about a pupil. Leaders respond to any concerns in a timely manner. They work well with other professionals and external organisations when required.

Leaders ensure that the curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to understand risks and learn to keep themselves safe, including when working and playing online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, leaders have not assured themselves that the curriculum is being delivered as intended. As a result, some pupils do not secure the subject-specific vocabulary that they need for future learning. They do not achieve as well as they should in these subjects. Leaders should ensure that teachers follow their guidance to deliver the curriculum as intended.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	136395
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	10211794
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	518
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	John Shepley
Headteacher	Kelly James
Website	www.leveredgeprimaryacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected.

Information about this school

- Lever Edge Primary Academy converted to become an academy school in January 2011. When its predecessor school, Lever Edge Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.
- The board of trustees operates a breakfast club and after-school provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors completed deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics, physical education and music. As part of the deep dives, the

inspectors met with subject leaders to discuss the curriculum, visited lessons, met with teachers and looked at children's and pupils' work. The inspectors also looked at the curriculum and pupils' work in some other curriculum subjects. The lead inspector listened to pupils read to a familiar adult.

- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, other school leaders and members of staff.
- An inspector spoke with representatives from the board of trustees, including the chair of the trust. An inspector spoke with the school improvement partner.
- Inspectors checked the arrangements for keeping pupils safe. They reviewed a range of documentation and spoke to leaders and staff. Inspectors also spoke to pupils about whether they felt safe in school.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at social times. They spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school. Inspectors also considered the views of pupils shared through Ofsted's pupil survey.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being. Inspectors also considered the views of staff shared through Ofsted's staff survey.
- An inspector spoke with parents and carers. Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View. This included the free-text responses.

Inspection team

David Robinson, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Peter Berry	Ofsted Inspector
Steve Kirkpatrick	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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