

Inspection of Fairfield Community Primary School

Rochdale Old Road, Bury, Lancashire BL9 7SD

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 March 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

This school is a welcoming and friendly haven where adults encourage all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to succeed. Pupils enjoy playing and learning together. They are very happy in the school. Pupils who recently joined the school, including from other countries, said they made friends quickly. All are valued members of the community.

Pupils develop strong relationships with staff. Many pupils spoke of staff's kindness and patience. Pupils know that staff care about them and that they treat everyone fairly. Leaders resolve any bullying concerns effectively. This helps pupils to feel safe.

Pupils make every effort to rise to leaders' high expectations of behaviour and achievement. They are polite and courteous, and work hard. They proudly wear their 'positive behaviour' badges. They achieve well academically and thrive socially. They benefit from a raft of well-considered and creative approaches to address their learning needs. Their faces light up when taking Dougie, the therapy dog, for a walk or when reading him a story.

Pupils were eager to talk about the many opportunities they have to nurture their interests, such as musical theatre and sports clubs. By carrying out responsible roles, such as young leaders and reading buddies, they learn to make a positive difference. Leaders' motto, 'Happiness and High Standards', permeates the whole school community.

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

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is ambitious for all pupils, including those with SEND. It is relevant and interesting, and motivates pupils to engage in their learning.

In most subjects, leaders have clearly identified the important knowledge that pupils, including children in the early years, should have and the order in which they should acquire it. Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to explain ideas clearly. They check that pupils' understanding is secure before introducing new content. They quickly address misconceptions. Consequently, in these subjects, pupils gain the knowledge and skills that they need to progress well over time and achieve well.

However, in some subjects, leaders are still finalising their curriculum thinking, from the early years to Year 6, after the recent reorganisation of classes. Although subject leaders have set out ambitious goals for pupils' learning, teachers sometimes lack sufficient clarity about the most important knowledge that pupils need to have and when they should acquire it. As a result, it is difficult for them to build on what pupils already know and to integrate it into larger concepts. In these subjects, pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

Across the whole school, leaders place a high priority on pupils learning to read well. Staff are well trained to deliver the clearly structured phonics programme effectively. From the start of the Nursery class, children listen carefully and join in well with rhymes and songs. Many children in the Reception class start to use their budding phonic knowledge when reading words and sentences.

Teachers make sure that pupils practise their reading regularly. They provide additional support for any pupils who need extra help so that they catch up quickly with their peers. This means that most pupils become fluent and accurate readers by the end of Year 2. Older pupils enjoy reading and were eager to discuss their favourite books.

Leaders identify in detail the needs of pupils with SEND. Teachers use this information well to make sure that these pupils successfully follow the same curriculum as their peers. From the early years, children display very positive attitudes to learning and behave well. Pupils participate keenly in lessons and take pride in their work. Staff provide sensitive support to help them to regulate their emotions and behaviour. This means that they rarely disrupt lessons. Leaders work tirelessly to ensure that pupils attend school regularly.

Leaders' investment in the development of pupils' personal development is reaping rewards. Pupils know they have a voice. They revel in opportunities to contribute to decision-making at the school. For example, their ideas have been at the forefront of the development of outdoor learning. They are confident and self-assured because they know that they are important. They understand that people have different religions, backgrounds and families and that all deserve equal respect. They experience a wealth of enrichment activities to broaden their horizons and extend their understanding of the wider world.

The expertise and effectiveness of the governing body contribute strongly to the school's development. Staff appreciate the way that leaders are considerate of their workload and well-being. They are proud to work at the school. Staff morale is high. Governors and staff share leaders' vision and ambition, and understand their role in bringing them to fruition.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They appreciate the approachability of leaders and the care that staff extend to their children.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff receive regular training so that they remain alert to the signs that pupils may be at risk of suffering from harm. Staff follow clear procedures to report their concerns, which are followed up diligently by leaders. Leaders develop strong links with local agencies to obtain timely help for vulnerable pupils and their families.

Pupils benefit from regular opportunities to learn how to keep themselves safe. They receive helpful information about using the internet safely and gain a secure, age-appropriate understanding of consent. Leaders have organised workshops for older pupils about how to avoid risks in the community.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, leaders have not ensured that staff are clear about the essential knowledge that pupils should learn. As a result of this, sometimes pupils have not acquired the essential knowledge that they need to apply to new learning. It also prevents some pupils from developing a secure understanding of some important concepts. Leaders should ensure that teachers are clear about the knowledge that pupils should learn, and when teachers should teach it, so that pupils can build on prior learning and achieve well in all subjects.

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 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	105287
Local authority	Bury
Inspection number	10269034
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	256
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sally McGill
Headteacher	Victoria Gilkey
Website	www.fairfieldprimarybury.org.uk/
Date of previous inspection	13 February 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, the school has appointed a new headteacher. There have also been several changes to leadership roles.
- There is a new chair of governors in place. Several new governors have been appointed recently.
- Leaders have recently reviewed the number of pupil admissions. As a result, mixed-age classes are no longer a feature of the school.
- The school provides a breakfast club and after-school childcare.
- Leaders currently make use of one registered alternative provider.

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.

- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher and other leaders. They spoke with subject leaders and other members of staff.
- The lead inspector spoke with seven members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. She also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms, at lunchtime and at playtimes. They spoke with different groups of pupils to discuss their views of the school, their learning, their behaviour and their safety.
- Inspectors checked the arrangements for keeping children safe. They reviewed documentation, checked attendance and exclusions information and spoke to leaders, governors, staff and pupils.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, science and history. For each deep dive, they discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and reviewed samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult. Inspectors also considered aspects of several other subjects in the school's curriculum.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for the provision for pupils with SEND and scrutinised samples of documentation relating to SEND, including pupils' support plans.
- Inspectors spoke to parents and considered their views, which were shared through Ofsted Parent View. This included the free-text comments received from parents. Inspectors also reviewed the responses to Ofsted's surveys for staff and for pupils.
- Inspectors considered a range of documents shared by school leaders and trustees, including the school development plan, external reports, the minutes taken at governing body meetings and leaders' self-evaluation documents.

Inspection team

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