

Inspection of Hazlehurst Community Primary School

Geoffrey Street, Ramsbottom, Bury, Lancashire BL0 9PQ

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 March 2023

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

This school was last inspected 11 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then 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.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to attend this happy and welcoming school. They enjoy warm and caring relationships with staff and each other.

Leaders go out of their way to nurture pupils' mental health and well-being. Pupils value the support that staff provide. This helps them to feel safe and well looked after. If pupils experience any incidents of bullying or unkind behaviour, leaders act promptly to sort these issues out effectively.

Most staff expect pupils to behave well and to follow the school's CARE (care, achieve, respect, everyone) code. Many pupils try hard to rise to these expectations and behave well. However, some staff do not have high enough expectations of pupils' conduct. When this happens, some pupils do not behave as well as they should, particularly during lesson times.

Pupils value the many extra-curricular opportunities that leaders provide as part of the 'Hazlehurst offer'. This includes learning to play a brass instrument, enjoying virtual visits to the Houses of Parliament and spending time in the school's outdoor classroom.

Leaders' ambition for pupils' academic achievement is too low across the curriculum. Most pupils, with the exception of the oldest pupils, do not achieve well across the curriculum. They are ill-prepared for the next stage of their education.

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

Leaders have a shared understanding of what they want pupils to experience during their learning journey from the early years to the end of Year 6. Leaders have implemented a well-thought-out curriculum to support pupils' personal development. However, they have been far less successful in implementing a broad, balanced and ambitious academic curriculum, which supports pupils to develop detailed knowledge across the curriculum.

Leaders have a weak knowledge of effective curriculum design. Many subjects are not taught frequently enough to ensure that pupils develop a strong body of knowledge over time. Some leaders have recognised that their curriculums do not support pupils well enough to know more and remember more. However, they have been too slow to address these weaknesses.

Some teachers and subject leaders benefit from subject-specific training. However, not enough leaders or staff have the skills or knowledge that they need to deliver the curriculum effectively. This includes the early years curriculum. As a result, pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), often experience activities which do not support them to connect new knowledge with what they already know. They do not have enough opportunities to practise and build on prior learning.

Although the pupils who left Year 6 in 2022 achieved outcomes in line with their peers nationally in their statutory tests and assessments, this belies pupils' poor progress through the curriculum prior to Year 6. Pupils at the end of key stage 1 attained outcomes significantly below that of their peers nationally. Moreover, many pupils, across different subjects and classes, remember little of what they have been taught. Some pupils do not recall being taught any lessons in some subjects.

In a small number of subjects, some teachers use assessment strategies well to check what pupils have learned and remembered. They then adjust and adapt teaching to address misconceptions or to re-teach important concepts. However, this is the exception rather than the rule. In most curriculum areas, including in the early years, assessment information is not used effectively.

Leaders and staff know that it is important to teach pupils to read well. In the Reception class, staff develop children's interest in reading by sharing a range of books, stories and rhymes.

Leaders have adapted their phonics programme, so that pupils are introduced to letters and sounds in a more logical and progressive way. Staff implement the programme as leaders intend. Most pupils benefit from the reading programme. The oldest pupils learn to read well and with good expression. However, they lack knowledge about the wide range of books that leaders have shared with them.

Struggling readers receive support to try to use the sounds that they have been taught to read new books. Nonetheless, some of these pupils have not securely mastered previously taught sounds. This means that they find it difficult to read books with confidence and fluency. Conversely, some early readers read books that are too easy for them. This fails to extend and deepen their phonics knowledge. Leaders do not ensure that the pupils who find reading very difficult develop strong reading habits. Some staff lack knowledge of the most effective strategies to use to support these pupils well.

Leaders work very effectively to support the emotional needs of pupils with SEND. They quickly identify any children in the early years who may need help with their early language skills or any pupils across the school who struggle with their mental health and well-being. Staff help pupils to develop confidence in these areas. Even so, some staff do not have enough of an oversight of the academic targets that pupils with SEND are working on. This impedes their ability to provide effective support for these pupils. Some staff lack knowledge about how to support pupils with SEND effectively across the curriculum, so that they can learn successfully.

Staff in the early years forge strong relationships with children. As a result, children settle in well and enjoy learning and playing together. However, the details of what children will learn across the curriculum is unclear. This means that staff do not know enough about what to teach and when this should happen.

Some pupils behave well in lessons and listen attentively to their teacher and each other. For example, the oldest pupils show mature attitudes to their learning and most take pride in their work. However, some pupils' learning is hampered by the poor behaviour of others. Some staff do not address low-level disruption well enough.

Pupils' personal development enjoys a high profile across the school. Pupils spoke fondly about the different ways that their teachers support them to manage their emotions and feelings. They also enjoy spending time with the school's therapy dog, Saint, who supports pupils across the school.

Pupils proudly take on a range of leadership roles in school. This helps them to develop their confidence and resilience. Pupils learn about the importance of looking after the planet and sustainability. Members of the eco-committee spoke with enthusiasm about their work to improve the school environment by purchasing bird feeders and saving energy in class. Older pupils also enjoy acting as buddies to the children in the early years. Pupils also participate in a range of after-school clubs and other activities to encourage them to keep fit and healthy.

Governors are highly committed and want the best for the school. They make regular checks about the school's progress and development. However, these checks are not effective enough. They have not revealed the extent of the weaknesses in the school. Governors have not challenged leaders for the weaknesses in the curriculum and the poor achievement of many pupils. They have not ensured that staff have the essential knowledge and skills to be able to perform their roles effectively. That said, most staff feel that leaders and governors are considerate of their well-being and workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff are vigilant and alert to any signs of abuse or neglect in pupils. Staff are well trained and know about a range of safeguarding issues. They act quickly and are tenacious in their approach. Leaders engage well with external agencies.

Leaders go out of their way to provide strong emotional support for pupils' well-being. That said, some staff have not had recent training in how to support pupils when they require a physical intervention.

Pupils learn about different ways to stay safe, such as not talking to strangers and using the internet safely

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some struggling readers do not receive effective support to help them remember the previously taught sounds in the longer term. This means that they find it difficult to read new books with growing confidence and fluency. Leaders must make sure that these pupils quickly receive the help that they need, so they develop strong reading habits and are well-equipped to meet the demands of the key stage 2 curriculum.
- Leaders' and governors' ambitions for pupils' academic achievement are too low. Not enough consideration has been given to ensuring that pupils gain a strong body of knowledge in many curriculum areas. This stops pupils from achieving well. Leaders must make sure that everyone expects the very best from pupils, so that pupils experience academic success.
- Leaders have a weak knowledge of effective curriculum design from early years to the end of key stage 2. Many subjects are also not taught frequently enough. This greatly hampers pupils' ability to make links with previous learning and to build on what they know. Leaders must implement a curriculum which enables pupils to gain a rich understanding across the curriculum, so that pupils across the school are well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
- Leaders' capacity to improve the school is weak. Their efforts have not addressed the many weaknesses in the school. Therefore, over time, many pupils underachieve. Governors must make sure that they strengthen capacity across the school and that the recent positive changes are sustainable in the longer term.
- Many leaders and staff do not have sufficient knowledge or skills to confidently lead and deliver curriculums effectively, including in the early years. Some staff have also not had recent training on how to support pupils who require extra help to regulate their emotions. This means that staff lack the confidence and knowledge to perform their roles as well as they should. Senior leaders and governors must ensure that staff have the knowledge that they need to be able to perform their roles effectively.
- Leaders have not made sure that staff use assessment information effectively in many subjects. This means that teachers do not check well enough what pupils have learned and remembered over time or adjust teaching in light of this information. Leaders should make sure that teachers use assessment information well, so that pupils are supported to retain and use knowledge in the longer term.
- Not enough thought has been given to how to support pupils with SEND to achieve well. Some staff do not have sufficient knowledge to be able to support these pupils as well as they should. Leaders must make sure that staff have the appropriate knowledge, information and skills, so they can effectively support these pupils to access the curriculum and learn well.

- Some pupils do not listen well enough in class or they disturb others. This means that learning time is lost. This affects pupils' learning. Leaders must ensure that all staff have the highest of expectations for all pupils, so that they can achieve their best.

Leaders and those responsible for governance may not appoint early career teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

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	105296
Local authority	Bury
Inspection number	10257105
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Nabila Afilal
Headteacher	Anne-Marie Knowles
Website	www.hazlehurstschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 and 16 December 2011, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.
- Leaders offer a before-school breakfast club and an after-school club.

Information about this inspection

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

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

- This is the first routine inspection that the school has received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other school leaders. They also met with a group of governors from the governing body.
- Inspectors spoke to different groups of pupils about their learning and their views of the school. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. Inspectors considered the views of pupils and staff shared through the Ofsted online surveys.
- Inspectors evaluated a range of documentation provided by school leaders. They checked the arrangements for keeping pupils safe, through a review of documentation and through discussions with leaders, including governors, staff and pupils.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, discussed the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, looked at a sample of pupils' work, spoke to teachers and talked to pupils about their learning. One inspector also observed pupils reading to familiar adults.
- Inspectors met with leaders of other subjects to consider the curriculum in these areas. Inspectors also spoke to other pupils about their learning and looked at books in these subjects.

Inspection team

Louise McArdle, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Kevan Naughton

Ofsted Inspector

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