

Inspection of a good school: Lower Fields Primary Academy

Fenby Avenue, Bradford, West Yorkshire BD4 8RG

Inspection dates:

16 and 17 May 2023

Outcome

Lower Fields Primary Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Lower Fields Primary Academy is a friendly and welcoming school. Leaders have established high expectations focused on being safe, respectful and responsible. Adults apply these expectations consistently. They help pupils manage their own feelings and behaviour well. Pupils know exactly what it means to be 'evergreen'. They understand what 'green' behaviours are and live these out in their conduct in school. When bullying happens, adults deal with it quickly. They help pupils to understand what bullying is and what it isn't. Pupils behave with kindness and respect towards each other. If things go wrong, skilled adults help pupils to get back on track.

Leaders give pupils opportunities to explore their interests. For example, pupils benefit from a range of lunchtime clubs, including sports, board games and mindfulness. Leaders also provide pupils with opportunities to explore jobs and careers. Pupils are beginning to see how the work they do now can help them achieve their aspirations for the future. Leaders have developed an ambitious curriculum that supports pupils to achieve these aspirations.

There is a sense of family at Lower Fields. The members of the recently appointed leadership team are building positive relationships with pupils and their families. They have created an inclusive culture that helps pupils to feel happy and safe.

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

Leaders have established an ambitious curriculum that helps pupils to build their knowledge step by step. Adults have identified the most important things pupils need to learn and remember in all subjects. For example, in art, pupils develop their understanding of tone and depth by exploring the paintings of Henri Rousseau. Teachers help pupils to remember their learning by making helpful links between subjects. When studying the Viking invasion, pupils learn about the legacy of these invasions in the placenames used today. They then use their geographical skills to explore these

placenames on maps. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. They learn the same ambitious curriculum that leaders have established for all pupils. Where necessary, adults adapt the curriculum so that pupils with SEND grow in confidence. Reading is woven into the whole curriculum. Pupils read in all subjects and adults make sure pupils can use new vocabulary fluently. However, leaders' ambition for the curriculum has not been fully realised in all subjects. Teachers' knowledge about how to teach some subjects is less well developed. As a result, some of the examples adults use to help pupils to learn are not as precise as they could be.

Leaders have made reading a priority. They make sure that staff get the training they need to help pupils to learn to read. In early years, adults help children to get off to a flying start by learning phonics and beginning to read simple words. Adults give children a special book bag and they start taking books home straight away. The books children read are matched to the sounds they know. Leaders ensure that all pupils practise reading every day. When pupils struggle, skilled adults provide just the right support to help them catch up. Leaders have invested in a wide range of well-chosen literature for pupils. In every year group, adults have selected thirty books that pupils will experience. Adults choose one of these books to read to pupils every day. Pupils enjoy these stories and talk about feeling excited when their teachers start sharing a new book. This inspires pupils to borrow these books from the school library to read at home. Interesting books are everywhere in this school.

In early years, adults help children develop their mathematical skills by giving them lots of opportunities to explore number. Children count the fruit in Handa's basket when reading the book 'Handa's Surprise'. They deepen their knowledge by exploring how number can be represented in many different ways. Leaders have made sure that the curriculum supports all pupils to become fluent mathematicians. Teachers respond quickly to any misconceptions pupils might have. They carefully match activities so that pupils practise the most important things that they need to learn. Pupils are confident to explain their mathematical thinking. For example, they describe in detail the process of converting fractions into percentages.

Pupils enjoy the leadership opportunities available to them, for example 'swap shop' shopkeepers and accountants. The curriculum for personal, social and health education helps pupils to understand ideas such as healthy relationships. Pupils learn about democracy by voting on current national issues and expressing their opinions. However, leaders' ambition for pupils' broader development has not been fully implemented. There are some gaps in pupils' knowledge. The experiences that are on offer to them are not as broad as they could be.

Those responsible for governance share leaders' ambitions for pupils. Staff workload and well-being are a high priority for leaders and governors. Staff are positive about the support and training that they receive. They are proud to work at this inclusive school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a culture of safeguarding. Pupils feel safe and learn how to keep themselves safe, including online. Adults receive regular training and weekly updates on safeguarding. They know the risks that children may face. If they are concerned that a pupil may be at risk of harm, they are quick to follow agreed procedures to get the necessary help.

Leaders keep thorough records of the actions taken to keep pupils safe. Leaders are tenacious in following up on concerns and work well with outside agencies when there are concerns about vulnerable pupils. Appropriate checks are made on the suitability of those appointed to work with children.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some aspects of the curriculum are in the early stages of being implemented. Sometimes, the explanations and examples teachers give to guide pupils' learning are not as precise as they could be. Leaders should ensure that staff have the knowledge across all aspects of the curriculum to guide pupils' learning in each subject.
- The school's offer for pupils' broader development beyond academic subjects is not yet coherently planned. This means that the experiences on offer to pupils to widen their experiences beyond the curriculum are too limited. Leaders should ensure their ambition for pupils' development, beyond the academic, is brought together into a coherent offer for all pupils.

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 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 predecessor school, Lower Fields Primary School, to be good in March 2018.

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	146584
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	10268441
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	418
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Steve Hodsman
Principal	Rebecca Stansfield
Website	www.lfpa.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This a larger-than-average size primary school.
- There have been many changes in staffing and leadership since the last inspection, including a new Principal and two Assistant Principals.
- The school runs a breakfast club for pupils who attend the school.
- The school does make 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 that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with senior leaders, subject leaders and teachers. The inspector met with the special educational needs coordinator and early years leader.
- The inspector held a video meeting with the chair of the academy advisory board. She also had a video meeting with two representatives from the trust board and met separately with the trust deputy chief executive officer.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and art. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead to review a range of documents, including the school's log of safeguarding incidents. The inspector also spoke to staff about how they keep pupils safe. The inspector reviewed the school's single central record to check the suitability of staff working at the school.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of other documentation, including records of pupils' behaviour, minutes of governors' meetings and leaders' evaluation of the school.
- The inspector spoke informally to pupils to gather their views on school life. She also talked to parents at the start of the school day.
- To gather parents' views, the inspector took account of the views of parents from Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, including free-text comments.
- To gather the views of staff, the inspector took account of the staff survey.

Inspection team

Jen Sloan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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