

Inspection of a good school: Educational Diversity

278a Whitegate Drive, Blackpool, Lancashire FY3 9JW

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 July 2023

Outcome

Educational Diversity continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Most pupils flourish at educational diversity. They benefit from the caring and welcoming environment that leaders have created. Pupils respond well to the high aspirations that leaders have of their behaviour. They play an important part in creating the calm and respectful atmosphere around school.

Pupils make a strong start when they join the school and many pupils move successfully back to their home school. Most pupils achieve well.

Pupils develop into confident, resilient and independent young people. They enjoy taking part in a range of activities that help them to establish a strong connection to their local community. These include an art project to design lights on the theme of sustainability. They also take part in enterprise initiatives that help them to develop their employability skills. Pupils enjoy taking part in a wide range of outdoor activities at Borwick Hall.

Pupils are happy. This is because staff know the pupils well and they provide intelligent support so that most pupils enjoy a settled start to the school day. Leaders deal well with any incidents of bullying that occur. This helps pupils to feel safe.

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

Leaders are ambitious for the achievement of all pupils. They have designed a suite of learning pathways that are well matched to the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). In most subjects, leaders have thought carefully about the design of the curriculum. They have set out clearly the key knowledge that pupils should learn. Most pupils are well prepared for each stage of their education.

In a small number of subjects, leaders have not finalised their thinking about the curriculum. In these subjects, teachers are not as clear as they should be about the key information that they should emphasise.

Most teachers deliver the curriculum with clarity. They use their strong subject knowledge to design activities that help pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding well over time. Teachers make regular checks on what pupils know and remember. They use this information effectively to address any gaps or misconceptions that pupils may have. As a result, most pupils keep up with their learning so that they are well placed to return to their home school when they are ready.

Leaders have recently taken steps to prioritise reading across the school. They accurately identify the reading needs of pupils when they join the school. Leaders use this information well to support pupils to develop their understanding of the texts that they read. Leaders have ensured that the books that these pupils read are well matched to their needs.

Sometimes, the support that leaders provide for pupils who are at the very early stages of learning to read does not focus as sharply as it should on helping them to develop their phonics knowledge. When this happens, these pupils do not learn the sounds that letters make and blend them together as accurately as they should. This hinders some pupils from becoming confident and fluent readers.

Leaders accurately identify the needs of pupils with SEND. They provide staff with the information that they need so that they can support these pupils effectively. As a result, most pupils with SEND learn well alongside their peers.

Most pupils display a positive attitude towards their learning. Teachers deal effectively with any incidents of low-level disruption that may occur.

Leaders ensure that pupils benefit from a wealth of opportunities that make a strong contribution to their personal development. Pupils learn about how to look after their physical and mental health. They know the signs of a healthy relationship. Links with a local football club help pupils to develop their leadership and teamwork skills. Regular engagement with employers helps most pupils to develop high aspirations for their futures. Pupils in key stage 4 enjoy their work experience placements. Engagement coaches support Year 11 pupils to take up suitable places in further education, on apprenticeships or in employment with training.

The management committee holds leaders to account effectively for the quality of education at the school. Staff value the support that they receive from leaders. They are proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a strong safeguarding culture at the school. They ensure that staff receive regular safeguarding training. Staff are alert to the signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. Leaders respond swiftly to any concerns that staff report to ensure that pupils receive the support that they need. This includes working with other agencies when necessary.

Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe in the community, including online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not established a coherent approach to supporting pupils who are at the very early stages of learning to read. As a result, some pupils do not receive the support that they need to develop their phonics knowledge securely. Leaders should embed their approach to teaching phonics and provide these pupils with the support that they need so that they become confident and fluent readers.
- In a small number of subjects, leaders have not finalised their curriculum thinking. In these subjects, teachers are not as clear as they should be about the key knowledge that they should emphasise. Leaders should provide the support that subject leaders need to design and embed suitably ambitious curriculums so that pupils achieve as well as they should.

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 October 2012.

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	131772
Local authority	Blackpool
Inspection number	10226239
Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	6 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	106
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Nicola Hall
Headteacher	Victoria O'Farrell
Website	www.eddiversity.com
Date of previous inspection	3 May 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school caters for pupils who have social, emotional and mental health needs. Many pupils have been permanently excluded or are at risk of exclusion from their mainstream schools. Some pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan.
- The school operates from the main school site at 278a Whitegate Drive, Blackpool, Lancashire, FY3 9JW. The school also operates from premises at Bathurst Avenue, Blackpool, Lancashire, FY3 7RJ and 10 Clifton Avenue, Blackpool, FY4 4RF.
- The school caters for pupils in key stages 2, 3 and 4. Most of these pupils are on the roll of a mainstream school and this school. A few pupils are only registered at this school.
- The school also runs a hospital and home tuition service. This caters for pupils aged 11 to 16 who are unable to attend mainstream education due to medical conditions.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- Leaders make use of two registered alternative providers for a small number of pupils.

Information about this inspection

- 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 spoke with the headteacher, other senior leaders, subject leaders, staff, members of the management committee and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils about their experience of school and about their views on behaviour and bullying. Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of evidence, including leaders' self-evaluation document and improvement plans. They also reviewed minutes of the management committee meetings.
- Inspectors checked the school's safeguarding policies and procedures and the single central record. Inspectors met with leaders, staff and pupils to check the effectiveness of leaders' safeguarding arrangements.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and some pupils about their learning, and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects, including science.
- Inspectors considered responses to the Ofsted survey for staff. There were no responses to Ofsted Parent View or the survey for pupils.

Inspection team

Andy Cunningham, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lindy Griffiths

Ofsted Inspector

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