

# Inspection of a good school: Bowness Primary School

Church Street, Little Lever, Bolton, Lancashire BL3 1BT

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Inspection date: 6 July 2023

## **Outcome**

Bowness Primary School continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Bowness Primary School is a warm and welcoming school. Pupils told inspectors that they value being a member of the 'Bowness family'. They treat each other with kindness and respect. Pupils behave well. They are confident to report any problems to staff. Staff tackle any issues that pupils may have, including bullying, swiftly and effectively. This helps pupils to feel happy and safe in school.

Leaders expect all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to work hard and to do their best. Staff provide the help that pupils need to achieve well. Pupils said that they are proud when their achievement is celebrated, for example in assemblies or when their best work is displayed around school.

Pupils benefit from a range of excursions throughout the year that enhance their learning and support their social and cultural development. For example, pupils in key stage 2 visited a catapult-building workshop that linked to their work in design and technology. Children in the early years visited a farm when learning about animals.

Pupils across the school take part in a wide variety of clubs, which enables them to develop their hobbies and interests. Older pupils support the school community by taking on leadership roles as prefects, librarians and members of the faith council.

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

Leaders have designed a suitably ambitious curriculum that begins in the early years. They have carefully identified and organised the essential knowledge that pupils should learn in each curriculum area. This helps teachers to design learning that builds up pupils' knowledge over time. Pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education.

Leaders are determined that all pupils will experience the full breadth of the curriculum. They have well-established systems to identify the additional needs of, and support, pupils with SEND. This includes seeking advice from external agencies when necessary.

Leaders provide teachers with the information and training required to make suitable adaptations to the delivery of the curriculum for pupils with SEND. Pupils with SEND learn well alongside their peers.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge which enables them to skilfully deliver the curriculum. They successfully support pupils to remember their learning over time. Teachers regularly check on pupils' understanding and swiftly address any misconceptions that they may have. This helps pupils, including children in the early years, to learn well.

Staff ensure that children in the Nursery class develop sound recognition and encounter a wide range of vocabulary that prepares them well for learning to read. Leaders have developed an effective phonics programme that builds on this strong start. Staff typically deliver the phonics programme well, ensuring that pupils build the phonics knowledge that they need to read with fluency and accuracy. Pupils practise their reading using books that match the sounds and words that they know. This allows most pupils to quickly develop into confident readers.

Leaders have ensured that reading is at the heart of pupils' learning. Pupils encounter a wide variety of texts through the curriculum and they are supported to make ambitious choices for their own reading books. Leaders have given careful consideration to the support that they provide for older pupils to ensure that these pupils continue to develop their reading expertise.

Teachers have established calm and purposeful environments in classrooms, where disruption to pupils' learning is rare. Leaders support teachers to tackle any incidents of challenging behaviour effectively. Children in the Nursery class are helped to settle in quickly through the warm relationships that they develop with staff. For much of the time, these children learn alongside the children in the Reception class, who act as role models when demonstrating the routines of the classroom.

Leaders have taken steps to prioritise attendance, for example by celebrating positive attendance and increasing their engagement with families. Despite leaders' efforts, some pupils do not attend school as regularly as they should. These pupils sometimes miss out on important learning.

Leaders support and promote pupils' wider development effectively. For example, they have mapped a comprehensive programme which starts in the early years to teach pupils the knowledge that they need to become responsible citizens. Pupils across the school learn about diversity and the importance of tolerance and respect.

Leaders work closely with trustees to bring about improvements to the school that benefit staff and pupils alike. Staff said that they enjoy working at the school. This is because leaders prioritise staff's well-being. When making decisions about the school, leaders are mindful of the impact on staff's workload.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a strong culture of safeguarding. They ensure that pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe and know who they should tell if they have any concerns. Leaders share relevant and up-to-date information about keeping children safe with parents and carers.

Staff receive regular safeguarding training. This helps to keep safeguarding at the forefront of their minds. Staff are vigilant to the signs that a pupil might need additional support.

Leaders have established secure and rigorous systems to record safeguarding information. They work well with external agencies to seek advice and to secure help for vulnerable pupils when necessary.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils do not attend school as regularly as they should. These pupils sometimes miss out on important learning. Leaders and trustees should ensure that they have effective strategies in place to improve these pupils' rates of attendance.

## 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	142030
<b>Local authority</b>	Bolton
<b>Inspection number</b>	10294386
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	123
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Andrew Sargeant
<b>Headteacher</b>	Krystyna Forster
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.bowness.bolton.sch.uk">www.bowness.bolton.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	2 and 3 October 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2008

## Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, the leadership structure of the school has changed to include a new executive headteacher and head of school.
- The school do not use alternative provision for any pupils.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection that 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 met with senior leaders, including the headteacher, and a range of staff.
- The lead inspector spoke with members of the local governing body, as well as representatives of the multi-academy trust. She also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their experiences of school and their views on behaviour and bullying. They observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and social times.

- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of evidence, including leaders' self-evaluation documents, improvement plans, minutes of governing body meetings and records of pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation about safeguarding. They met with leaders, staff and pupils to understand how pupils are kept safe.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, religious education and mathematics. For each deep dive, they discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some teachers and pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- An inspector observed children reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Charlotte Oles, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

John Hanley

Ofsted Inspector

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