

Inspection of Birkby Junior School

Mead Street, Fartown, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD1 6HE

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 September 2023

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Birkby Junior School feel happy and safe. They value the care and support that they are given by staff. Pupils understand the importance of tolerance and respect. They are adamant that all people should be treated fairly and equally. One pupil told inspectors that the school is like 'one big happy family'.

The school has an ambitious curriculum. This includes for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), who are supported effectively by staff, and the broad, balanced curriculum. As a result, pupils develop strong knowledge and understanding in most subjects. However, there are a small number of subjects where the curriculum is still new. In these subjects, pupils continue to have some gaps in their knowledge and understanding.

Birkby Junior School plays an important role in the community. It offers a food bank for vulnerable families and runs a 'parents as partners' group for the wider community. Leaders know their pupils well. This means that they build strong relationships with pupils' families during their time in school.

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

Leaders at all levels, and in most subjects, have developed an ambitious and challenging curriculum for pupils. They have identified the important knowledge that they want pupils to know and remember in each subject. Teachers receive high-quality professional development. The curriculum is well sequenced. In some subjects, such as mathematics and science, teachers design lessons that build on what pupils already know. However, the curriculum in a small number of subjects is still new. In these subjects, teachers do not always choose the most effective ways to teach subject content. This means that some pupils have gaps in their knowledge.

There is a strong focus on developing a love of reading, right from when pupils join the school. Well-trained staff ensure a consistent approach to how children learn to read. Those pupils who need additional help benefit from effective support. This includes pupils who are new to learning English. As a result, pupils quickly learn to read. The school has ensured that this early love of reading is nurtured and developed throughout the school.

Pupils with SEND receive excellent support. The SEND team knows the pupils well. Teachers ensure that pupils with SEND achieve well by carefully adapting the curriculum when needed. Staff carefully follow support plans to ensure that pupils receive the support that they need. As a result, pupils with SEND learn important knowledge across a range of subjects.

Pupils' behaviour is exceptional. They meet the high expectations that the school sets. Pupils are respectful and supportive of each other. Even when pupils find work difficult, they show resilience and determination to overcome the challenges that

they face. Leaders at all levels prioritise attendance. The school has robust procedures to promote good attendance. However, some families remove their children from school to visit relatives or return to their home country. This means that pupils miss out on valuable learning. The school monitors this carefully and works tirelessly to ensure that pupils catch up quickly.

There is an extensive range of opportunities which cater exceptionally well for pupils' wider development. Pupils have opportunities to show that they can develop a sense of responsibility. For example, they can become playtime leaders and 'well-being warriors', or organise events to raise money for charities and good causes. There is a genuine commitment from staff to ensuring pupils participate in a wide set of experiences during their time at Birkby Junior School. Recently, this has included visiting the theatre and going to the beach. Pupils have a strong understanding of world faiths and other cultures. They have the opportunity to celebrate their own culture through 'culture days', where pupils attend school in traditional dress, sample food from other countries and hear stories and music from a range of different cultures within the school and beyond.

The leadership and management of the school are outstanding. Staff morale is high. They are proud to work at the school. The school goes above and beyond to ensure that pupils are safe and safeguarding is of the highest priority for all staff. Leaders have prioritised professional development to ensure that staff are expertly trained to perform their roles. Those responsible for governance are knowledgeable and committed to the school. They have a strong understanding of the quality of education that pupils receive. They provide highly effective challenge and support to school leaders. The school is already addressing important priority areas, such as the quality of education, to ensure that it continues to improve.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The implementation of the curriculum in a small number of subjects is not as effective as in others. This is because, in these subjects, the curriculum is new. The methods that teachers choose to deliver the curriculum do not consistently support pupils to build a deep body of knowledge. The school should continue to support teachers to choose the most appropriate and effective methods to help pupils learn in these 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 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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	107626
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	10289937
Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	574
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Janet Phillips
Headteacher	Susan Davis
Website	www.birkbyjuniorschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a five-form entry junior school.
- The school do not use any alternative providers of education.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in mathematics, science, history, physical education and early reading. As part of the deep dives, inspectors visited lessons, reviewed curriculum plans and spoke with curriculum leaders and teachers. They

also talked to pupils about their learning and looked at the work they have completed.

- Inspectors met with the SEND coordinator; reviewed education, health and care plans and support plans for pupils with SEND; and visited lessons to see how pupils with SEND are supported to learn.
- Inspectors met with the leader responsible for reading to discuss how reading is promoted in the school and the support for pupils at the early stages of reading.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors considered the views of pupils, parents and staff through Ofsted surveys.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's records of bullying, reviewed the actions leaders take when bullying occurs and spoke to several groups of pupils, including some single-gender groups, to understand their experience of school.
- Inspectors met leaders to discuss pupils' behaviour and reviewed the school's data on suspensions.
- Inspectors met with representatives from the local governing body.
- Inspectors scrutinised records relating to attendance and the number of pupils who have joined or left the school roll.

Inspection team

Stuart Voyce, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Andrew Crossley	Ofsted Inspector
Rowena Sykes	Ofsted Inspector
Lesley Sullivan	His Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023