

Inspection of a good school: Poplars Farm Primary School

Poplars Park Road, Off Kings Road, Bradford, West Yorkshire BD2 1LQ

Inspection dates:

26 and 27 September 2023

Outcome

Poplars Farm Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to Poplars Farm Primary School. They feel safe. They know staff will support them. Most pupils are happy to learn, and they behave well. Staff use clear, effective routines right from the start, in early years. These routines support pupils to make good choices. Pupils learn the school's 'grow' values of giving and being responsible, open-minded and welcoming. Pupils enjoy being together and play well at social times. If there is any falling out, adults support pupils to resolve it quickly.

The school is proud to make links to schools in other countries. This exposes pupils to the wider world. The principle that we should respect people of all backgrounds and reach out to other cultures is evident throughout school. However, pupils sometimes lack the knowledge of other faiths needed to fulfil these good intentions.

Staff know how to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These pupils mostly access the same curriculum as their peers. Staff will sometimes adapt the curriculum so that it better meets the individual learning needs of pupils. This is effective in supporting pupils with SEND.

Children in the early years get off to a great start. The environment is welcoming. Staff are nurturing. They choose activities carefully to help children learn the curriculum as they play and explore. Children engage well.

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

The curriculum is broad and ambitious. Leaders have carefully developed the curriculum within each subject. Leaders draw on expertise from the global teaching community and share best practice. This helps them to continually develop staff. Staff are supported through effective training and coaching. Subject leaders are effective. They are keen to trial new teaching methods to help pupils learn. Teachers usually explain new ideas well and address pupils' misconceptions. However, some staff do not consistently emphasise the most important knowledge to pupils. When this happens, staff miss opportunities to

deepen pupils' understanding. In most subjects, pupils remember much of what they learn. Leaders have recognised that some strategies to measure how well pupils remember their learning over time need refining. Some approaches do not consistently give staff clear enough information about what pupils do and do not know.

The school meets the needs of pupils with SEND, including those with a high level of need. Staff work closely with families to learn about each pupil's strengths and areas of need. Reviews are carried out regularly to check that pupils are receiving the right support. Pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) are supported to learn well. Staff use appropriate strategies to help them learn the curriculum.

Most pupils learn to read quickly. Books match the sounds pupils know, which helps them to learn. Some pupils need further support to read more confidently and fluently. This work is already underway. For example, leaders recently took the decision to establish some smaller phonics groups to better meet individual pupil's needs.

In the early years, staff help children to settle in quickly. The curriculum is delivered well. Children explore new learning through a range of activities. Staff skilfully build children's knowledge and vocabulary. They use effective strategies to check what children know and can do. Children engage positively with learning and with each other.

The curriculum for pupils' personal, social and health education helps to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain. However, pupils remember some aspects of the curriculum, such as online safety and keeping healthy, better than others, such as democracy. Pupils do follow the school's values of being welcoming and kind to all. The school provides a range of educational opportunities, beyond the formal curriculum, for pupils' personal development. For example, pupils link up online with pupils from schools in other countries. They benefit from connecting with pupils in Egypt and learning about the lives they lead.

Pupils have some opportunities to take on leadership responsibilities, such as joining the global committee. There is also a clear strategy for helping pupils develop skills in debating and discussing. This starts with turn-taking in the early years, moving on to sophisticated discussion by Year 6. There are educational visits tied to the planned curriculum. However, the school does not have clear oversight of these different strands of personal development and how well they prepare pupils for secondary school and beyond. Although they go on educational visits, pupils are not able to consistently make connections between the visits and the curriculum in school. Some pupils have misconceptions about world faiths or do not remember much about them.

Governors carry out their statutory duties effectively. They are very supportive of the school and visit regularly. Some processes, such as overseeing pupils' personal development, lack sufficient rigour. For example, they do not routinely track whether disadvantaged pupils are accessing clubs and other activities. Most staff are very happy and feel well supported by school leaders. They appreciate opportunities for staff training and are proud to work at Poplars Farm Primary School.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the school has not provided sufficient clarity and detail about what staff should emphasise and revisit to help pupils learn concepts. Some staff miss opportunities to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding. The school should continue to refine the curriculum so that staff know what the most important knowledge is and are able to assess pupils' learning incisively.
- Some aspects of the school's approach to personal development are underdeveloped. Pupils are not as well prepared for life in modern Britain as they could be. Leaders should continue to strengthen the oversight of individual pupil's personal development so that pupils get the most out of experiences in the classroom and the school's extra-curricular offer.

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 March 2013.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use 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

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| Unique reference number | 107247 |
| Local authority | Bradford |
| Inspection number | 10255862 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 419 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Terry Mortimer |
| Headteacher | Jo Speak |
| Website | www.poplarsfarm.bradford.sch.uk/ |
| Date of previous inspection | 17 January 2018 |

Information about this school

- Pupil numbers have increased from 256 to 419 since the last inspection.
- The school has a nursery, which children attend from age three.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for additional pupil premium funding is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak EAL is well above the national average.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspector carried out this graded inspection under section 8 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held several meetings with the headteacher during the inspection.
- The inspector met with two members of the governing body.
- Deep dives were carried out in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. 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, where appropriate, looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- The inspector spoke to pupils, formally and informally, about their learning and experiences at school. The inspector also spoke to parents as they dropped their children off at the school gate.
- Safeguarding documentation and records for behaviour and attendance were checked.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour throughout the school day, including during lesson visits and at breaktime. Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils about their views on behaviour and the wider experiences they receive at school.
- The inspector reviewed the parental responses received through the Ofsted online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. The inspector also considered the responses received through Ofsted's staff questionnaire and the responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Zoe Helman, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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