

Inspection of Belle Vale Community Primary School

Besford Road, Gateacre, Liverpool, Merseyside L25 2QF

Inspection dates: 26 and 27 September 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending Belle Vale Community Primary School. Staff have high expectations of what every pupil can and should achieve. Pupils said that staff help them to live out the school's motto of 'learning together, being our best'. Typically, pupils achieve well across a range of subjects.

Older pupils are an excellent example to younger children in early years. They model sensible behaviour and help children to play together kindly. Pupils are well mannered, confident and welcoming to visitors. They show respect towards staff and each other.

Pupils benefit from a well-designed curriculum. Their learning is enhanced with carefully chosen experiences, for example visits to local places of interest, such as zoos or museums. Pupils also relish opportunities for challenging outdoor and adventurous activities, such as those on offer during residential visits in key stage 2.

Pupils said that the school teaches them how to keep themselves safe. This includes how to cross the road safely and learning how to stay safe when online. Pupils enjoy a wide range of after-school and lunchtime clubs. They also have opportunities to apply for a variety of leadership roles, such as those of school councillor, prefect, digital leader and librarian. Pupils take these responsibilities seriously and perform their duties with pride. Year 6 pupils feel well prepared for secondary school.

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

In recent years, the school has made several positive changes to the curriculum. For example, the school has invested in developing teachers' subject knowledge, which has enabled them to deliver the curriculum with growing expertise.

The curriculums in most subjects are well organised. This means that teachers can support pupils to build their knowledge in a logical order, which helps them to connect and deepen their learning over time. However, in one or two subjects, the curriculums are less well developed. The content of these subject curriculums is not as ambitious as it should be. The school has not ensured that these curriculums cover all that pupils need to know to support future learning. This means that sometimes, pupils develop gaps in their knowledge.

Teachers typically deliver the curriculum well. They provide clear and helpful explanations to pupils. They also include opportunities for pupils to reflect on their learning and discuss their thinking. However, on occasion, some teachers do not choose activities that take account of pupils' prior knowledge. This means that some pupils do not develop a deep enough understanding of concepts. From time to time, this hinders how well these pupils learn.

The school has effective systems in place to identify the additional needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Overall, these pupils are

supported well to learn the same curriculum as their classmates. Teachers make useful adaptations to the delivery of the curriculum, so that all pupils are included and can achieve success.

Leaders have made sure that reading is a high priority. They have introduced a well-ordered phonics curriculum. Children benefit by learning phonics from the very beginning of Reception Year, where they get off to a flying start. Pupils practise reading with books that contain sounds that they have already learned. This includes the books that they take home. Staff use assessment strategies successfully to identify those pupils who find reading more difficult. They provide appropriate support to help these pupils to read with increasing fluency and comprehension.

In early years, there is a strong focus on developing children's vocabulary. Adults are experts at weaving this through every learning experience. This helps children to be ready for the challenges of key stage 1. Building vocabulary continues to be a priority as pupils move through the school. As a result, pupils become increasingly confident and articulate.

Pupils behave well. This begins with the establishment of rules and routines in early years. Pupils are kind, thoughtful and considerate of each other and of adults. They listen intently to each other and to their teachers. Pupils behave in a calm and sensible manner in lessons and during social times. For pupils who find it more challenging to manage their own emotions, the school has put in place effective strategies to support them to regulate their feelings.

Staff promote pupils' personal development effectively. Pupils learn about different cultures and a range of social and moral issues. This helps to prepare them well for life in modern Britain. In breakfast club and at lunchtime, pupils learn the importance of making healthy food choices. Older pupils recognise what constitutes a healthy relationship. They also spoke with maturity about the importance of equality. In early years, the positive interactions that staff have with children make a strong contribution to children's wider development.

Many parents and carers said that they value the strong relationships that staff forge with them. Parents appreciate how the school helps them to understand what their child is learning.

Governors are knowledgeable about the school. They provide effective support and challenge to leaders and fulfil their statutory duties with diligence. Staff spoke positively about the opportunities to work closely with colleagues in the school. Staff know that leaders are mindful of their well-being. They appreciate leaders' consideration of their workload when they introduce new initiatives.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In one or two subjects, the curriculum content does not match the ambition of the national curriculum. This means that pupils do not acquire some of the knowledge that is essential for subsequent learning. As a result, from time to time, there are gaps in pupils' understanding. The school should ensure that the curriculums in these subjects cover the breadth of knowledge that pupils need in order to be ready for the next stage of their education.
- In some subjects, on occasion, teachers do not choose activities that support pupils to learn the knowledge defined in the curriculum. As a result, some pupils do not learn as deeply as they could in these subjects. The school should ensure that teachers are equipped with the necessary expertise to deliver the curriculum consistently well.

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	104519
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	10289863
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	280
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Helen Thompson
Headteacher	Ruth Lancaster
Website	www.bellevaleprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	26 April 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school provides a before-school breakfast club.
- The headteacher was not in post at the time of the previous inspection.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

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 had 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.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, other leaders and staff in school. They spoke with a group of governors, including the chair of the governing body. The lead inspector also spoke with a representative of the local authority.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, history, computing and religious education. They discussed the curriculum with leaders of these subject areas. Inspectors also visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work, held discussions with teachers and talked with pupils.
- Inspectors also spoke with leaders from other areas of the curriculum. They looked at pupils' work and spoke with pupils.
- An inspector listened to pupils reading aloud to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors observed children's and pupils' behaviour at breaktimes and at lunchtimes. They observed pupils' behaviour as they moved around the school.
- Inspectors visited the breakfast club and talked with staff and pupils in the provision.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's self-evaluation documents and improvement plans and minutes from meetings of the governing body.
- 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 spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school.
- Inspectors spoke with parents as they collected their children from school. They considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View. This included the free-text comments.
- Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and for pupils.

Inspection team

Sharon Cowey, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Emily Morris	Ofsted Inspector
Alison Lawson	Ofsted Inspector

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