

Inspection of Green Fold School

Highfield Road, Farnworth, Bolton, Lancashire BL4 0NS

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 November 2023

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love coming to Green Fold School. It is a place where all pupils flourish.

Staff are passionate and enthusiastic about providing the very best education for pupils. Relationships between staff and pupils are exceptional. Pupils know that staff care for them deeply and that there is always an adult there for them when needed. Consequently, pupils feel happy and know that they are in safe hands.

From children in early years to the oldest pupils, there is no ceiling placed upon what staff want pupils to achieve. Staff have a thorough understanding of pupils' unique and complex needs. This, along with an aspirational curriculum, ensures that pupils, all of whom have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are exceptionally well prepared for their next steps in education.

Staff skilfully help pupils to regulate their own behaviour and to manage their emotions. Staff are experts at noticing when pupils experience distress or discomfort, and they respond quickly and sensitively.

Pupils benefit from an impressive range of activities that promote their wider development. For example, staff make sure that they encourage every pupil in key stages 1 and 2 to attend a residential, where pupils begin to become independent and take part in activities that challenge and inspire them.

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

The school has designed a highly effective and ambitious curriculum. The school's curriculum thinking is exceptionally well developed and reflects a strong determination that every pupil will benefit from rich and engaging learning experiences.

All staff receive frequent, high-quality training. In turn, many are experts in their field and have lots of opportunities to work collaboratively and to share best practice with others. This includes working with mainstream and special schools across the local authority.

Teachers are confident in the subjects that they teach. They skilfully use the information that they have about each pupil to break down learning into small, manageable steps. Staff have a deep understanding of how to adapt the delivery of the curriculum for all pupils. A range of professionals, including speech and language therapists and occupational therapists, work in unison with the teaching staff. Together, they use the education, health and care (EHC) plans so that individual targets are seamlessly interwoven into all aspects of the curriculum. As a result, all pupils thrive.

At the forefront of the school's work is a focus on developing pupils' communication and language skills. Staff apply a wide range of communication strategies across the

school and identify personalised communication pathways for each pupil. From the early years, children are taught early reading skills. Pupils enjoy learning the foundations for reading through, for example, listening and responding to sounds around school. Pupils who are ready to learn phonics develop their early reading skills well. They decode texts and read books that are closely matched to the sounds that they already know. Fostering a love of reading is a prominent feature in school. Pupils have regular access to a wealth of books. They frequently share stories, songs, rhymes and poems with staff and with each other.

Staff support pupils impressively well to manage their own behaviour. Most pupils struggle at times and need extra help and understanding. From the early years onwards, children are taught to follow routines and to take turns. As pupils get older, they are increasingly able to self-regulate and enjoy friendships, socialising and participating in all that the school has to offer. The school works tenaciously to ensure that pupils attend school regularly, demonstrating sensitivity to the difficulties and barriers that families face.

The school ensures that all pupils have access to a rich set of experiences that contribute well to their personal development. Decisions about what to offer begin with finding out about pupils' talents and interests. The school takes up many opportunities for joint activities with the neighbouring mainstream primary school. Pupils enjoy regular outings and trips. They spoke with pride about their participation in sporting events, such as curling and boccia competitions, as well as their involvement in national challenges.

Governors share the school's ambition and commitment. Staff value the support that they receive for their well-being and workload. For example, they feel that their ideas are listened to and appreciate the school's clear expectations for the year ahead. Staff are proud to work at the school and share the school's determination to make a real difference to the lives of pupils and their families.

Parents and carers were effusive about Green Fold. Typical comments were that staff at the school 'go above and beyond' in all that they do for their children and for them as parents.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	105281
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	10268081
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	166
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Holly Bonfield
Headteacher	Gary Anders (Headteacher) Andrew Feeley (Executive Headteacher)
Website	www.theorchardsfederation.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	4 and 5 May 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school caters mainly for pupils with complex autistic spectrum disorder and pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties. All pupils have EHC plans.
- The school is part of The Orchards Federation.
- Green Fold's provision is located across four sites, two of which are co-located with other schools within the federation.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision for pupils.

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.
- The 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 these subjects: communication, language and social interaction, including aspects of early reading; mathematics, and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers and looked at samples of pupils' work. Where appropriate, inspectors spoke to some pupils about their learning. They also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- 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.
- Where appropriate, inspectors spoke with pupils about school life.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, who is also one of the designated safeguarding leads, the deputy headteacher and the assistant headteachers.
- Inspectors spoke with other members of the staff team, including the special educational needs coordinator, the early years lead and the children and families manager.
- Inspectors held discussions with staff about the well-being and safeguarding of pupils.
- The lead inspector spoke with the executive headteacher and with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. She also spoke on the telephone with a representative of Bolton local authority.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including that relating to school improvement.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.

Inspection team

Sue Eastwood, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Dawn Farrent

Ofsted Inspector

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