

Inspection of Eden School

Heys Lane, Blackburn, Lancashire BB2 4NW

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 November 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is Jen Ashworth. This school is part of the Education Partnership Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Sharon Roscoe, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Ian Brown.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy learning at this school. They feel safe because of the care that they receive. They are greeted with kindness when they arrive in the morning by nurturing staff. Pupils have an opportunity to have breakfast with staff. This helps them to be ready for learning.

The school has high expectations of all pupils' achievement. Pupils spoke positively about the support and guidance that staff provide. This helps them to overcome barriers to learning. Pupils have a more settled experience than in their previous schooling. They re-engage with their education and achieve well overall.

Pupils are happy here. They develop positive relationships with each other and with staff. Typically, the school is calm and orderly. Pupils socialise well at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They generally behave well during lessons.

Pupils take part in many activities that help to develop their confidence and independence. These include sports, such as hockey, basketball, dance and outdoor activities at residential centres. Pupils benefit from trips and visits, for example to museums and theatres. This enhances their understanding of the curriculum. Pupils enjoy taking on leadership responsibilities, including being student councillors and shopping for local food banks. They appreciate the opportunity to create food dishes for other pupils and staff in the school's restaurant.

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

The school is ambitious for all pupils. Since the previous inspection, leaders, the trust and local governors have successfully improved the quality of education that the school provides. All pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Many pupils arrive at different times during the year. The school identifies the additional needs of pupils at an early stage. The school engages well with external agencies to provide a range of therapeutic support for pupils. This helps to reduce pupils' anxieties and helps them to self-regulate their feelings and behaviour.

The school has improved the organisation of the curriculum. The knowledge that pupils should learn, and the order in which it is taught, is carefully set out in most subjects. This helps pupils to build on their prior learning. Staff take careful note of pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans. This helps to ensure that pupils receive appropriate support in class. Most teachers use assessment strategies successfully to check what pupils know and to address any misconceptions that may arise. Pupils learn and achieve well in a range of subjects.

In the main, teachers deliver the curriculum well. They revisit previous content to help pupils to remember what they have already been taught. However, on occasions, some teachers do not select appropriate activities to deliver the knowledge that they want pupils to learn. Consequently, some pupils do not remember all that they should.

Many pupils arrive with gaps in their reading knowledge. Consequently, the school places a strong focus on developing pupils' reading skills. It ensures that pupils have time every school day to read for pleasure. Staff provide effective support for pupils who need extra help to catch up. This enables them to read with accuracy and with improving fluency.

The school prioritises pupils' mental health and well-being. Staff are well trained to respond calmly to some pupils' challenging behaviour. Pupils develop strategies to understand and manage their own behaviour, which improves over time. They reported that breaks consisting of sensory activities, such as boxing and woodwork, help them to settle back into lessons.

Many pupils have experienced missed schooling or low levels of attendance at their previous schools. The school carefully monitors pupils' attendance and uses a variety of strategies to improve it. This has led to an increase in attendance rates for many pupils. However, there are a small number of pupils who are still absent from school too often. Consequently, these pupils miss out on essential learning.

The school supports pupils' personal development well. Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures in detail. They learn about equality, democracy and the rule of law. This helps pupils to understand the importance of treating all people with respect.

Most pupils receive relevant information, advice and guidance to prepare for their future. Pupils attend careers days and visit local colleges. Some pupils attend a construction course at a local college. This helps them to develop their practical and employability skills. Most pupils go on to education, employment or training. Some older pupils have limited opportunities for external work placements. The school is taking effective steps to strengthen the work experience programme.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They feel that school leaders are considerate of their well-being and workload when implementing changes. For example, staff value the time they are given to develop the curriculum together.

The trust and local governors are supportive of the school. They provide appropriate challenge and know what is going on in the school. This contributes to the school's ongoing development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- On occasions, some teachers do not choose the most appropriate activities to deliver the knowledge that pupils should learn. This hinders some pupils' learning in these areas of the curriculum. The school should ensure that teachers deliver subject curriculums effectively to help pupils to know more and remember more.
- Some pupils do not attend school as often as they should. This means that they miss valuable learning time, which has a negative impact on how well they achieve. The school should support these pupils to improve their levels of attendance.

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	141016
Local authority	Blackburn with Darwen
Inspection number	10268378
Type of school	Special
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	8 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	57
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Ian Brown
CEO of the trust	Sharon Roscoe
Headteacher	Jen Ashworth
Website	www.edenschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 May 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is an academy free school and is part of the Education Partnership Trust.
- All pupils have an EHC plan and have social, emotional and mental health needs.
- The school currently provides education for pupils from Years 5 to 11.
- The school makes use of one unregistered alternative provider for a small number of pupils.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

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.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and subject leaders. Inspectors also met with a range of other staff and leaders during the inspection.
- Inspectors spoke with the director of education and the CEO of the trust, the vice-chair of the trust board and representatives of the local governing body, including the chair of governors. An inspector also spoke with representatives of the local authority and of an alternative provider who works with the school.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their experiences in school and their views on behaviour and bullying. Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including self-evaluation documents, improvement plans, minutes of local governing body meetings and records of pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- 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 carried out deep dives in English, including early reading, history and mathematics. For each deep dive, they held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. An inspector observed pupils reading to familiar staff.
- Inspectors also met with subject leaders to review other areas of the curriculum.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Ahmed Marikar, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Claire Hollister

Ofsted Inspector

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