

Inspection of Bretherton Endowed Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

South Road, Bretherton, Leyland, Lancashire PR26 9AH

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 November 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	Outstanding

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 11 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and proud to belong to this welcoming school that is at the heart of the community. They appreciate warm greetings from staff as they arrive each morning. Parents and carers said that their children skip into school with a smile.

Pupils know that kindness is important. They enjoy playing and learning together. Pupils, including those who have recently joined the school, make friends easily. The positive relationships that they forge with caring staff help them to feel valued as individuals. Pupils are confident that staff will support them to resolve any worries that they may have.

Pupils are keen to reach the high expectations that are set for them. They behave well during lessons and around the school. Pupils are eager to learn. They achieve highly in many areas of the curriculum.

Pupils pursue their talents and interests in the broad range of clubs on offer, such as ju-jitsu, gardening and football. They take great pride in their successes, particularly when representing their school in choral performances and sports competitions. By taking on roles of responsibility, including as digital leaders and members of the ethos group, pupils learn that they can make a positive difference in their school and to the local community. They understand the value of being good citizens and the importance of helping others who are less fortunate than themselves.

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

The curriculum is broad and ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The content and coverage of the curriculum has been organised carefully to cater for the needs of pupils in mixed-age classes. The school is undertaking a review of the curriculum, which means that different subjects are at various stages of development.

Mostly, the school equips pupils well with the knowledge that they need for the next stage of their education. This is because in most subjects, the important knowledge that pupils should learn has been identified clearly. This knowledge is ordered logically from the early years to the end of Year 6 so that new ideas build well on pupils' previous learning. Subject leaders are well trained and provide valuable curriculum guidance for teachers. The clarity of expectations about what pupils should learn and remember helps the school to check that pupils achieve highly in these subjects.

In a few subjects, the school is in the process of identifying the important knowledge that pupils should learn. In these subjects, this affects how well staff deliver the curriculum and then check on pupils' learning. Over time, this hinders how well some pupils deepen their understanding of some important concepts.

The school places high importance on teaching pupils to read well. A sharp focus on communication and language in the early years sets the groundwork for children to make a positive start in learning to read. Staff receive the training that they need to deliver the phonics programme consistently well from the start of the Reception Year. Pupils practise reading regularly with books that are well matched to the sounds that they already know. Pupils who find reading more difficult receive effective support to help them to catch up if they fall behind in the phonics programme. Most pupils become fluent, confident readers by the end of Year 2. As a consequence, pupils in key stage 2 read independently and accurately. They are keen to discuss their favourite books and authors.

The school identifies the additional needs of pupils with SEND early and accurately. Staff ensure that these pupils have the resources that they need to access the same curriculums as their peers. However, on occasion, assessment strategies are not used well enough to check pupils' understanding or to adapt teaching activities. As a result, some pupils, including those with SEND, do not achieve as well as they could.

Pupils are well mannered, confident and articulate. They are willing to work hard and can concentrate without interruption in the calm and productive learning environment.

The school provides a wealth of exciting opportunities for pupils to learn more about the wider world. Regular visits and trips help pupils to thrive socially as well as academically. Pupils understand differences between themselves and others and that all people deserve equal respect. They adopt a mature and thoughtful approach to discussions about important themes, such as democracy and equality.

Governors are actively involved in the school. They conscientiously fulfil their duties, providing valuable support to leaders and staff.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They appreciate that policies have been reviewed to prevent unnecessary workload.

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They value the approachability of staff and the care afforded to their children. Parents appreciate opportunities to take part in phonics and reading workshops that help them to support their children's learning at home.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, the school has not fully defined the most important knowledge that pupils should learn. This makes it difficult for staff to

design learning so that pupils remember information in these subjects in the long term. The school should identify the knowledge that pupils need to acquire in each subject so that pupils' learning builds securely over time.

- Occasionally, teachers' use of assessment strategies in some subjects is not fully effective in checking pupils' understanding. This leads to delays in the support that some pupils receive to address misconceptions and errors. The school should ensure that staff check pupils' learning consistently well and help them to learn all that they could.

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	119461
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10275320
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	107
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Pam Aspden
Headteacher	Alison Moxham
Website	www.brethertonschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 November 2012, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a part of the Diocese of Blackburn. Its most recent section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, was in February 2018. The next section 48 inspection is expected to take place before 2026.
- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher and deputy headteacher have been appointed. There have been several changes to the governing body, including the appointment of a new chair of governors.
- The school does not currently make use of any 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 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.
- The inspectors held discussions with the headteacher and other leaders of the school.
- The lead inspector spoke with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The lead inspector spoke on the telephone with representatives of the local authority and of the diocese. She also met with the school improvement partner.
- 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.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school and during lessons. They spoke with pupils to discuss their views of school, their learning, their behaviour and safety.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with staff, spoke to some pupils about their learning and reviewed samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector observed some pupils reading to a familiar adult. The inspectors also reviewed leaders' documentation and samples of pupils' work from several other subjects.
- The lead inspector met with the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator and reviewed samples of documentation relating to SEND.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of evidence about pupils' attendance, safety and behaviour.
- The inspectors considered the views of parents through Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. An inspector also spoke to some parents at the start of the school day. The inspectors also reviewed the responses to Ofsted's surveys for staff and for pupils.
- The inspectors considered a range of documents shared by school leaders, including the school improvement plan, leaders' self-evaluation document and the minutes taken at governing body meetings.

Inspection team

Janette Walker, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Amina Modan

His Majesty's Inspector

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