

# Inspection of a good school: Fleetwood Flakefleet Primary School

Northfleet Avenue, Fleetwood, Lancashire FY7 7ND

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Inspection dates: 1 and 2 May 2024

## Outcome

Fleetwood Flakefleet Primary School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Flakefleet is a very special school. Pupils flourish. This is due to the loving support that they receive from the staff, who know them exceptionally well. This school truly sits at the heart of its community. The care and attention that is offered to pupils radiates beyond the school gates to their parents and carers. Serving pupils' best interests is at the centre of the school's work. As a result, barriers to learning or pupils' well-being are identified carefully and skilfully removed so that everyone can 'dare to dream'.

The school wants pupils to succeed academically. Recent improvements to the curriculum mean that many achieve well across a range of different subjects. Pupils also blossom in terms of their social and emotional development. They gain a mature understanding of the world around them.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy their time at school. They behave well. They value spending time with each other. For example, pupils of all ages happily play together at breaktimes. They make the most of the exciting outdoor provision, whether this is chatting in the tyre park, riding a scooter or exploring the sandpit.

Pupils eagerly give their time to support their school, for example, by acting as digital leaders, buddies or house ambassadors. In doing so, pupils gain confidence in their own abilities and they develop a keen sense of responsibility. A wide range of clubs and educational visits broaden pupils' experiences and harness their interests and talents.

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

Many children enter the early years without the knowledge or behaviours that are typical for their age and stage of development. They are on catch-up from the start. Leaders at all levels, and a united staff team, share an unwavering determination to ensure that pupils have the best start in life. They are supported well in this quest by a knowledgeable governing body. As a result, the school's work to overcome obstacles to learning is often innovative and highly successful. For example, pupils benefit from a vast

range of very effective provision that promotes their emotional well-being so that they are ready to learn. The school's influence goes even further afield. The Strive café, which acts as a hub, brings the community together and ensures easier access to the services that pupils and their families need.

The positive impact of the school's work is abundantly clear in all areas of the school. Pupils behave well. They treat each other and staff with kindness and respect. The school building is a hive of activity, but equally calm and purposeful. Pupils who find it more challenging to manage their own behaviour are supported gently and sensitively. The school keeps a close watch on attendance patterns. It works in partnership with parents to reduce absence levels. As a result, the proportion of pupils who miss large chunks of their education has declined considerably over recent years.

The popular 'Flakefleet Adventures' is just one way in which the school seeks to expand pupils' experience of the world. Whether this is simply blowing bubbles, enjoying a sleep-over in the school building or visiting a theatre, pupils' learning is enhanced and deepened. They learn how to keep safe and healthy. Pupils gain a strong understanding of fundamental British values. They respect the differences that exist between themselves and others in society. They are prepared well for life beyond their local area.

The school places equal weight on pupils' academic success. However, this work is not borne out in the recently published data. In 2023, the proportion of pupils who left Year 2 and Year 6 meeting the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics was significantly below the national average. Too many pupils had gaps in their knowledge as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, weaknesses in the previous curriculum and high absence rates.

The published data does not reflect the quality of education that current pupils enjoy. The school has overhauled subject curriculums so that they are ambitious and logically ordered to help pupils to build their knowledge over time. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities have their needs identified quickly and they are supported well to learn alongside their classmates. Despite considerable change, staff have adopted the new curriculums successfully. In part, this is due to the training that they have received and the resources that are available to help them to deliver the curriculums well. The school's care in considering the impact of change on staff's workload and well-being also explains their enthusiasm for the new curriculums.

Teachers make sure that they spot and address pupils' errors during lessons. However, their checks to make sure that pupils have the knowledge that they need to progress through a new unit of work are less secure. This means that some pupils' learning falters because they do not have the necessary building blocks on which to layer new ideas and concepts. Similarly, at the end of each topic, teachers are sometimes unsure what should be assessed to ensure that pupils know and remember key subject information.

From the start of the two-year-old provision, children are immersed in language and stories. The phonics programme is taught consistently well across the Reception class and key stage 1. This helps pupils to read from books that match the sounds that they know. The school is alert to those pupils who do not keep pace with the phonics programme.

However, the strategies to help pupils catch up have unintended consequences. For some pupils, their backward movement through the phonics groups means that they fall further behind in their learning. For older pupils, their attendance at the additional phonics sessions mean that they miss out on aspects of the rich writing curriculum.

A whole school focus on vocabulary means that many children in the early years and pupils across the rest of the school are overcoming gaps in their speaking, listening and writing skills. Older pupils produce interesting writing for different purposes and for a variety of audiences. However, their work is often let down by weaknesses in their knowledge of grammar and spelling. Some pupils do not develop legible handwriting styles. This is because these fundamental skills are not developed fully by the end of key stage 1.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Teachers' checks on pupils' knowledge at the start and end of units of work are not effective enough in spotting gaps in learning or ensuring that pupils remember what has been taught. This means that some pupils are not able to build securely on what they know. The school should finish its work in devising suitable assessment strategies that help pupils to make the progress that they should through the new curriculums.
- The approach to helping some pupils gain ground in phonics does not aid their progress through the phonics programme or the writing curriculum. Some pupils fall further behind in their knowledge of phonics, while some older pupils miss out on the rich writing curriculum. The school should revisit its approach to closing gaps in reading so that pupils become fluent readers who are also keeping pace with the other subjects that they study.
- Some pupils' written work is hampered by weaknesses in their spelling, handwriting and grammar knowledge. This limits their success in English and across other curriculum subjects. The school should ensure that these fundamental skills receive greater attention in the early years and key stage 1 so that pupils are better prepared for success in key stage 2.

## 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in July 2018.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	130336
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10327751
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	483
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Derrick Foulkes
<b>Headteacher</b>	David McPartlin
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.flakefleet.lancs.sch.uk">www.flakefleet.lancs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	10 and 11 July 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, a new deputy headteacher and chair of governors has been appointed.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.
- The school offers before- and after-school provision, including a breakfast club that is available to all pupils.
- The school offers a two-year-old provision.

## Information about this inspection

- 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 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 meetings with the headteacher, other school leaders, a representative of the local authority and the school improvement partner. They also

met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with the alternative provider who works with the school.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, including early reading, mathematics and art and design. For each deep dive, they discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers and with some pupils about their learning. The inspectors also looked at samples of pupils' work and observed pupils from Years 1 to 3 read with a familiar adult.
- The inspectors considered some other curriculum areas by talking to leaders and reviewing pupils' work.
- 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 considered a wide range of documentation, including the self-evaluation document.
- The inspectors spoke to pupils to gather their views of behaviour, safety and learning. They also visited the playground, dining hall and before- and after-school clubs to observe pupils' behaviour outside of the classroom. The inspectors took account of the findings from Ofsted's online pupil survey.
- The inspectors considered the views of staff shared through discussions and Ofsted's online staff survey.
- The inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also spoke to some parents as they brought their children to school.

## Inspection team

Jo Olsson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Rebecca Jewitt

His Majesty's Inspector

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