

Inspection of Brierley Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Beech Close, Brierley, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S72 9EJ

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 June 2024

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?

This school has high expectations for pupils. Pupils rise to these expectations. They are polite, well-mannered and an integral part of the warm and welcoming ethos that is at the heart of this school. Pupils of all ages get on well together. They look after one another. It is a pleasure to see the way in which pupils interact with each other and build positive relationships with the adults who care for them.

Leaders have developed an ambitious curriculum for pupils. Pupils relish the opportunity to engage in learning that is both interesting and challenging. The school captures pupils' curiosity and enthusiasm for learning by ensuring that lessons are engaging and taught well.

Pupils have a range of opportunities to become leaders and take on responsibility. Older pupils particularly enjoy being role models for the youngest pupils in school. Subject ambassadors are advocates for the subjects that they support. They proudly speak to visitors about their learning and the importance of the subjects that they are so passionate about.

The school has ensured that pupils have a voice and are listened to. Pupils are confident to express their views. They are resolute in their campaign to provide a safer road crossing outside of their school to keep themselves and others safe.

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

Children in Reception develop high levels of independence. They make their own toast at snack time and enjoy this opportunity to sit together and talk to one another. Children learn how to use resources within the classroom to develop their independence and make their own choices. Adults recognise the importance of developing children's language and social skills. They skilfully model how to play co-operatively together. For example, children enjoy building an obstacle course as part of a game they have created. They help one another to navigate the 'tricky' parts of the course so that they all succeed in getting across together.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified at an early stage. The curriculum is appropriately adapted across a wide range of subjects. Pupils with SEND learn well alongside their peers. The school recognises the need for an individualised approach for some pupils who find coming to school more challenging.

Pupils achieve well in the core subjects of reading, writing and mathematics. By the end of Year 6 pupils are well-prepared for secondary school. Leaders have made adaptations to the mathematics curriculum to ensure that pupils regularly revisit learning. They can apply their growing mathematical knowledge to different problems.

The teaching of reading has been a top priority for the school. Well-trained staff teach phonics daily. Routines are well-established. In early years and key stage 1, pupils learn the sounds that they need to read and write unfamiliar words. Pupils who are at risk of falling behind are identified quickly. They have extra practise and support to help them catch-up effectively. Older readers develop fluency and expression through regular 'book club' reading lessons.

There have been some recent developments to the curriculum for foundation subjects such as geography and history. The curriculum sets out, in a logical order, important knowledge and skills for pupils to learn. For example, pupils start to learn about concepts such as civilisation from Year 1. While this knowledge is rightly ambitious, leaders recognise that they need to continue to make refinements to ensure that all pupils are remembering and understanding what they are learning.

The clear behaviour policy ensures pupils know the expectations and they live up to these. Pupils are calm and considerate of others as they move around the school. Leaders are continuing to strive to improve the attendance and punctuality for all groups of pupils. This has resulted in some recent improvements to attendance rates.

Pupils benefit from a well-planned personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. From Reception to Year 6 pupils learn about important topics such as healthy lifestyles and keeping safe in an age-appropriate way. However, some pupils are less knowledgeable about aspects of personal development that would fully prepare them for life in modern Britain. For example, pupils have a limited knowledge of other faiths. They can often confuse important elements of different world religions.

Pupils talk enthusiastically about their time at school. They are rightly proud of attending Brierley Primary School. Although leaders want all parents to feel fully engaged with school life, some lines of communication are not clear enough.

Governors are committed to their role in supporting the school. They value its place within the local community. Staff feel well supported and are proud to work at the school. Leaders across school are reflective and regularly evaluate their practice. They make strategic decisions that are pertinent to the school to ensure that it continues to improve further.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils' understanding of different faiths, is not well developed. Sometimes, pupils do not have the knowledge that they need to respond to the differences that they will encounter in the wider community to prepare them fully for life in modern Britain. The school should make sure that the curriculum includes the most essential knowledge that pupils need to learn about different world religions.
- The school's strategies for communicating with parents and carers are not clear enough. Some parents do not feel well-informed about school life. The school should simplify its processes for communicating with parents and liaise with them to establish how effective these are.

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	106629
Local authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	10340024
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	211
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Father Paul Cartwright
Headteacher	Samantha Benson
Website	www.brierleyschool.com
Date of previous inspection	9 and 10 October 2013, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Diocese of Leeds. The last section 48 inspection took place in June 2019
- The school currently uses no alternative provision.
- The school operates a breakfast club.

Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) 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.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher and other school leaders and staff. They also met with members of the governing body, a representative from the local authority and a representative from the Diocese of Leeds and spoke to parents at the school gate.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading and phonics, history, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors 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.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at less formal times, such as playtime and lunchtime. Inspectors looked at records of behavioural incidents as well as attendance figures and spoke to pupils, parents and staff to gain their views.
- Inspectors considered other documentation, including governing body minutes, policies and development plans. They also looked at documents relating to pupils' personal development and held meetings with relevant staff in this area.
- Inspectors took account of the views of parents, staff and pupils, including through Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Sarah Gordon, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Louise Greatrex

Ofsted Inspector

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