Inspection of Acre Hall Primary School

Irlam Road, Flixton, Urmston, Manchester M41 6NA

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 June 2024

Overall effectiveness	**Requires improvement**
The quality of education	**Requires improvement**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Good**
Personal development	**Good**
Leadership and management	**Requires Improvement**
Early years provision	**Good**
Previous inspection grade	Good

The headteacher of this school is Colin Catherall. This school is part of the Bright Futures Educational 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), John Stephens, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Daniel Rubin.

What is it like to attend this school?

Acre Hall is a friendly school where pupils are celebrated for their individuality. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and those in the specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND (specially resourced provision), arrive at school happy and keen to learn. The school's values help to ensure that pupils 'respect themselves, each other and the environment'.

Following some major changes to the school's curriculum, an increasing number of pupils meet the school's high expectations for academic success. However, some pupils do not achieve as well as they should. This is because the curriculum is not delivered as well as it could be.

Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, have a positive, resilient attitude towards their learning and they behave well. Pupils and their families benefit from the positive relationships that they form with staff. This helps pupils to flourish socially and emotionally.

Pupils are highly supportive of one another. Younger children value spending quality time with older pupils who offer guidance and act as role models. For example, older pupils act as reading buddies and lunchtime servers to younger pupils.

Pupils are proud to be awarded positions of responsibility, such as acting as prefects, school councillors and online safety ambassadors. They carry out these roles diligently.

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

Since the previous inspection, the school has overhauled the quality of education that pupils receive. The school has established an ambitious curriculum. It has high aspirations for pupils' achievement, including pupils with SEND. The school has set out the knowledge and vocabulary that it wants pupils to learn from the Nursery Year to Year 6.

The school provides staff with regular, high-quality training. For the most part, this enables staff to design and deliver learning activities that support pupils to learn well. However, from time to time, staff do not design the most appropriate activities to help pupils to acquire the knowledge in the curriculum confidently. As a result, some pupils' learning is hindered.

In most subjects, staff are skilled at identifying pupils' misconceptions accurately and resolving them swiftly. However, in a few subjects, pupils' misconceptions are not addressed quickly enough. Consequently, inaccuracies in pupils' understanding become embedded over time.

In some subjects, the school has ensured that the impact of the curriculum is monitored effectively and that any identified gaps in pupils' learning are addressed

quickly. In other subjects, the school does not use the assessment information that is gathered to shape pupils' future learning effectively. Consequently, some gaps in pupils' learning remain unchecked.

A love of reading flows through the school. This starts in the early years where children are introduced to a range of books. Older pupils described their favourite books and authors enthusiastically.

Staff are well trained to deliver the phonics programme with confidence. The school ensures that any pupils who find reading difficult get the extra support that they need to catch up quickly. Most pupils become confident, fluent readers.

Pupils with SEND are identified quickly by skilled staff. Staff adapt their delivery of the curriculum to ensure that pupils with SEND, including those in the specially resourced provision, access the same curriculum as their peers. Pupils with SEND are fully included in all aspects of school life. However, they experience the same weaknesses in the curriculum as their peers.

Throughout the school, pupils are friendly and polite. The school places high importance on pupils' attendance. Staff get to know pupils and their families well. This helps to keep attendance rates high. The school provides appropriate support when pupils' rates of absence need to improve.

The school has developed a wide-ranging offer to enhance pupils' personal development. Pupils are tolerant of differences between themselves and others. Pupils also benefit from a wide range of trips. For example, they go to local air raid shelters, visit the zoo and sing at local theatres. Pupils' talents are developed through clubs such as baking, dance and football.

Trustees and governors are committed to improving the school. They have recently strengthened the curriculum and have a strong vision for the school's future. The school prioritises staff's well-being and is mindful of staff's workload. For example, staff are given time to complete additional tasks. Staff feel valued and are proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some learning activities do not deepen pupils' learning. Consequently, some pupils do not learn as well as they could. The school should ensure that staff are suitably equipped to design learning tasks that help pupils, including those in the early years, to learn the curriculum effectively.

- In a small number of subjects, the school has not ensured that pupils' misconceptions are identified and corrected in a timely manner. This means that some pupils do not develop an accurate body of knowledge as well as they could. The school should check pupils' misconceptions are identified and addressed quickly and effectively.
- In some subjects, the school has not ensured that it checks the impact of the curriculum on pupils' learning sufficiently well. This means that the school is unable to evaluate and modify the curriculum as well as it should. The school should ensure that it checks the impact of the curriculum on pupils' learning effectively so that it can make suitable improvements to the curriculum when required.

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	138977
Local authority	Trafford
Inspection number	10321436
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	300
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Daniel Rubin
CEO of trust	John Stephens
Headteacher	Colin Catherall
Website	acrehall.bright-futures.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	4 and 5 December 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Acre Hall Primary School joined the Bright Futures Educational Multi-Academy Trust in March 2021. Prior to this, the school was part of the Dunham Trust.
- A new headteacher was appointed in September 2021.
- The school has a 30-place local authority commissioned specially resourced provision for pupils with autism and/or moderate learning difficulties. There are currently 32 pupils in the provision. All pupils in the specially resourced provision have an education, health and care plan.
- The school manages a breakfast club.
- The school does not 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 that 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.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other senior leaders and staff. The lead inspector also met with members of the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, English, history, mathematics and computing. 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.
- Inspectors also considered the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector observed some pupils reading to a trusted adult.
- 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 observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and breaktimes. They also spoke with pupils about their experiences of school.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys for staff and for pupils.

Inspection team

Ruth Moran, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
David Thompson	Ofsted Inspector
Kevin Simpson	Ofsted Inspector

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