

# Inspection of a good school: Banks Lane Junior School

Hempshaw Lane, Offerton, Stockport, Cheshire SK1 4PR

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Inspection dates:

23 and 24 July 2024

## **Outcome**

Banks Lane Junior School continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils are happy at this warm and caring school. They feel well looked after and appreciate the support that is offered to them by the school.

The school has high expectations for pupils' achievement and behaviour. Pupils value the recognition that they get for working and trying hard to meet these expectations. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well. Classrooms are typically calm. This helps pupils to do their best in lessons. Pupils are polite and well mannered. They are friendly and articulate, including when speaking with visitors.

Pupils have a clear understanding of fundamental British values. They are aware of the differences between people and know that it is important to respect everyone equally.

Pupils flourish in their leadership responsibilities, including acting as Spanish ambassadors, 'nature ninjas' or members of the school parliament. A number of educational visits enrich pupils' learning across the curriculum. Pupils enjoy attending a wide range of after-school clubs, including bingo, street dance and learning to play instruments such as the ukulele.

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

In most subjects, the school has clearly defined what pupils should learn and the order in which this should be taught. It has thought carefully about how learning is organised. Staff benefit from regular opportunities to work collaboratively with their colleagues to design and refine learning.

In most subjects, staff use their strong subject knowledge to make sure that pupils learn the content of the curriculum well. In these subjects, staff check that pupils have a secure understanding of what has been taught previously before introducing new learning. As a result, pupils progress successfully through these curriculums and achieve well. However,

in a small number of subjects, the checks that the school makes to ensure the successful delivery of the curriculums are at an earlier stage than in other subjects. This means that the school does not have a clear understanding of the impact of the curriculum on pupils' learning in these subjects. It also means that the school is not able to identify when staff might need additional support or guidance to deliver these curriculums as intended. At times, this means that pupils' knowledge is not as secure as it could be.

The school fosters a love of reading. A comprehensive reading programme underpins the curriculum. Through this, all pupils have access to high-quality reading texts. This links to a strong focus, across all subjects, on the explicit teaching of vocabulary. The success of this work is evident when speaking to pupils. Pupils spoke enthusiastically and with empathy, about their favourite series of books and their preferred authors. Older pupils read widely and with fluency and confidence.

The school has implemented a phonics programme for those pupils who are at the early stages of reading. The school has provided training on the programme for some members of staff. However, staff are at varying stages of applying the training appropriately. Some routines for teaching phonics are inconsistent. As a result, some pupils are not successfully transferring their phonics knowledge into their everyday learning in the classroom.

The school swiftly identifies pupils with SEND. Staff get to know pupils before they join the school. This allows them to provide any additional help that pupils may need to settle in successfully. Staff across the school are informed about the additional needs of pupils with SEND. They adapt learning activities so that pupils progress well through the curriculum.

The school has taken appropriate steps to improve pupils' rates of attendance. It carefully scrutinises attendance information so that any trends or patterns are identified. The school works closely with parents and carers to ensure that pupils who are often absent are supported to increase their attendance levels. As a result, most pupils typically attend school well.

Pupils focus well in their lessons. For example, they actively participate in class discussions and partner work. The school encourages pupils to take responsibility for their own actions. Pupils treat each other with respect and kindness in the playground.

Many parents who communicated with Ofsted during the inspection expressed positive attitudes about the school's engagement with them. However, a minority of parents indicated that they do not feel that the school communicates with them as well as it could about the support that their children receive.

Governors are determined that all pupils will achieve well. They closely evaluate the impact of the school's actions. Staff are incredibly proud to work at the school. The school has created a culture where staff feel appreciated and valued. They benefit from strong teamwork and support to fulfil their roles effectively. For example, staff are fully involved in decisions about new policies and procedures which affect their workload.

## 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 checks that the school makes to assure itself that staff are delivering the curriculum as it intends are not as effective as in other subjects. This makes it difficult for the school to know when staff need further guidance and support. The school should ensure that it checks the delivery of these curriculums more carefully so that it can be fully assured that pupils are learning all that they should.
- Some staff have not had the necessary training to support the delivery of the phonics programme consistently well across the school. This means that some pupils do not build their phonics knowledge as well as they should. The school should ensure that it provides effective professional development to these staff to improve their delivery of the phonics programme.
- A small number of parents do not feel that the school engages with them effectively. This hinders how well the school works alongside those parents to assist pupils who may need more support. The school should ensure that it identifies and removes barriers to engagement so that it can work more effectively with parents.

## 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 March 2020.

### 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>	106028
<b>Local authority</b>	Stockport
<b>Inspection number</b>	10348002
<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	352
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Jackie Graham
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ed Milner
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.bankslane-jun.stockport.sch.uk">www.bankslane-jun.stockport.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	4 and 5 March 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision for pupils.
- The school has appointed several new governors since the previous inspection.

## 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 inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with senior leaders, including the headteacher and a range of staff. She also spoke with members of the local governing body.
- The inspector spoke to a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector reviewed a wide range of evidence, including the school's self-evaluation documents, improvement plans and minutes of local governing body meetings. The inspector also reviewed records of pupils' behaviour and attendance.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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 inspector spoke with pupils about their experiences of school and their views on behaviour and bullying. She observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at social times.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, and geography. For each deep dive, she discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with some staff and with pupils about their learning, and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector reviewed pupils' work in some other subjects.
- The inspector observed pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector spoke to staff about pupils' behaviour and staff's workload.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. She also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff.
- There were no responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils. The inspector considered the views of pupils throughout the inspection.

### **Inspection team**

Rebecca Sharples, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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