

Inspection of a good school: Norris Bank Primary School

Green Lane, Heaton Norris, Stockport, Cheshire SK4 2NF

Inspection dates:

23 and 24 July 2024

Outcome

Norris Bank Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Norris Bank Primary happily attend this caring and welcoming school. They have excellent relationships with staff. Pupils are excited to learn because of the interesting way in which teachers deliver lessons. This ensures that pupils are curious about, and engaged in, the topics that they study.

In most subjects, pupils meet the high expectations that the school sets for their learning. This is reflected in the strong outcomes that pupils achieve in national tests at the end of key stage 2.

Pupils behave well in school. They put the school's GROW values into practice by respecting others' feelings and working well with one another. For example, in the early years, children talk to each other about their learning to achieve well together.

Pupils have opportunities to attend a varied range of clubs that offer sporting opportunities as well as activities that develop their wider interests. For example, they use their entrepreneurial skills by making and selling carrot cake made with the produce they have grown in the school garden. There are also annual residential visits for pupils in key stage 2 that support their learning. Pupils also have opportunities to learn to play musical instruments.

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

The school has recently put in place a new programme for the teaching of phonics. Staff have received training to ensure that they deliver a highly consistent and effective curriculum. In the early years, no time is wasted in ensuring that children start to learn phonics. Teachers question children well to check on how well they know the sounds that have been taught. In key stage 1, staff support pupils to be precise in their pronunciation of different sounds.

Staff check carefully on pupils' learning of reading to spot where pupils may need help to remember what has been taught. There is additional support to make sure that pupils

keep up well with the intended curriculum where needed. The phonics scheme has started to pay dividends in terms of pupils' achievement and in terms of their enjoyment of reading. Pupils progress well to become confident and fluent readers.

The school has set out an ambitious curriculum in most subjects. It has started to define the key aspects of learning that it wants pupils to remember. Teachers use this well to demonstrate the expectations that have been set for pupils' learning. Staff assess pupils' knowledge accurately to inform their teaching and to help to deepen pupils' understanding. However, in a small number of subjects the school has not defined some key subject-specific knowledge clearly enough. This means that staff are unsure of the essential knowledge that pupils need to know to help them with their future learning. Consequently, pupils do not recall this key knowledge as well as they can in other subjects.

There are robust systems in place to identify where pupils may have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The provision for these pupils is effective in enabling them to access the curriculum. Staff are clear about what these pupils need to learn next. The support that pupils with SEND receive enables them to achieve ambitious goals.

Disruption to learning is rare. When it does happen, pupils feel that it is handled swiftly by staff to help them to continue to focus on their learning.

The school has prioritised pupils' regular attendance and has clear systems in place to tackle persistent absenteeism. The school understands the causes of pupils' absence well. It has used this information to ensure that pupils typically have a high rate of attendance.

Pupils understand the importance of exercise and eating well as part of leading a healthy lifestyle. They also know how to maintain healthy relationships. Pupils get to sample a range of cultures through activities such as tasting different Spanish foods as part of their language lessons. The school has also put in place thoughtful opportunities for pupils to learn about different faiths. Pupils understand the main differences between religions as well as comparing their similarities. They have a strong understanding of equality.

The school has worked well to support staff with their well-being, including when the need arises. However, a significant minority of staff said that their workload can become unmanageable at peak times. Governors do not routinely assure themselves about the demands on leaders and staff and are not aware of the extent of this issue. As a result, there is a lack of meaningful engagement to understand some of the pressures on staff, including leaders. That said, the vast majority of staff who responded to the inspection survey said that they feel proud to be part of the school and enjoy working here.

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 sufficiently defined the key knowledge that it wants pupils to know. This means that teachers are not clear about the most important knowledge that pupils will need for their future learning. Pupils' recall of key knowledge in these subjects is not as strong as it could be. The school should ensure that it more precisely defines the essential knowledge that it wants pupils to know so that teachers can help pupils to achieve well in all subjects.
- Governors do not assure themselves about the demands placed on staff, including leaders, at different points in the year. This means that they are unaware of how workload is affecting some staff. Governors should ensure that they undertake meaningful engagement with all leaders and staff so that staff can continue to focus on the quality of education for pupils.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 2015.

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	106065
Local authority	Stockport
Inspection number	10348006
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	407
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Ruth Ledder
Headteacher	Elena Ponsen
Website	www.norrisbank.stockport.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	2 and 3 October 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, there have been several changes to the governing body. There is a new chair and a new vice-chair of governors.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school runs a before- and after-school 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 inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, history, and art and design. For each deep dive, the inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector also discussed the curriculum in other subjects, looked at a sample of work in these subjects and spoke with pupils about their work.
- The inspector heard pupils read individually and as part of classroom activities.
- The inspector took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View as well as Ofsted's online inspection surveys for staff and pupils.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, at breaktimes and around the school. He looked at records for behaviour and bullying and spoke with pupils and staff.
- The inspector discussed the provision in place for pupils' personal development.
- 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.

Inspection team

Steve Bentham, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024