

# Inspection of Northowram Primary School

Baxter Lane, Northowram, Halifax, West Yorkshire HX3 7EF

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Inspection dates:	5 and 6 November 2024
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding for overall effectiveness at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since June 2016. The school received an ungraded inspection under section 8 of the Act in January 2023. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

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

The school's high expectations for pupils' academic and personal development make a real difference to the pupils at Northowram. As a result of high-quality provision and support, pupils are well prepared for their next steps in learning, including the move up to secondary school at the end of Year 6.

Pupils are happy to come to school. They are keen to do well and enjoy their lessons. Relationships between pupils, and with adults, are positive. It is a school where people get along, both in lessons and when at play. Pupils know that staff are always available to listen to any concerns they have. They are confident that any issues, including bullying on the rare occasions it happens, will be sorted out quickly. Attendance is high.

Pupils achieve consistently well in national assessments. This is particularly the case in phonics and reading, where pupils achieve very highly as a result of high-quality provision. Pupils' achievement in subjects not assessed nationally, while strong, is not quite as high.

The support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is very effective. Staff know pupils well. They work proactively to ensure pupils with SEND get the right support at the right time. Pupils with SEND achieve well in their learning and development.

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

Across all subjects, the school has worked out what pupils need to learn and when. The school has ensured that what children learn in the early years is well considered so they are well prepared for their future learning. In each subject, the curriculum builds well on what pupils have been taught in previous year groups. The school's phonics programme is taught consistently. Pupils build fluency and accuracy in their reading.

Children are extremely well supported in the early years. They benefit from a highly effective curriculum that meets their needs. Staff know exactly when to step in and out of children's play. The school promotes children's language and communication skills exceptionally well. As they move through the early years, children develop their vocabulary and articulate their thoughts and ideas with increasing confidence.

The school's outdoor learning programme is integrated carefully with what pupils learn across the curriculum. This helps pupils develop their skills and knowledge in a range of ways, including outside in the school's grounds. For example, pupils learn to use a range of tools safely and productively during their outdoor sessions.

Teachers explain new ideas and concepts well. They check pupils are learning the intended curriculum content. However, some teachers lack subject-specific knowledge in some parts of the curriculum. This makes it harder for them to identify and address pupils' misconceptions.

Rates of pupils' attendance are high. Overall, the school's systems are effective for checking and following up on any absences. However, the school's work to improve the attendance of the small number of pupils who are persistently absent from school has not been as effective as it could be.

Pupils' behaviour around the school is calm. They are explicitly taught how rules are needed to help keep each other safe. For example, children in early years talk about why they need to walk in corridors but how they can run around safely outside. Pupils are taught the importance of having good manners and being kind to each other. They demonstrate this consistently across the school. A small number of pupils find meeting the school's behaviour expectations more challenging. These pupils receive effective support to help them make better decisions.

Pupils benefit from a coherent personal, social and health education curriculum. This is delivered through lessons and assemblies and includes the use of a range of guest speakers. Pupils get the chance to learn about a range of faiths and cultures. Staff make these opportunities meaningful, and pupils particularly benefit from learning about various celebrations throughout the year. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of concepts such as democracy, racism and consent.

The school provides a range of clubs and activities which help to build pupils' interests and talents. Some of these activities are not available locally, so they become very popular. For example, pupils take part in 'funky fitness' and 'Christmas ceramics'. The school makes sure pupils and their families get the help they need to join in with these activities.

The school takes staff well-being seriously. For example, changes to the curriculum are made in a way which pays careful attention to staff workload. Staff appreciate these approaches and feel well supported by leaders' decisions.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- In some subjects, teachers' subject knowledge is less secure. Occasionally, it leads to pupils' misconceptions being missed. The school should ensure staff have the training and support they need to develop their subject-specific knowledge across the curriculum.
- Attendance for a small number of pupils is too low. The school's actions to address this have not been effective or timely. The school should redouble efforts with these families. It should evaluate carefully the actions take to improve the attendance of these pupils and adapt the approaches as necessary.

## 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>	107486
<b>Local authority</b>	Calderdale
<b>Inspection number</b>	10297212
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	447
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	James Allison
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jane Scardifield
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.northowram.calderdale.sch.uk">www.northowram.calderdale.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	25 and 26 January 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

## Information about this school

- The school uses one unregistered alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- The inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken this into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held discussions with leaders, including the headteacher, the leader in charge of the personal development provision, the designated safeguarding lead, a

group of governors and a representative of the local authority.

- Inspectors considered a wide range of documentation, including school policies, school self-evaluation records, records of pupils' attendance, minutes of governing body meetings and information regarding safeguarding processes.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, music and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. An inspector listened to pupils reading.
- Inspectors met with a group of subject leaders and visited a range of lessons, including looking at pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator, visited lessons with a focus on pupils with SEND and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors visited some after-school clubs and observed pupils at social times and when moving around the school.
- Inspectors spoke to teachers, teaching assistants and support staff over the course of the inspection and considered the responses to the staff survey.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the start of the school day and reviewed the responses to Ofsted's survey, Ofsted Parent View. This included free-text responses.
- Inspectors met formally with groups of pupils and spoke to others informally throughout the inspection. They considered the responses to Ofsted's online pupil survey.

### **Inspection team**

Steve Wren, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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