

Inspection of a good school: Water Primary School

Burnley Road East, Water, Rossendale, Lancashire BB4 9PX

Inspection dates:

26 January 2022

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils and their parents and carers are proud to belong to this small and welcoming school community. Pupils feel safe in school. They are kind and respectful to each other. Pupils play happily with their friends at breaktimes. They make sure that everyone is included.

Staff support pupils to uphold the school's values. Staff will listen to pupils' worries and sort them out. Leaders deal with incidents of bullying well.

Pupils benefit from the wide range of physical activities on offer. Leaders ensure that pupils know how to keep themselves fit and healthy. Pupils enjoy being outside and exploring the school's forest area. Pupils in Year 6 told inspectors how much they look forward to working with children in the early years during their 'seeds and gardeners' time.

Leaders expect all pupils to achieve well. Pupils behave well in lessons and try their best. Staff provide effective care and support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Most older pupils read confidently and avidly. This helps pupils to learn more. However, leaders are not clear about the knowledge that pupils should learn in several subjects. This means that pupils do not learn as much as they should.

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

Leaders know how they want to construct the curriculum. They have begun to develop a curriculum that meets the needs of pupils and matches the ambition of the national curriculum. However, leaders have not clarified the knowledge that they expect pupils to learn in each subject, or the order in which this knowledge needs to be learned. This

includes the curriculum for children in the early years. As a result, pupils, including those with SEND, do not build up their knowledge across the curriculum as well as they should.

In the subjects where the curriculum is well underway, teachers are clear about what pupils need to learn. Teachers quickly find out what pupils do not know, and use this information to plan the next steps in learning. In these subjects, pupils build up their knowledge over time and achieve well. However, in several other subjects, leaders have not provided teachers with the curriculum guidance that they need. In these subjects, teachers are not clear about what pupils should learn. Consequently, pupils are not as well prepared as they should be for new learning. For example, the lack of clarity on what children are expected to learn in some aspects of the early years curriculum limits how well children are prepared for key stage 1.

Leaders successfully prioritise reading. They have ensured that all pupils, including those with SEND, begin to build up their phonics knowledge from the Reception class. Staff across the school know and follow the school's phonics programme effectively. This means that staff are adept at identifying the pupils who have gaps in their phonics knowledge. Staff then provide appropriate support to help these pupils to catch up quickly. Teachers carefully choose books that help pupils to practise and improve their reading. Staff are skilled in providing emotional support.

Once back on track, pupils enjoy reading regularly. They appreciate the high-quality books that leaders provide. These books motivate pupils to read about topics that are new to them, and broaden their horizons. Pupils are thrilled to be acknowledged as being a 'star reader'.

Pupils, including children in the early years, are focused on their learning in lessons. Any low-level disruption is dealt with swiftly by staff, and does not disturb learning. The positive relationships between staff and pupils enable pupils to develop confidence in 'having a go' at the unfamiliar.

Staff are well trained in identifying pupils who have SEND. Leaders and teachers put effective pastoral support in place for these pupils, including those in the early years. As a result, pupils with SEND are becoming increasingly confident in their learning, contributing their ideas in lessons with enthusiasm.

Leaders and governors ensure that pupils benefit from a strong extra-curricular offer. These activities enhance pupils' wider development. Older pupils flourish in the additional roles of responsibility that they take on. Pupils spoke to inspectors with pride about how they support other pupils and staff through roles such as mental health or sports ambassadors, or by mentoring pupils in the Reception Year. However, the curriculum does not support pupils to develop their knowledge of other faiths and cultures in sufficient depth. This hampers pupils' understanding and appreciation of diversity.

Governors have played an important role in ensuring that leaders and staff have kept their focus on meeting the needs of the pupils at the school, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff and leaders feel well supported by governors. That said, governors have not checked that leaders have a sufficiently effective curriculum in place.

In discussion with the headteacher, the inspectors agreed that physical education and languages may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors ensure that pupils are safe. Staff and governors are well trained. They know how to identify the potential safeguarding risks that pupils may face.

Staff make effective use of the school's recording systems to pass on their concerns to those who have responsibility for safeguarding. Leaders follow up any issues diligently, and ensure that vulnerable pupils have the support that they need.

Leaders make sure that pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe in school, in the wider world and when they are online. Pupils understand the need to take responsibility for their own safety, where possible.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not established the essential knowledge that they expect pupils to know in the early years and in several foundation subjects across key stages 1 and 2. This means that pupils, including those with SEND, do not learn as well as they should. Leaders need to be clear about what they expect pupils to know, and the order in which pupils need to learn new knowledge across subjects. This also includes the areas of learning in the early years. Governors should challenge leaders to ensure that the curriculum is well planned to support all pupils to build up a rich body of knowledge, in preparation for the next stages of their learning.
- The personal development curriculum does not support pupils well enough in developing their understanding of different faiths and cultures. This means that some pupils are not prepared as well as they should be for life in modern Britain. Leaders must ensure that pupils are given rich opportunities to learn about cultures other than their own. This is so that pupils can appreciate the richness of diversity that they may experience.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in February 2012.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	119198
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10212401
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	133
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Tracey Cuthbertson
Headteacher	Chris Willan
Website	www.water.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	1 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other leaders in the school, including an associate special educational needs coordinator. Inspectors spoke with the chair of governors and one other member of the governing body.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents relating to safeguarding. This included: the school's central record of staff and visitors; staff training records; records of safeguarding; and samples of the records kept on individual pupils.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. They talked with the curriculum leaders of these subject areas. Inspectors also visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work, held discussions with teachers and talked with pupils. Inspectors looked at curriculum plans and samples of work from other areas of the curriculum.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They observed pupils' behaviour as they moved around the school.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school.
- Inspectors considered parents' views on the school from their responses to Ofsted Parent View. They also considered the free-text responses from parents. They spoke with parents as they dropped their children off at school.
- There were no responses to Ofsted's staff or pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Claire Cropper, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Joan Williamson

Ofsted Inspector

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