

Inspection of Harwood Meadows Primary School

Orchard Gardens, Harwood, Bolton, Lancashire BL2 3PS

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 February 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and feel safe at school. They enjoy the work that teachers give them. They trust the adults working in the school. Pupils feel comfortable about approaching staff and sharing any concerns that they may have.

Pupils are aware of the high expectations that staff set for their behaviour. They behave well. They told inspectors that bullying is dealt with decisively. Pupils respond well to rewards that tie in with the school's values of being aspirational, resilient and kind.

Leaders are setting higher expectations for pupils' learning. However, in some subjects, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have hampered their efforts to improve the curriculum as much as they intended.

Older pupils are provided with a range of leadership roles. For example, Year 6 pupils act as reading buddies for children in the Reception Year. A range of trips and visitors to the school enhance pupils' learning. For example, Year 6 visited a local air raid shelter to help them understand some aspects of life during the Second World War.

Those parents and carers that inspectors spoke to, and the majority of the parents responding to the Ofsted Parent View survey, were positive about the school. Many praised the school's staff for the recent improvements that have taken place.

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

In response to the findings from the previous inspection, leaders have put in place a new and effective curriculum for phonics. Children in the early years get off to a quick start in learning to read. The high expectations set by staff in the early years are sustained throughout key stage 1. Pupils read books that are well matched to their phonics knowledge. This is because teachers check carefully on the sounds that pupils have learned. There are effective systems of support across the school to help pupils to catch up on the reading knowledge that was interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. As they move through the school, pupils read with increasing fluency and comprehension.

Subject leaders have been supported well to develop the curriculum offer. This has resulted in a more structured approach to building on pupils' prior learning in each subject. Pupils are able to remember more about the topics that they have covered in most subjects. However, in some other subjects, leaders' actions have been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In these subjects, some of the key knowledge that leaders want pupils to learn has not been defined clearly enough. However, it is clear from leaders' actions that they are in the process of refining these remaining subject curriculums to make it easier for teachers to know when to teach the essential knowledge that pupils need to remember.

Leaders quickly identify pupils' needs and put appropriate support in place for the large majority of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However,

leaders are not as sharp as they could be at identifying the specific needs of some pupils who have social and communication needs. This can cause a short delay in getting the right support for these pupils. However, once this is in place, pupils benefit from effective support to learn the same curriculum as others. Pupils with SEND, and their parents, are very positive about the support they receive.

Pupils across the school have positive attitudes to their work. This contributes well to their learning. Disruption to lessons is rare. If it does happen, pupils said that it is dealt with well by staff.

The curriculum for pupils' personal development enables them to gain a strong understanding of equalities. Pupils are respectful of the views of others. Pupils also have a strong cultural awareness, such as their knowledge of different artists.

Staff are all on board with the vision that leaders and governors have put in place. They feel that leaders are considerate of their workload. Governors are knowledgeable. They have a clear understanding of the school and work well in partnership with leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors ensure that pupils are kept safe from harm. For example, leaders have been advised by pupils, in their role as digital leaders, about the common social media apps that pupils use. This has ensured that teachers are more informed about how to teach pupils to use technology safely.

Staff know pupils well and they are vigilant for the signs of abuse. This ensures that pupils are referred for early help if they, or their families, would benefit from any extra support. There are clear procedures in place to manage any safeguarding concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

The school's curriculum is not yet sufficiently well planned and sequenced in some subjects. However, it is clear from leaders' actions that they are in the process of bringing this about and are making any necessary amendments in response to the pandemic. It is for this reason that the transitional arrangements have been applied on this inspection.

- Leaders have not clearly defined some of the key subject knowledge that they want pupils to learn in some subjects. As a result, teachers are unclear about what should be taught and when this should happen. This prevents pupils from gaining some of the essential knowledge that they need for their future learning. Subject leaders should continue to ensure that they identify the essential

knowledge that pupils should gain in these subjects so that teachers can help pupils to build on their previous learning.

- Leaders are not identifying the needs of a small minority of pupils who have SEND quickly enough, particularly in relation to their social and communication needs. This means that there is a delay in getting the help that some pupils need. Leaders should further refine their existing good practice to ensure that there are systems in place to identify all pupils' specific needs at the earliest opportunity.

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	137991
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	10212230
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	225
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Ian Moore
Headteacher	Julian Bevan
Website	www.harwood-meadows.bolton.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 and 6 November 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher has taken post. Two new teachers have started at the school. A new senior leader responsible for coordinating special educational needs has only recently started working at the school.
- School leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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 parents at the start of the school day and took into account the views of parents who responded to the Ofsted Parent View survey. There were no responses to the staff or pupil surveys.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and computing. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, considered 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 for history, art and design, design technology, history and physical education. Inspectors reviewed a sample of pupils' work for art and design, geography and history.
- Inspectors met with pupils to ask them about their learning in a range of subjects and about the opportunities that they have for their personal development.
- Inspectors met with pupils from across the school to ask them about safeguarding. Inspectors reviewed documentation, which included the school's safeguarding policy, the register of checks carried out on new employees and safeguarding records.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, at breaktimes and when walking round the school. They discussed behaviour and bullying with pupils, senior leaders and other staff.

Inspection team

Steve Bentham, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Kelly Eyres

Ofsted Inspector

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