Inspection of a good school: Owler Brook Primary School

Wensley Street, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S4 8HQ

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 July 2024

Outcome

Owler Brook Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This school prides itself on being a 'family for our families'. It fulfils this ambition well. It is a haven for many families in need. Pupils are nurtured in a welcoming environment. Parents and carers typically see the school as a safe place for their children but also somewhere that the whole family can go for advice and support.

There are high aspirations for all pupils. From the early years, pupils are encouraged to be curious and enthusiastic learners. They enjoy using the extensive outdoor play equipment at breaktimes. Classrooms are vibrant and rich with learning opportunities.

Relationships between pupils and staff are respectful and kind. There is a caring and calm ethos. Pupils behave well. They know that there are trusted adults that will help them with any worries they may have. Staff deal with incidents of poor behaviour effectively. Pupils relish collecting pom-poms in reward for demonstrating the school's values including, 'being kind, being safe, respecting all and being honest'.

Pupils experience various school clubs and activities. These include cooking, cricket and messy play. They like holding positions of responsibility, such as reading ambassadors. Pupils enjoy performing and taking part in sports competitions. They particularly appreciate residential experiences.

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

Leaders have reviewed and revised the curriculum. Curriculum content is coherently sequenced. It meets the needs of the diverse school community well. For example, it is structured to support the significant proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language and are new to the country. Leaders ensure there is appropriate focus on developing pupils' communication and language. Many pupils arrive and leave the school throughout the academic year. There are frequent opportunities in the curriculum for pupils to revisit and consolidate learning. Teachers use 'point in time assessments' to check what pupils can do and remember. Pupils who need more help are identified

quickly. Extra teaching and specific support are put in place to help pupils catch up and keep up with learning. Pupils make positive progress in their learning during their time in school.

Reading is the school's highest priority. A new phonics programme has been implemented successfully. Staff teach phonics well. Children begin phonics in the early years. Staff check pupils' progress in phonics frequently. They provide prompt support when needed. The joy of reading is promoted throughout the school. Books are specifically chosen to provide pupils with 'windows' to the world and 'mirrors' to reflect their own lives. Pupils read daily. Initiatives such as the 'big book giveaway' ensure that families can access a range of books at home. Children in the early years develop their early communication and language skills well. They are immersed in stories, songs and rhymes. Skilled staff make the most of every interaction with children. They model language and reinforce vocabulary to broaden children's understanding of the world and prepare them for later learning.

The school identifies and supports the needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. Teachers tailor learning and support to meet pupils' individual needs when needed. Leaders seek external advice when necessary and work closely with parents to help pupils to achieve their best.

Attendance remains an ongoing priority for the school. There are thorough procedures in place to address pupils' absence. Leaders highlight the importance of regular attendance to parents. The school and trust have suitable policies and information to explain the negative impact of absence on pupils' education. There are several examples of how leaders have positively improved the attendance of individual pupils. However, too many families choose not to send their children to school on a regular basis. These pupils miss essential learning and social experiences.

The school provides many opportunities to enrich pupils' personal development. These are carefully crafted by leaders who know the needs of families very well. All pupils are offered free breakfast every day. Trips and activities give pupils a range of experiences that they may otherwise not be able to enjoy. These include museums, different places of worship and learning to play musical instruments, such as the ukelele. Pupils learn about life in modern Britain, including the importance of individual liberty, equality and protected characteristics. They learn how to stay safe including online and from risks within the local community, including from drugs and knife crime. Year 6 pupils appreciate learning first-aid skills.

The trust has secure oversight of the school. Staff speak highly of the support of leaders for their workload and welfare. They are dedicated to the school. Parents appreciate that leaders and staff work with determination to make life better for pupils and their families.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Attendance is an ongoing and significant priority for the school. Too many pupils are persistently absent from school. They miss essential learning and experiences, which has a negative impact on their education. The school should continue their intensive efforts to ensure that parents understand that persistent absence can disadvantage their children educationally and socially.

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 predecessor school, Owler Brook Primary School, to be good in December 2014.

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	147622
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	10346735
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	468
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Pamela Smith
Headteacher	Mrs Kit Oldham
Website	www.owlerbrookprimary.co.uk
Date(s) of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in March 2021.
- The school runs nursery provision on a part-time or full-time basis, for children from the age of three.
- The school does not use alternative providers of education.
- The school provides breakfast and offers a range of after-school activities.
- The school joined The Cascade Multi Academy Trust on 1 April 2020.

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 leaders and has taken that into account in the evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the assistant headteachers, the school business manager, the chief executive officer of the trust, leaders for safeguarding, the attendance and welfare officer for the trust, the special

educational needs coordinator, three members of the local governing body, including the chair and some subject leaders. The inspector met remotely with the chair of the trust and spoke on the telephone with a school improvement partner.

- The inspector met with some members of staff and some pupils and spoke with some parents informally at the end of the school day.
- Deep dives were undertaken into reading, mathematics and religious education. The inspector looked at curriculum plans, visited lessons, spoke to teaching staff and some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector listened to some pupils reading to an adult.
- The inspector spoke to leaders about the curriculum in science, reviewed some pupils' science books and scrutinised information relating to the support and provision for pupils with SEND. The inspector also considered the curriculum for children in the early years, toured the early years provision with leaders and spoke to the nursery teacher.
- 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 considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys for parents and carers, pupils and staff.

Inspection team

Stephanie Innes-Taylor, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector

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