

Inspection of a good school: Sandal Primary School

West Lane, Baildon, Shipley, West Yorkshire BD17 5DH

Inspection dates:

22 and 23 November 2023

Outcome

Sandal Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Sandal Primary School is a happy and welcoming place to learn. Pupils love coming to school. They know it is a safe place where they will be supported by adults who care for them.

The school's motto of 'nurture, grow and succeed' is woven through the curriculum and every aspect of school life. The school has high expectations for every pupil, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These expectations are realised as pupils typically achieve well. Pupils are proud of their leadership roles such as junior school leaders and eco-warriors. They are very well prepared for the next stage of their education and to be active and positive citizens.

Pupils conduct themselves well throughout the building and at less structured times. They are polite and welcoming to visitors. Pupils insist that bullying is very rare and they know that adults will support them should it occur.

The school encourages pupils' talents and interests well. There is a wide variety of clubs and activities that are attended well by pupils. These take place at lunchtimes and before and after school to ensure that pupils have plentiful opportunities to attend.

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

The school has introduced an ambitious curriculum that prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education. There is a clear sequence to pupils' learning. Lessons build on what pupils have learned before. For example, in computing, pupils develop their ability to write more complex computer programmes over their time in school. Pupils with SEND access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. They are provided with the support they need to succeed.

There is a very consistent approach to the teaching of the core subjects of mathematics and reading. Teachers are well trained and have good subject knowledge. Pupils at the

early stages of learning to read benefit from daily phonics sessions. Those who struggle or who fall behind are quickly identified and supported to catch up. Books are celebrated and pupils develop a love of reading. They talk enthusiastically about their favourite books and authors. The well-structured mathematics curriculum ensures that pupils develop their knowledge over time. In the early years, children learn the important mathematical concepts that they need to prepare them for key stage 1. The children are surrounded by opportunities to learn about the 'number of the week'. Pupils enjoy their mathematics lessons. They say that they remember things because their lessons are interesting. Pupils' written work, however, is of a variable quality. Some pupils' written work is difficult to read. Some pupils form letters incorrectly and they do not all follow a consistent approach to handwriting.

Children in the early years get off to a very positive start to their education. They experience a rich and broad curriculum. Adults support children's learning well with a strong focus on the development of language and vocabulary. High expectations of behaviour and well-established routines have led to a very calm and positive environment. As a result, children are well settled. Children in the nursery class cooperate well and learn to take turns.

Pupils behave sensibly at playtimes and around school. In lessons they are interested and motivated. They are keen to learn.

The school's offer for pupils' personal development is exceptional. The use of the school's on-site woodland area contributes to this. All pupils have regular access to learning that takes place in the woodland. This supports their learning in the wider curriculum. For instance, as part of a topic on the Second World War, pupils built Anderson Shelters and baked a wartime fruit crumble. The woodland is also used as an effective element of the support for pupils with SEND and complex needs. For example, pupils have opportunities to work cooperatively with others, grow produce and care for the school's chickens.

The curriculum for personal, social and health education (PSHE) prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. Pupils are inclusive and tolerant of each other. They believe in treating everybody fairly and with respect.

Leaders and governors have a strong moral commitment to ensuring pupils are well prepared for their next stages and for life. Governors are skilled and knowledgeable. They understand their role in school leadership and they know the school well. They make visits to school to assure themselves that improvement plans are having impact.

Many parents and carers are positive about the quality of education provided by the school. However, a number commented that the school's communication with parents could be improved.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils' written work is not of a consistently high standard. As a result, some pupils do not develop the skills that they need to become fluent writers. This, consequently, impacts on the quality of the work pupils' complete in a range of subjects. The school needs to put in place a consistent approach to the teaching of handwriting to ensure that pupils develop the skills necessary to support their future learning.
- Several parents commented that communication from school is not always accurate or effective. This means that parents sometimes do not know what is happening and miss events. Communication with parents needs to be improved so that parents feel fully informed about what is going on and so they can fully support their child's learning.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2018.

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	107287
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	10289931
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	457
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Ray Tate
Headteacher	Louise Dale
Website	www.sandalprimaryschool.co.uk
Date(s) of previous inspection	19 and 20 June 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use alternative provision for current pupils.

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 their evaluation of the school.

- The inspector met with the headteacher and other members of the leadership team. He also met with the chair of governors and members of the governing board.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and computing. As part of this process, he met with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with pupils, listened to pupils reading and looked at their work in books. The inspector also scrutinised pupils' work in some other curriculum subjects.

- The inspector examined a range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, improvement plans, records of governance, and documentation relating to attendance and pupils' behaviour.
- The inspector took account of responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, the pupils' survey and the staff survey. The inspector spoke informally with parents at the end of the school day.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with groups of pupils, both formally and during less structured parts of the day.
- 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

Dughall McCormick, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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