

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Shadsworth Junior School

Blackburn With Darwen, Arran Avenue, Lancashire BB1 2ET

Inspection dates:

21 and 22 January 2025

Outcome

Shadsworth Junior School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel a keen sense of belonging at Shadsworth Junior School. They know that adults care about them and have high expectations for pupils to achieve. Pupils rise to these expectations, achieving well and being eager to please. The school is a calm and purposeful place to learn.

The school values pupils' well-being highly. The school's pet dog is loved by all. Pupils are happy, polite and display positive attitudes toward their learning. Routines for positive behaviour are firmly established across the school. If pupils struggle, they are taught how to manage their own behaviour effectively.

Pupils revel in the wide variety of opportunities that are on offer to develop their talents and interests, such as art, netball, judo and choir clubs. A rich variety of visits to places of local interest enhance pupils' learning across the curriculum.

Pupils have a strong understanding of a range of important issues, including equality and diversity and healthy living. They are proud of the positive contribution that they make to their school. This includes acting as prefects, play leaders and subject ambassadors. By the time that pupils leave Year 6, they are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

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

Since the previous inspection, the school has refined the curriculum. The key knowledge and skills that pupils should learn are identified clearly. Teachers know what to teach and when this should happen. This enables many pupils to achieve well across a range of subjects.

In most subjects, staff complete regular checks on pupils' learning. This ensures that any gaps in pupils' learning or misconceptions are addressed swiftly. Pupils are able to build on their previous learning. However, in a minority of subjects, these checks are at an early stage of development. At times, pupils in these subjects do not connect new learning with what they already know. This means that, sometimes, their knowledge is not as secure as it could be.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified quickly by skilled staff. The school ensures that any barriers to learning are overcome without delay. Staff support pupils with SEND in lessons and during playtimes diligently. This helps these pupils to feel included in the life of the school and to follow the same curriculum as their classmates. As a result, they achieve well.

The school ensures that reading is a priority. Pupils talk about their favourite books excitedly. They can explain the importance of reading for success in school and beyond. Pupils enjoy reading a wide range of books. If they struggle with reading, highly skilled staff provide the precise support needed to enable them to become accurate and independent readers. As a result, most pupils become confident and fluent readers by the time they leave key stage 2. However, this approach is not replicated consistently well in writing, especially for younger pupils. Some pupils are not supported well enough to practise key skills in writing, such as sentence formation and accurate spelling. This limits their writing fluency and hinders the quality of their written communication.

Pupils are keen to attend school. Leaders have been tenacious in improving pupils' rates of attendance. The school has a clear understanding of the barriers to better attendance. It has devised suitable strategies to reduce absence levels. As a result, pupils' rates of attendance are improving.

The provision for pupils' wider development enriches their learning by providing them with first-hand experiences of theatres, universities and museums. Pupils value these visits highly. They learn how to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy. They know about healthy relationships and staying safe online. Pupils demonstrate strong knowledge of fundamental British values and the uniqueness of individuals in society.

The school, including governors, provides strong support for staff's workload and well-being. Staff feel listened to. They value the ongoing curriculum training that they receive to help deliver the ambitious curriculum. Governors challenge the school appropriately and use their experience to support the school effectively. Staff and governors are very proud to be a part of this nurturing school community.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's writing curriculum is not as effective as other elements of its work. This means that some teachers do not enable pupils to write clearly, with accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar. The school should ensure that there is an increased emphasis on pupils' writing skills from the start of their time in school.
- In a minority of subjects, teachers' checks on pupils' learning are at an early stage of development. This means that, sometimes, staff do not pick up on where there are gaps in pupils' learning or understanding and so, occasionally, these go unaddressed. The school should ensure that teachers' checks are used consistently well in these subjects so pupils can practise, apply and secure their learning.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 for overall effectiveness in October 2019.

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

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| Unique reference number | 119221 |
| Local authority | Blackburn with Darwen |
| Inspection number | 10348143 |
| Type of school | Junior |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 7 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 224 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Kim Stinson |
| Headteacher | Jenny Hetherington |
| Website | www.shadsworthjuniorschool.org.uk |
| Dates of previous inspection | 9 and 10 October 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school offers wraparound care through a breakfast club and after-school clubs.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about 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.
- 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 met with groups of pupils to discuss their views of the school.

- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, curriculum leaders and teachers.
- The inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The inspector observed behaviour in classrooms and social times. He spoke to teachers and pupils throughout the inspection about behaviour in school.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. He also spoke with groups of staff and considered the responses from staff and pupils to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Thomas Fay, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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