

Inspection of Belfield Community School

Samson Street, Belfield, Rochdale, Lancashire OL16 2XW

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 April 2025

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 proud ambassadors of their school. They embrace and celebrate the diversity within its community. Some pupils join the school at different times in the year. Many of these pupils speak English as an additional language. There is always a warm welcome for everyone, no matter when they arrive.

Pupils are happy in school. They know that staff care for them deeply and expect them to succeed. Pupils who need extra support get it quickly. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), as well as those learning to speak English as an additional language. Pupils typically achieve well. They are suitably prepared for the demands of secondary school.

Pupils are highly respectful of each other and of adults. They understand how staff expect them to behave and follow the school's rules well. For example, pupils walk safely and quietly in corridors. This makes the school a calm and orderly place.

Pupils readily assume roles of responsibility. They wear their different-coloured sweatshirts to represent their roles as school councillors, eco ninjas and well-being ambassadors with pride. Pupils who act as young interpreters relish their role in supporting pupils who are new to school to settle in quickly.

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

The governing body makes a strong contribution to the leadership of the school. It supports the school's unwavering determination that every pupil can succeed. Irrespective of when they join, the school quickly builds positive relationships with pupils and their families. It identifies the additional needs of pupils with SEND swiftly. The school provides staff with rich information about pupils' needs. It ensures that most pupils with SEND access the curriculum successfully alongside their peers. Pupils with more complex SEND have their individual needs met exceptionally well. This is a strength of the school. Pupils with SEND thrive.

The school has strengthened the curriculum to ensure that the most important knowledge and vocabulary that pupils need to learn are set out clearly. Pupils build their academic knowledge as well as their understanding of the locality. For example, they learn about local history and the legacy left by influential movements, including the Co-operative Group.

Teachers appreciate that leaders consider their workload and well-being when making any changes. They recognise how improvements to the curriculum have helped them to deepen their own subject knowledge.

Curriculum improvements are more recent in some subjects than in others. At times, teachers are unsure what should be checked to ensure that pupils know and remember key information at the end of a unit of work. Added to this, the school continues to refine its approaches to supporting pupils to embed their knowledge securely in the long term in

these subjects. While pupils have broad knowledge of topics learned, some do not demonstrate the same depth of understanding over time that they do of more recent learning.

Teachers receive appropriate guidance to support them to deliver the curriculum well. However, the school has not ensured that it checks this guidance is being followed closely enough in a small number of subjects. On occasion, the curriculum is not delivered as effectively in these subjects as in others. Pupils' knowledge is sometimes uneven in these subjects as a result.

The school makes reading a priority. Pupils study a wide range of books and poetry, including from other cultures. This encourages them to develop positive attitudes to reading. Children in the early years enjoy learning rhymes and songs. They listen closely for different sounds. Teachers typically deliver the phonics programme well. Pupils' reading knowledge is stronger than the most recent Year 1 phonics screening check results suggest. The school steps in quickly and provides effective support for pupils who find reading more challenging.

Kindness is at the heart of this school. Children in the early years develop warm, trusting relationships with staff. Older pupils build on this positive start. They are caring and considerate to others.

The school keeps a close watch on attendance patterns. It works in partnership with parents and carers to reduce absence levels. The proportion of pupils who miss large chunks of their education has declined in recent years.

The school has carefully considered its personal development offer. Pupils benefit from an increasingly diverse range of experiences to enhance and deepen their learning. For example, through the 'Belfield Promise', pupils have opportunities to learn to cook, tie a tie and build sandcastles. Pupils are respectful of other faiths and cultures. They know what is right and wrong, as well as what makes a healthy relationship. Pupils are well prepared for life beyond school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, the school's current approaches to assessment do not enable teachers to check whether pupils have secured and, at times, deepened the intended knowledge. This sometimes hinders some pupils from demonstrating a rich body of subject knowledge. The school should ensure that teachers are fully equipped to check that pupils have embedded their knowledge securely.

- At times, in some subjects, teachers do not focus on helping pupils to recall the most important knowledge that they have learned. As a result, some pupils are less confident in recalling learning over time in these subjects. The school should ensure that teachers design sufficient opportunities for pupils to recap, rehearse and recall previous learning so that they build a secure understanding across the curriculum.
- The school's systems to quality assure recently refined curriculums in a small number of subjects are not as effective as they could be. At times, these curriculums are inconsistently implemented, and pupils' learning is uneven as a result. The school should check that teachers deliver subject curriculums consistently well and provide appropriate support where this is not the case.

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	105780
Local authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	10377916
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	455
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Rachael El Weshahi
Headteacher	Carly Wilson
Website	www.belfield.rochdale.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	11 and 12 February 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There have been several changes in staffing since the school was last inspected. These include the appointment of a new headteacher and an increase in the size of the leadership team.
- Many pupils in the school speak English as an additional language. Some of these pupils have lived in other countries before attending this school. Currently, there are more than 30 home languages spoken by pupils.
- The school does not currently make use of alternative provision for pupils.
- The school provides a breakfast club for pupils.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other leaders in the school.
- An inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. She spoke to a representative of the local authority and to the school improvement officer.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science, history and religious education. They spoke with the leaders of these areas of the curriculum. Inspectors also visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work, held discussions with teachers and talked with pupils.
- Inspectors discussed pupils' learning in other areas of the curriculum.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: 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.
- Inspectors spoke with parents and carers at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online Parent View survey and parents' free-text responses.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. There were no responses to the online pupil survey to consider.
- An inspector visited the school's breakfast club.

Inspection team

Jackie Stillings, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Cath Cooke

Ofsted Inspector

Lynda Florence

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2025