

Inspection of Bolton Primary School

Bolton, Appleby-in-Westmorland, Cumbria CA16 6AW

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 June 2023

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 at Bolton Primary School. Leaders' values of 'caring, inspiring, enjoying and excelling' are lived out by pupils, including children in the early years. Pupils are kind and caring towards each other. They value the friendships that they have with pupils of all ages, and appreciate the family feel of the school.

Leaders address any concerns that pupils or parents and carers have quickly and effectively. This helps pupils to feel safe.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well. Most pupils behave well. They listen to their teachers and concentrate on their work.

Some pupils have embraced opportunities to visit Bulgaria, Spain, Greece and Italy. Children from these countries have also visited the school. These experiences have been shared with pupils of all ages. These opportunities help pupils to experience life in other countries and to develop a sense of the wider world.

Pupils enthusiastically participate in after-school clubs including rounders, football and dodgeball. They enjoy using the wildlife area and the trim trail in the school grounds.

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

Leaders have designed a curriculum that is broad and ambitious for all pupils, including those with SEND. They have identified the important knowledge that they want pupils to learn and when they should learn it. Leaders have also ensured that the curriculum is relevant to the local area so that pupils, including children in the early years, can develop a sense of place. Pupils achieve well.

Pupils who may have additional needs are identified early. Staff get to know children well before they join the Reception class. This helps staff to identify any additional needs that these young children may have at the earliest opportunity and to put support in place quickly. Pupils with SEND are supported effectively to learn the same curriculum as their classmates.

Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subjects that they teach. They teach their specialist subject across the school. Pupils benefit from teachers' subject expertise from the early years through to Year 6. Teachers check what pupils know and remember. However, in a few subjects, leaders have not ensured that teachers consistently address errors and misconceptions in pupils' work. This means that some pupils' learning is not as secure as it should be in some subjects.

Leaders have prioritised reading across the school. Leaders' 'strive for five' incentive successfully encourages pupils to read widely and often. Leaders have established an effective phonics curriculum from the beginning of the Reception Year. The books

that pupils read match the sounds that they have been taught. Pupils in key stage 2 who need help to catch up are supported well to do so. This helps pupils to become confident and fluent readers.

Most pupils behave in a calm and sensible manner around the school. They are courteous, considerate and mature. However, on occasion, in some lessons, a few pupils' behaviour disrupts the learning of others. Leaders deal with any rare incidents of negative behaviour, including the use of discriminatory language, quickly and effectively.

Older pupils have embraced the opportunity to lead clubs for younger pupils at lunchtime. They enjoy being positive role models and are proud of how well younger pupils engage with the activities that they organise.

Leaders have developed a curriculum that successfully supports pupils' personal development. Specialist staff teach personal, social and health education across the school, including relationships and sex education. Pupils benefit greatly from these staff's expertise. For example, pupils have a clear understanding of healthy relationships, fundamental British values and different faiths and cultures. This helps to prepare them to be citizens in modern Britain.

The school is well led and managed. Governors know the school well. They understand their role and hold leaders to account effectively. Staff enjoy working at the school. Leaders prioritise staff's workload and well-being. Staff appreciate the support that they get from leaders and feel valued.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that there is a culture of safeguarding in the school. Staff have had the training that they need to identify pupils who may be at risk of harm. They know how to report any concerns they may have. Leaders keep a record of staff's concerns and act swiftly to address these. However, the system for staff to record and report their concerns is cumbersome. It does not help leaders to check for patterns effectively or to consider the bigger picture. Leaders are aware of this and have taken appropriate action.

Leaders ensure that vulnerable pupils receive support from specially trained staff in school. They also secure help for vulnerable pupils from other agencies. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, including when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, leaders have not ensured that their high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour are shared by staff. This can hinder some pupils from achieving as well as they should. Leaders should ensure that all staff have consistently high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour.
- In some subjects, teachers do not address pupils' errors and misconceptions. This means that some pupils' learning is not as secure as it should be. Leaders should ensure that teachers have a consistent approach to identifying and addressing errors in pupils' work.

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](#)' 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	112176
Local authority	Westmorland and Furness
Inspection number	10255961
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	65
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Bronwen Maxwell
Headteacher	Ruth Elstone
Website	www.bolton.cumbria.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 January 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During this inspection, inspectors met with the headteacher and other leaders in school. They also spoke with a range of staff.
- The lead inspector spoke with members of the governing body, including the chair. She also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered the responses to the Ofsted surveys for staff and pupils.

- The lead inspector examined a range of safeguarding documentation. Inspectors spoke with staff to check how well they understand safeguarding procedures.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes, in lessons and around school. They also spoke to pupils about their experiences at school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. The lead inspector also considered the curriculum in some other subjects. Inspectors met leaders and teachers and visited a sample of lessons. They also spoke with pupils about their learning in these subjects and looked at examples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector observed pupils reading to a trusted adult.

Inspection team

Sally Timmons, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Cleo Cunningham

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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