

Inspection of a good school: Downholland-Haskayne Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary School

Black-A-Moor Lane, Haskayne, Ormskirk, Lancashire L39 7HX

Inspection date:

27 March 2024

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and settled at this school. Staff are nurturing and caring. They know pupils well. Pupils get on well with each other. Older pupils look after younger ones. They are keen to take on extra responsibilities, for instance as monitors in the classroom or working in the school library.

Staff want pupils to achieve well. Recently, the school has raised its expectations about what pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), should learn. Pupils' academic achievement in some subjects is improving. However, this is not the case in others. This is because the curriculum does not help teachers know what should be taught in mixed-age classes.

Pupils behave well around school and in the playground. Typically, pupils engage positively in their learning. However, some pupils can be easily distracted from the task in hand and lose concentration when the work they receive does not meet their needs or interests. When this occurs, some staff are slow to make the necessary adjustments to pupils' learning.

In recent weeks, the school has begun to broaden the range of extra-curricular opportunities on offer. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about what they had learned from a recent walk around the local area. They can attend various after-school clubs. They spoke animatedly about the school's end-of-term disco.

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

The school provides a curriculum that is broad and ambitious. In some subjects, especially those where the curriculum is more established, the school has identified the order in which pupils will learn key content in an age-appropriate way. However, in many subjects, the curriculums do not take enough account of the needs of pupils in mixed-age classes. This is because it is unclear to teachers what pupils should learn and when this should happen. Consequently, teachers struggle to deliver appropriate subject content. At times, the work that some pupils receive is too easy, while for others it is too difficult. As a result, in some subjects, pupils remember little of what they have been taught.

In some subjects, teachers are conscientious in checking that pupils understand what has been taught. However, in other subjects, teachers do not effectively identify gaps in pupils' knowledge or address misconceptions. In these subjects, pupils are not secure in their learning. They struggle to link current learning with previous topics. As a result, pupils do not learn all that they should in readiness for the next stage in education.

Children in the early years, including two-year-olds, and pupils in key stage 1 are beginning to benefit from the newly introduced phonics programme. The programme is well organised so that pupils build their phonics knowledge step by step. Pupils read unfamiliar words from books that match the sounds that they know. However, some pupils do not receive effective support to help them read with fluency and confidence. The school has begun to make changes to its reading programme to address this issue. The school has ensured that classrooms and the library are well stocked with a broad range of high-quality books and texts. Pupils enjoy reading and make regular use of the book baskets in each classroom.

Pupils with SEND benefit emotionally from the support that staff provide. The school effectively identifies the needs of pupils with SEND. However, some of the adaptations that teachers make to their delivery of the curriculum are not effective enough. As a result, some pupils with SEND do not achieve as well as they should.

Across the school, pupils generally behave well. Pupils of different ages in the mixed-age classes work well together. However, some pupils lose interest in their learning. Staff do not ensure that they re-engage quickly enough. Consequently, learning time is lost.

The absence rates of pupils who attend school for five days each week are low. However, the attendance of those pupils who only attend school for three days as part of the flexi-school agreement is not as positive. Some flexi-school pupils are regularly absent on the days when they should be in school. This limits their achievement. Recently, the school has made improving the attendance of pupils a high priority. It routinely monitors pupils' attendance, and it has begun to seek to understand the underlying causes of pupils' absence. While some parents and carers have responded positively to these initiatives, the school has been unsuccessful in engaging with a considerable minority of parents. As a result, although attendance rates are improving for some pupils, others do not attend school often enough.

The school offers some opportunities for pupils to learn beyond the academic curriculum. Pupils enjoy learning about different cultures, religions and families that make up modern

Britain. Pupils learn how to discuss difficult moral issues in age-appropriate ways. They enjoy taking on different jobs in school.

Members of the governing body are deeply committed to the school. However, they recognise that, over recent years, they have not offered sufficient challenge to help stem the decline in the quality of education on offer. Very recently, governors, with the support of the local authority, have made a number of positive changes. This is helping to shore up the school's capacity to improve.

Most staff feel well supported by the school. They appreciate the efforts that are made to ensure that changes to the curriculum, for example, are managed well and do not have a negative impact on their workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In many subjects, the school has not clearly identified the key knowledge that pupils should learn. This means that teachers of mixed-age classes are not sure what should be taught and when this should happen. As a result, pupils do not build on their knowledge over time. This limits their achievement. The school should ensure that subject curriculums are carefully designed to take account of mixed-age classes so that pupils learn all that they should in readiness for their next stage of education.
- Teachers' checks on what pupils know and understand are not effective in some subjects. This means that teachers are not able to identify misconceptions or gaps in pupils' learning. This hinders their progress through the curriculum. The school should ensure that teachers are suitably equipped to spot and then address gaps in pupils' learning so that pupils build their knowledge securely over time.
- Teachers do not adapt their delivery of the curriculum well enough to meet the needs of some pupils with SEND. As a result, these pupils do not achieve as well as they should. The school should ensure that teachers receive the support that they need to help pupils with SEND access the curriculum so that they learn the content of the curriculum.
- The school does not ensure that some pupils, particularly those who are flexi-schooled, attend school as often as they should. This impacts on their achievement. The school should develop further its analysis of patterns of attendance and seek out different strategies to work constructively with parents and to overcome the barriers that are preventing some pupils from attending school regularly.
- The governing body does not hold the school to account effectively enough. This means that they have overseen a decline in the quality of education over time. The governing body should ensure that it has the knowledge and expertise that it needs to hold the school to account for the quality of pupils' education.

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 found the school to be good in December 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	119479
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10314012
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	36
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Wendy Kelly
Headteacher	Jane Smethurst (acting headteacher)
Website	www.haskayne.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 December 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The acting headteacher took up post in January 2024.
- This is a Church of England primary school in the Diocese of Liverpool. Its most recent section 48 inspection took place in March 2022. The school is awaiting confirmation from the diocese about its next section 48 inspection.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

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. 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 acting headteacher, subject leaders, staff and members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body.
- An inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority and the diocese.

- Inspectors spoke to pupils about their experience of school and their views on behaviour and bullying. Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of evidence, including the school's improvement plans and records of pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took into account 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 carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also spoke to some pupils about their learning in other subjects and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- An inspector observed pupils from Years 1 to 3 reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also spoke to some parents at the beginning of the school day. Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online staff survey. There were no responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils.

Inspection team

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