

Inspection of a good school: Unsworth Primary School

Blackley Close, Unsworth, Bury, Lancashire BL9 8LY

Inspection dates:

13 and 14 March 2023

Outcome

Unsworth Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and safe at Unsworth Primary School. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are supported well by skilled staff. Pupils know that staff care about them.

Many pupils who spoke with the inspector said that they easily make lots of new friends at school. They enjoy being active at playtimes, and know how to keep themselves safe while doing so. Leaders deal with any incidents between pupils, including bullying, thoroughly and well.

Leaders expect pupils to achieve as well as they can. Pupils who attend the specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND (specially resourced provision) benefit from the same ambitious curriculum as their classmates. Pupils, including those with SEND, are well prepared for the demands of key stage 3.

Leaders have equally high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Most pupils focus well on their learning in class. Children in the early years quickly settle into the well-established school routines.

Pupils appreciate the diverse nature of their school community. This helps them to develop positive attitudes towards those who may be different to themselves. Pupils are proud of the responsibilities that they have. They are positive role models. Older pupils especially enjoy supporting younger children.

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

Leaders provide all pupils, including those with SEND, with an ambitious and well-thought-out curriculum. Despite recent changes to leadership, leaders have continued to improve and refine the curriculum that pupils experience. Pupils develop a rich body of knowledge as a result.

In most subjects, leaders have designed a curriculum that organises the knowledge that pupils should learn in a logical order. In these subjects, teachers are clear about which learning to focus on with the pupils in their class. This helps all pupils, including those with SEND, to build up secure knowledge. In these subjects, staff regularly check that pupils can remember what they have learned. Pupils recall their prior learning easily. This makes it easier for them to understand and learn new information.

In a small number of subjects, leaders have not defined as clearly what pupils need to learn in each year group, including in the early years. Consequently, some teachers are not clear about what curriculum content to teach pupils and when this should be taught. This sometimes hinders teachers in designing learning that helps pupils to build on what they have learned in the past. On occasion, some pupils forget some aspects of their learning.

Most subject leaders check that teachers deliver the curriculum well. For example, leaders expect teachers to provide opportunities for pupils to regularly revisit and consolidate previous learning. This helps pupils to overcome difficulties or misunderstandings. However, in a small number of subjects, leaders do not have sufficient expertise to support staff to deliver the curriculum with confidence. This prevents these leaders from having an accurate oversight of the quality of education that pupils receive in these subjects.

Leaders make sure that teachers identify pupils' SEND quickly and accurately. This enables staff to successfully support these pupils to access the full curriculum. Pupils in the specially resourced provision also benefit from well-tailored support, which helps them to learn well.

Staff deliver the phonics programme consistently well. Children in the early years quickly build up their phonic knowledge. Leaders ensure that pupils practise the sounds that they have learned when reading in school or at home. Most pupils develop secure reading knowledge by the time they are in Year 2. Staff quickly identify and support any pupils who need to catch up with their reading knowledge.

Pupils enjoy reading. They use their reading knowledge well to learn new information. Pupils enjoy the high-quality texts that leaders provide. The stories and poems that their teachers share with them inspire pupils to read more widely.

Most pupils have responded well to leaders' new systems for encouraging and supporting them to maintain high standards of behaviour. Leaders have put in place effective strategies to support the small number of pupils whose behaviour sometimes disrupts the learning of others in their class.

Leaders ensure that the curriculum supports pupils' wider development. For example, pupils develop a secure understanding of local history and geography. They also learn about different faiths and cultures in their local community. Pupils learn to listen to, and reflect on, different points of view. They are keen to help others in school and in the wider community. Pupils are well prepared to take their place in a diverse and modern Britain.

Leaders, including governors and trustees, ensure that staff's workload is manageable, and that their well-being is maintained. Staff value this support.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are focused on keeping pupils safe. They have robust safeguarding systems in place. They ensure that all pupils, especially those with more complex SEND, know how to express their worries and ask for help when they need it.

Leaders ensure that staff are well trained to carry out their safeguarding responsibilities effectively. Staff are skilled in noticing when pupils may be at risk of potential harm. They make effective use of leaders' reporting systems to record any concerns that they have about a pupil's welfare. Leaders regularly check these records to make sure that vulnerable pupils receive timely and appropriate support.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including when they are online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of foundation subjects, leaders have not defined the knowledge that they expect pupils to learn in each year group as clearly as they have in other subjects, including in the early years. This sometimes hampers teachers from designing learning that builds on what pupils have already learned. Leaders should ensure that, in these subjects, teachers are clear about the knowledge that pupils should learn and when this content should be taught.
- A few subject leaders are still developing the knowledge and skills required to support teachers to deliver these subject curriculums with confidence. This hinders these leaders from having an accurate oversight of how well pupils are learning in these subjects. Leaders should ensure that these subject leaders are fully equipped to support staff to deliver the curriculum consistently well.

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 predecessor school, Unsworth Primary School, to be good in December 2017.

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	146932
Local authority	Bury
Inspection number	10268533
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	206
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Bernadette Garner
Headteacher	Tahseen Ali
Website	www.unsworth-primary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Unsworth Primary School converted to become an academy school in April 2019. When its predecessor school, Unsworth Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school is part of the Oak Learning Partnership trust.
- Since the school opened as an academy, there have been three headteachers, some of whom, including the headteacher in post at the time of the inspection, have been temporary arrangements.
- A new headteacher has recently been appointed but was not in post at the time of the inspection.
- The school has a specially resourced provision. The specially resourced provision is for 14 pupils, ranging from Reception-age children to pupils in Year 6. Twelve places were allocated at the time of the inspection. Pupils' primary needs in this base include speech, language and communication difficulties and autistic spectrum disorder. Most pupils who attend the specially resourced provision have education, health and care plans.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision for pupils.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector spoke with the headteacher and other leaders in the school. She spoke with a group of governors and trustees.
- The inspector spoke with the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust.
- The inspector looked at a range of documentation relating to safeguarding. This included the school's central record of staff and visitors, staff training records, records of safeguarding and samples of the records kept on individual pupils.
- The inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, science and geography. She spoke with the leaders of these areas of the curriculum. The inspector also visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work, held discussions with teachers and talked with pupils.
- The inspector also considered examples of pupils' work in other areas of the curriculum.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes. She observed pupils' behaviour as they moved around the school. The inspector scrutinised leaders' records of pupils' behaviour.
- The inspector spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school.
- The inspector spoke with parents and carers as they dropped their children off at school. She considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.
- The inspector considered Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Claire Cropper, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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