

Inspection of Bowerham Primary & Nursery School

Bowerham Road, Bowerham, Lancaster, Lancashire LA1 4BS

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 September 2021

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy belonging to the 'Bowerham family'. They said that this makes them feel happy, cared for and safe. Pupils said that bullying does not happen in their school. If it did, they trust the staff to sort it out. Parents and carers also reported that leaders and staff keep their children safe.

Pupils know that staff expect them to behave well. Older pupils set an excellent example to younger pupils. They are extremely sensible and consistently polite. Pupils are welcoming and keen to speak to visitors.

Pupils' personal development is exemplary. They enjoy holding positions of responsibility, such as school councillors, play leaders and learning champions. They are fully involved in making the school the best it can be. For example, pupils helped to redesign the school uniform, which they said is comfortable. This helps pupils to be active throughout the school day.

Pupils, including children in the early years, play happily together. They have lots of fun and make full use of the exciting outdoor space. Pupils also enjoy learning inside their vibrant classrooms. They listen attentively to the staff and to each other. Pupils willingly offer their ideas in discussions and take on board the ideas of others. Their positive attitudes to learning, coupled with leaders' high expectations, help pupils to achieve well.

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

Leaders and staff share a common purpose. They want everyone at Bowerham Primary and Nursery School to thrive academically and personally. Leaders have high ambitions for what pupils should know and understand by the time they leave Year 6. The curriculum plans for all subject areas are very well planned. The important knowledge that leaders want pupils to know and develop is clearly identified and carefully ordered in all subjects.

Leaders know their local area well. They successfully ensure that the curriculum enables pupils to gain a strong sense of their community. Subject leaders keep themselves abreast of local and national initiatives and changes. This means that the curriculum is dynamic and relevant to pupils. It also ensures that leaders are well placed to support teachers with their subject knowledge. Leaders in the early years have designed an exceptionally strong curriculum across all areas of learning.

Comprehensive curriculum plans ensure that teachers know what to teach. Staff are well trained to deliver the curriculum. This includes those teachers who are new to teaching. However, the success with which teachers deliver the curriculum varies across subjects and year groups. At times, pupils' learning lacks sufficient depth because key aspects of the planned curriculum are not covered. While subject leaders check that the curriculum is being delivered, they are not consistently

picking up when important elements of pupils' learning lack sufficient emphasis. As a result, in some subjects and year groups, pupils cannot build on their prior learning and recall what they learned.

Leaders ensure that the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified early. Staff know how to support pupils, including those with SEND to ensure that the curriculum is accessible to all. Teachers check that pupils understand what they have been taught. They provide extra support for those pupils who need it. This stops pupils from falling behind.

Staff immerse children in the early years in a world of stories and books. Adults make story times highly engaging, even for the youngest children. Children start learning about sounds and letters straight away in the Nursery class. By the time they enter their Reception Year, the children are well prepared to learn to read.

Staff are experts in teaching phonics. Pupils practise new sounds by reading books that match the sounds they learn in class. This helps them to develop their reading fluency. Any pupils who fall behind receive support to help them catch up quickly.

Older pupils develop into enthusiastic readers. They can name a range of authors and talk confidently about their favourites. Pupils enjoy reading for pleasure. They say reading 'transports them to another place'. Pupils understand how reading deepens their learning in other subjects, such as history.

Staff are well trained to support pupils to behave well. In all the lessons visited, pupils were too busy with their learning to have any time to misbehave.

Work to develop pupils' personal development is exceptional. Pupils understand the importance of tolerance and mutual respect. They develop a secure understanding of what is right and wrong. Pupils take part in a wide range of activities outside of the school day. They have a strong awareness of how to lead healthy lifestyles. This includes the importance of dental hygiene and regular exercise. Leaders ensure that pupils develop into well-rounded citizens, who are exceptionally well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Staff are extremely proud to work at the school. They appreciate that leaders do all they can to support their well-being and work-life balance. Like the pupils, staff feel a strong sense of belonging to the 'Bowerham family'.

Governors understand their roles and responsibilities. They bring with them a wealth of experience and skills. Governors are kept well informed by the headteacher, other leaders and the pupils. They know the school exceptionally well. Governors challenge and support leaders to provide all pupils with a high-quality education.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders know the pupils and their families very well. They train all staff to spot pupils who may be at risk of harm. Leaders are tenacious in following up any concerns. They ensure that vulnerable pupils, and their families, get the support they need when they need it. For example, leaders share important information with the community safety team in order to keep pupils safe.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, including when they are online. Older pupils understand what makes a healthy relationship. They know that behaviours such as unwanted touch, grooming and cyber-bullying are unacceptable.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects and year groups, leaders have not ensured that the planned curriculum is implemented as well as they intend. This means that some pupils do not know more or remember more of previous learning as a result. Leaders' checks on pupils' learning should focus clearly on whether the intended curriculum is being taught as planned. This will help to ensure that pupils in all subjects and year groups are better prepared for learning in their next phase of education.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	119129
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10200801
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	494
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Joanna Young
Headteacher	Jo Banks
Website	www.bowerham.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 January 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has a nursery which provides for two-year-old children.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- This inspection took place on 21 and 22 September 2021. An additional visit was made to the school on 30 November 2021 to gather additional evidence.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- During the inspection, inspectors spoke with members of the local governing body, a representative from the local authority and the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including the comments submitted via the free-text facility.

Inspectors also considered the responses to the survey for staff and the responses to the pupils' survey.

- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around school, in lessons and at lunchtime.
- Inspectors looked at safeguarding documentation, including the record of required checks carried out on school staff. They spoke with staff to check their understanding of the school's safeguarding procedures. Inspectors also spoke to pupils about safeguarding.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, science, history and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. They observed children and pupils reading to a trusted adult.

Inspection team

Jackie Stillings, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
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Jo Olsson	Her Majesty's Inspector
Mavis Smith	Her Majesty's Inspector
Schelene Ferris	Ofsted Inspector

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