

Inspection of a good school: Bonnygate Primary School

Arisdale Avenue, South Ockendon, Essex RM15 5BA

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 June 2023

Outcome

Bonnygate Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love their school. The 'Bonnygate Way' values of 'ready, respectful, safe' underpin everything. Pupils are eager to learn. There are caring and respectful relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils feel safe.

Leaders have high aspirations for all, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). In lessons, pupils are attentive and work hard. Learning is rarely disrupted. Pupils show good conduct at all times. They are polite, articulate and considerate of each other. The school environment is a calm place to learn.

Pupils understand what bullying is. They say it rarely happens and if it did, adults would sort it quickly. Staff care deeply about pupils. Pupils trust adults and are confident sharing any worries with them.

Pupils have mature and thoughtful attitudes towards topics such as discrimination and equality. They learn about different religions and ways of life. There is a highly inclusive culture across the school. Pupils appreciate their wonderful school environment, saying 'it has something for everyone'. There are areas for active play and others where pupils can be quiet. There are many clubs and activities on offer, some run by pupils. The mental health ambassadors' mindfulness club is very popular.

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

The school curriculum is well sequenced and ambitious, including the early years. Teaching ensures that pupils' knowledge builds step by step. Pupils are eager to learn and progress. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They introduce new learning clearly and are quick to address any misconceptions. This is not consistent in all subjects. Where it is not done well, teachers do not know if pupils have a secure understanding of their learning. In mathematics, for example, some adults do not focus precisely enough on the key things pupils need to remember. They do not ensure that pupils understand important mathematical terms. This can lead to some gaps in pupils' knowledge.

Leaders prioritise pupils learning to read. Staff teach the reading curriculum with expertise. Phonics begins in Nursery for children who are ready. Pupils read books that carefully match the sounds they know. They gain knowledge and skills to become fluent and accurate readers. Anyone at risk of falling behind quickly gets help to keep up. Pupils enjoy reading, visiting the library and listening to their class stories. Awards encourage pupils to read at home. Pupils exchange awards for tokens for the reading vending machines. Pupils can choose books to take home and keep.

In the early years, teachers have a strong understanding about how children learn well. Adults engage closely with children. They listen carefully, encouraging children to think more deeply. Children are attentive, as seen when drawing flowers. A child explained: 'The yellow bits you can see in the middle of the flower stick out and these are the bits the bees feed off.' The early years curriculum ensures that children are well prepared to move to Year 1.

Pupils with SEND have their needs identified accurately by leaders. They plan appropriate teaching and pastoral support to help pupils learn alongside their peers. Teachers understand how to change their plans to ensure that learning meets the needs of pupils with SEND. This helps them achieve well.

Personal development is a strength of the school. Leaders are passionate about expanding horizons for pupils. They aspire for pupils to foster an understanding of the world beyond their local community. Aspirations Week helps pupils to learn about different careers. It inspires ambition in pupils to work hard and aim for appropriate vocational training or university. There are many opportunities for pupils to take on leadership roles. Weekly sessions in the outdoor environment help pupils develop skills of teamwork and manage risk. Pupils learn about the principles of respect and other important information, such as healthy friendships, through assemblies and the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. Pupils talk positively about the importance of acceptance of everyone.

All pupils have individual tablet computers to access learning. They are skilful users of technology. Pupils have responsible attitudes when using personal devices and know how to keep themselves safe when using the internet.

Staff are proud to work at Bonnygate and value being able to work with colleagues across the trust. Leaders, including the trust, consider staff's workload and well-being.

Governors and trustees know the school well. They make regular checks to help them understand the impact of leaders' work. They support and challenge school leaders effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Keeping children safe is a high priority for leaders. A strong culture of safeguarding is evident across the school. There are many layers of checks, which ensure that nothing

gets overlooked. Well-trained staff understand their responsibilities. They are diligent about logging concerns, however small. Leaders know their families well and work hard to develop positive and trusting relationships with them.

Pupils, parents and carers say that school is a very safe place. The curriculum teaches about staying safe when not in school. Pupils know how to report concerns and are confident there is a trusted adult they can talk to who will listen to any worries.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Checks to see if pupils have understood their learning are not consistently in place across the school. Some pupils move on to new learning before they are ready. This leads to gaps in their understanding. Leaders should ensure that all staff are trained in a consistent approach to checking pupils' learning in all subjects and addressing any gaps in pupils' knowledge.

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, Bonnygate Primary School, to be good in May 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	148209
Local authority	Thurrock
Inspection number	10269254
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	451
Appropriate authority	The Osborne Co-operative Multi-Academy Trust
Chair of the Trust	Trisha Jaffe
Headteacher	Laura Spencer
Website	www.bonnygateprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- There is a new headteacher since the previous inspection. The headteacher has been in post since September 2022.
- There is a nursery provision on site which is managed by the school.
- The school runs the before-school club.
- The school joined the Osborne Co-operative Multi-Academy Trust in December 2020.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

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 met with the headteacher, other senior leaders of the school and members of staff. She met with governors and members of the trust, including the chief executive office and the deputy chief executive officer.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and computing to evaluate the quality of education. For each of these, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils, and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector observed some younger pupils read to staff and talked to them about their reading. The inspector also spoke to older pupils about reading.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour and met with groups of pupils to seek their views of the school. They also spoke to pupils informally in class, around the school and during breaktimes.
- To inspect safeguarding, the inspector scrutinised the single central record of recruitment and vetting checks and other safeguarding files. She spoke with leaders, teachers, support staff, members of the trust board, pupils and parents to evaluate the culture of safeguarding in the school.
- The inspector reviewed the 57 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the 24 free-text responses. She took the 209 responses to the pupil survey, and the 49 responses to the staff survey, into account.

Inspection team

Karen Stanton, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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