

Inspection of Emmanuel Holcombe Church of England Primary School

Helmshore Road, Holcombe, Bury, Lancashire BL8 4PA

Inspection dates: 26 and 27 March 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish at this school. They told inspectors that pupils are made to feel welcome and that they quickly make new friends. Pupils were also keen to explain how the school helps them to develop the confidence and resilience that they need to embrace new challenges.

Pupils typically behave well. They play and chat together sociably at breaktimes. Pupils are happy and proud to uphold the school's values. They strive to follow the 'rainbow rules' which help them to behave responsibly and to show respect towards others.

The school ensures that all pupils benefit from the impressive 'Holcombe Offer'. The high-quality activities that pupils experience as part of this offer help them to secure and deepen their learning. Pupils enjoy helping each other through roles such as school councillors, ambassadors, faith leaders or 'buddies' to children in the early years. Pupils also take part in a wide range of local events, such as celebrations at their parish church or competitions with other schools.

The school has high expectations for the achievement of all pupils. It ensures that disadvantaged pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), overcome any additional challenges that they may face. Pupils typically achieve well across the curriculum.

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

Since the previous inspection, the school has clarified what it expects pupils to know in most subjects as they progress from the Nursery Year to Year 6. Teachers focus on the most important information that pupils need to learn in these subjects. Pupils recall with ease much of the key knowledge that the curriculum defines. This makes it easier for them to absorb new information quickly.

The school ensures that teachers use the most effective strategies to secure pupils' learning. Teachers regularly revisit topics that pupils have studied previously. This helps pupils to build on what they already know. Teachers address pupils' misconceptions or gaps that they have in their knowledge quickly and well. This is particularly true in reading. In this way, teachers make sure that pupils are well prepared for their next stages of education.

The impact of improvements to the design and delivery of the school's curriculum on pupils' achievement is tangible. For example, the high proportion of Year 6 pupils who met the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics in 2023 illustrates how well pupils succeed in these subjects. Moreover, pupils' current achievement in most other subjects paints a similar positive picture. By the end of Year 6, in most subjects, pupils are ready for the challenges of the key stage 3 curriculum.

In a small number of subjects, the curriculum does not make clear what pupils need to remember or the order that learning needs to occur. In these subjects, some pupils' learning is less secure. At times, they do not learn all that they need to. As a result, these pupils have gaps in their knowledge that could hinder their learning when they transfer to their chosen secondary school.

Pupils' achievement in reading is a strength of the school. The school has fully embedded the ambitious and well organised reading curriculum that was very new at the time of the last inspection. Pupils enjoy reading and being read to. This begins in the Nursery Year where children respond with enthusiasm to the stories, songs and rhymes that adults share with them.

Staff deliver the school's phonics programme to a consistently high standard. Children develop a secure understanding of how to use phonics to read words accurately in the Reception Year. Pupils successfully build on this as they progress into key stage 1. They benefit from frequent opportunities to practice and strengthen their reading knowledge through exploring a wide range of high-quality literature. Pupils become accomplished and confident readers. They read with fluency and accuracy which helps them to access the rest of the curriculum successfully.

The school is adept at identifying the additional needs of pupils with SEND. This enables teachers to provide effective and timely support for pupils when they need it. Pupils with SEND achieve well as a result.

Pupils' attitudes to school make a positive contribution to their achievement. Most pupils attend well. The school provides effective support to pupils when their attendance falls below the school's expectations. Lesson time is rarely disturbed because pupils are well motivated and they focus intently on their learning.

The school places a high priority on pupils' personal development. The carefully thought-out activities that it provides prepare pupils extremely well for later life. Pupils particularly value the support that they receive to keep fit and healthy, including in their mental well-being. The high focus and effectiveness of the support that they receive from the school in this aspect is exceptional.

The school is mindful of staff's workload when making any improvements to the quality of education that pupils receive. Relationships between the school, staff and pupils are strong. Governors are well informed about the work of the school and they provide effective support and challenge.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, the school has not ensured that the curriculum clearly defines the essential knowledge that teachers should focus on with their class. In these subjects, some pupils are not able to recall important information that they need to be well prepared for their next stage of learning. The school should ensure that, in these remaining subjects, teachers are clear about the essential knowledge that pupils should learn in readiness for subsequent learning.

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	105338
Local authority	Bury
Inspection number	10294221
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	107
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jo Venn
Headteacher (acting)	Amy Longstaff
Website	www.emmanuelholcombeprimaryschool.com
Date of previous inspection	9 November 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new chair of governors has been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision for pupils.
- The school operates a before- and after-school club for pupils.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Manchester. It was last inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in November 2018. The school is awaiting confirmation from the diocese about its next section 48 inspection.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's educational provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other leaders in the school. An inspector also spoke with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- An inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority. She also spoke with a representative of the diocese.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of 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.
- An inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. They spoke with the leaders of these areas of the curriculum. They also visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' work, held discussions with teachers and talked with pupils.
- Inspectors also spoke with pupils about their learning in other subjects.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They observed pupils' behaviour as they moved around the school. An inspector also scrutinised leaders' records of pupils' behaviour.
- An inspector visited the school's breakfast club.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school.
- An inspector spoke with parents and carers as they brought their children to school.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. They also considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and for pupils.

Inspection team

Claire Cropper, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sarah Midgley

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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