

Inspection of Bankfields Primary School

Mansfield Road, Eston, Middlesbrough TS6 0RZ

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 January 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at Bankfields Primary School. The relationships between pupils and teachers are respectful. Pupils described their teachers as kind and fair. Pupils benefit from a highly ambitious curriculum. Leaders have made reading a high priority. As a result, most pupils quickly become confident and fluent readers.

Pupils have a clear understanding of what bullying is. They said that incidents of bullying are incredibly rare. This view is supported by leaders' behaviour records and inspectors' observations. Pupils said that when they fall out, teachers listen carefully to them. Pupils use worry boxes to raise any concerns that they have. Teachers ensure that these are checked regularly.

All staff have high and consistent expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils who find managing their emotions more difficult get the support they need. Highly trained staff help pupils to manage their anxieties. 'Mindfulness Mondays' help all pupils to settle back into school routines after the weekend. Pupils said that the activities they do make them more relaxed and more able to concentrate on their work. Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. As a result, classrooms are purposeful and productive places.

Pupils are given a wide range of responsibilities. Jobs such as prefects, sports leaders and school councillors mean that pupils make a purposeful contribution to the life of the school.

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

Leaders are highly ambitious for all pupils. Supported by the trust, leaders have created a curriculum which raises pupils' aspirations and gives them memorable life experiences. The trust provides opportunities for teachers and leaders to share strong practice and ideas. All staff are proud to work at Bankfields. They said that leaders consider workload and help them to manage it. While visits to the school have been hindered due to COVID-19, trustees and governors know the school well. They provide appropriate challenge for leaders.

Leaders' chosen phonics programme is new. Although training for staff was provided some time ago, COVID-19 has delayed its implementation. Staff have the skills and knowledge they need in order to teach phonics accurately. Teachers assess pupils' phonic knowledge regularly. The books that pupils read are matched to the sounds that they are taught. Small changes to the way that pupils' phonic knowledge is checked will improve the match of books further. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) benefit from small-group work and one-to-one reading with an adult. Older pupils said that they enjoy reading. Reading corners in classrooms, stickers and prizes encourage pupils to read regularly.

The mathematics curriculum is well organised and is a strength of the school. Teachers present mathematical knowledge to pupils in a logical way that builds on their previous learning. This helps pupils to remember what they have been taught. As a result, pupils make good progress and are confident mathematicians. Pupils with SEND access work that is accurately matched to their needs. Extra adult support helps explain mathematical concepts to pupils in different ways. Where appropriate, pupils with SEND are introduced to mathematical ideas before the lesson starts. This pre-teaching means that they start the lesson confidently, and with the knowledge they need in order to access the same, ambitious curriculum as everyone else.

In subjects such as computing and science, leaders have carefully considered the order in which learning is introduced to pupils. Here, the learning is well sequenced. Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They present new ideas to pupils in a logical and considered way. As a result, pupils can talk in detail about their learning in these subjects.

Leaders have introduced very ambitious 'key concepts' in subjects such as history. These provide challenging ideas for pupils to explore. However, pupils do not have the prior knowledge they need in order to tackle these difficult concepts. The history curriculum has not taken account of learning that pupils have lost through the COVID-19 pandemic. This means that their learning is muddled. Leaders are in the process of changing the way in which pupils' learning is assessed. In some subjects, such as computing, assessments are not accurate enough. The ambitious changes that leaders have made to the curriculum are not reflected in the checks that teachers are making. Teachers do not have the full picture of pupils' skills and knowledge in some subjects.

Children in the early years learn in an engaging and well-organised environment. Adults are well trained. They ask children challenging questions that get them thinking. A curriculum that is planned around books means that children are being taught new and exciting language. Children who were drawing a tiger in the jungle used the word 'camouflage' and knew what it meant. Daily reading and mathematics lessons teach children the important skills they need. Leaders plan plenty of opportunities for children to practise their newly learned skills while they play. Inspectors saw children writing shopping lists using their phonics and buying pretend fish and chips using coins.

Pupils have a secure understanding of British values, such as democracy and respect. They enact these values in the way they treat one another. This is because leaders' personal, social, health and economic education curriculum is carefully planned. Leaders have prioritised pupils' physical and mental health. Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of healthy relationships. Pupils are encouraged to stay active during the school day by taking part in a daily run. A range of extra-curricular clubs encourage pupils to stay active. Leaders work with local organisations to teach pupils the importance of finances and budgeting.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that all staff have received mandatory training. Leaders provide regular safeguarding updates, so that the procedures for reporting concerns are well known. All staff know the risks their pupils face. Leaders have the skills to identify when a pupil needs additional help. They work with a range of agencies to put in place the support that pupils need.

Visitors, such as the police and charities, teach children important messages about how to stay safe outside of school. The computing curriculum ensures that pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe online.

Inspectors identified minor defects in some safeguarding processes. These were addressed during the inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The knowledge and skills that leaders want pupils to learn in some wider curriculum subjects, such as history, are not clearly sequenced. Some of the content is too ambitious, and pupils do not have the prior knowledge they need in order to understand these challenging concepts. As a result, pupils are not remembering what they have been taught. Leaders need to ensure that pupils' learning in the wider curriculum is well sequenced, so that the key concepts they want pupils to remember build on what has been taught before. Leaders have already started to revise their curriculum plans. For this reason, transition statements have been applied.
- In some wider curriculum subjects, the assessment of pupils' learning is not sharp enough. Leaders have started to refine their approach to the assessment of wider curriculum subjects. However, recent changes to the curriculum mean that assessments do not match the curriculum content that pupils have been taught. This means that gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills are not being consistently identified. Leaders should improve their approach to assessment, so that pupils' skills and knowledge in all curriculum areas are checked accurately.

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	147392
Local authority	Redcar and Cleveland
Inspection number	10200721
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	309
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jane Powell
Headteacher	Patricia Petrie
Website	http://bankfieldsprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school joined Steel River Academy Trust in September 2019.
- At the time of the inspection, the headteacher was also the senior executive leader for the Steel River Academy Trust.
- The proportion of pupils in receipt of additional funding through the pupil premium grant is higher than national averages.
- At the time of the inspection, the school was making use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and the head of school. Inspectors also met with the special educational needs coordinator, and carried out joint lesson visits.

- Inspectors conducted deep dives in reading, mathematics, history, science and computing. Inspectors met with curriculum leaders, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and talked to pupils and teachers. Leaders were involved throughout the deep-dive activities.
- Inspectors also reviewed wider curriculum plans in art and geography.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read to a familiar adult, and visited reading and phonics lessons in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2.
- Inspectors spoke with a selection of parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors spoke with representatives from the board of trustees, including the chair of trustees and one of the senior executive leaders.
- Inspectors met with representatives of the local governing body, including the chair of governors.
- Inspectors reviewed the seven responses that were received through the Ofsted online questionnaire Parent View, which included six free-text responses. Inspectors considered the 22 responses that were received through Ofsted's staff questionnaire. Inspectors also considered the 36 responses received through the pupil survey.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour throughout the school day, including during lesson visits, and at breaktimes and lunchtimes. Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils about their views on behaviour and the wider curriculum opportunities they receive.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's safeguarding documentation and behaviour and attendance information.
- An inspector spoke to the alternative provider used by the school.

Inspection team

Chris Pearce, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Dom Brown

Ofsted Inspector

Amy Keith

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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