

Inspection of Bolton School Infant & Nursery School

Chorley New Road, Bolton, Greater Manchester BL1 4PA

Inspection dates: 10 to 12 October 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Does the school meet the independent school standards? **Yes**

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a friendly and nurturing school. When pupils, and children in the early years, join the school, staff help them to settle in quickly and make new friends. Warm and caring relationships exist between pupils and staff. Pupils conduct themselves well in lessons and around school. As a result, pupils feel happy and safe in school.

The school has high expectations for pupils' achievement, including for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Children in the Nursery and Reception classes are curious and enthusiastic learners. They learn and play joyfully together. Pupils in key stage 1 have positive attitudes to their learning. They listen carefully to their teachers and try hard to complete the work set for them. Across the school, pupils achieve well.

Pupils enjoy a broad range of opportunities and experiences that enrich the curriculum. This includes visiting the local care home, where pupils enjoy gardening with the residents. Pupils also enjoy learning outdoors in the woodland area. Pupils develop their talents and interests through additional activities such as yoga and jujitsu.

When pupils leave the school at the end of Year 2, they are well prepared for their next steps in education.

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

In the early years and key stage 1, pupils get a positive start to their school life. There is a sharp focus on the development of children's communication and language skills in the early years. This stands children in good stead as they move into and through key stage 1.

The school is in the process of improving the curriculum offer. This means that some subject curriculums are more developed than others. Where curriculums are further developed, teachers ensure that pupils access appropriate and well-considered learning. This is because the school has clearly and precisely identified the knowledge and skills that pupils should learn. Teachers assess pupils' learning with precision in these curriculums. This information helps teachers to successfully consider and shape future learning. Pupils are achieving increasingly well in these areas.

In a few subject curriculums, the school has not sufficiently thought about what pupils should be learning and when this content should be taught. Staff are not always aware of gaps that this might create for pupils in their learning. In these areas, some pupils do not progress through the curriculum as well as they should.

The school prioritises reading right from the start. Staff have received relevant and comprehensive training to deliver the phonics programme consistently well. Pupils have regular opportunities to read books that are well matched to the sounds that

they have learned. Pupils who require additional support receive appropriate and timely intervention. This means that pupils learn to read with fluency. The school invites parents and carers to several meetings and events so that they can learn more about the phonics curriculum. This means parents can support their child's reading better at home.

There is a strong focus on fostering pupils' love of reading. In the early years, children enjoy listening to the stories and poems that adults read to them. They join in enthusiastically with songs and rhymes. Pupils in key stage 1 enjoy listening to, and interacting with, the adults who read or sing to them. Pupils read widely and enjoy using the well-resourced school library.

The school has clear processes for identifying the additional needs of pupils with SEND. Staff use information about pupils' individual needs well to make appropriate adaptations to lesson activities. This enables these pupils to access the curriculum alongside their peers.

The school is a calm place to learn. Pupils are focused and hard-working in lessons. Playtimes and lunchtimes are cheerful. Throughout the school, there are positive and courteous relationships between staff and pupils.

The school promotes pupils' wider personal development well. Pupils learn about the wealth of cultures and beliefs in modern Britain. They understand the importance of respect for other people, regardless of differences. The school enhances pupils' learning by inviting visitors to the school and by organising activities which celebrate different cultures such as Chinese New Year. Pupils are encouraged to support local charities. During the inspection, the pupils collected food as part of a harvest celebration and donated this to a local food bank. Pupils spoke to inspectors about the importance of helping people in need.

The proprietor body has the relevant experience and expertise to carry out its role effectively. It offers suitable challenge and support to ensure that leaders run the school successfully. Leaders, including the proprietor body and governors, understand what is working well and what could be improved. This helps them to prioritise their work appropriately.

The proprietor body ensures that the school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the statutory requirements of the early years foundation stage. It has ensured that the school meets all the independent school standards (the standards) consistently.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and proprietor)

- In a few subjects, leaders have not finalised their curriculum thinking. This means that teachers are sometimes unclear as to the essential knowledge and skills that pupils should know. The school must ensure that the curriculum in these subjects precisely identifies the important knowledge that pupils need to learn and the order in which they need to learn it.
- Some teachers do not identify with accuracy where pupils need to revisit previous learning. As a result, some pupils develop gaps in their learning without teachers knowing. This makes it difficult for teachers to address these gaps. The school should ensure that a consistent approach to assessment supports the swift identification of gaps in pupils' learning so that they can be addressed.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	149361
DfE registration number	350/6013
Local authority	Bolton
Inspection number	10286509
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent day school
Age range of pupils	0 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	290
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Bolton School
Chair	Ian Riley
Headteacher	Philip Britton
Annual fees (day pupils)	£10,986
Telephone number	01204 840201
Website	www.boltonschool.org/
Email address	pjb@boltonschool.org

Information about this school

- This was the school's first standard inspection. The school was registered with the Department for Education (DfE) in December 2022.
- The school is located in premises at Chorley New Road, Bolton, Greater Manchester, BL1 4PA.
- This school is registered by the DfE to admit pupils aged 0 to 7 years. There are currently 32 children on roll aged 0 to 2 years. There are 258 children aged 2 to 7 years. Inspectors did not inspect the provision for children aged 0 to 2 years during this inspection.
- School leaders do not use alternative provision.
- There are no pupils with an education, health and care plan.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- 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 spoke with the headteacher, the chair of the proprietor body and a range of staff.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentation. This included information relating to the standards, the school's curriculum and leaders' improvement priorities.
- 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.
- The lead inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. Inspectors also spoke with some parents and carers to gather their views.
- The lead inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online staff survey.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their learning and experiences at school.

- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. An inspector observed pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector made a tour of the school premises.

Inspection team

Rebecca Sharples, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Louise McArdle

His Majesty's Inspector

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