

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Mellor St Mary Church of England Primary School

Brundhurst Fold, Mellor, Blackburn, Lancashire BB2 7JT

Inspection date: 25 March 2025

Outcome

Evidence gathered during this ungraded (section 8) inspection suggests that the school's work may have improved significantly across all areas since the previous inspection. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a warm, welcoming and caring school. Pupils at the school flourish. The school sets high expectations for pupils' achievements. Pupils, including children in the early years, have highly positive attitudes to their learning. They take pride in their work and achieve well. Pupils are enthused by their lessons. The school ensures that it lives up to its mission that pupils have the opportunity to 'believe, share and learn together'.

Pupils behave exceptionally well. There is a calm, respectful and purposeful atmosphere throughout the school. As a result, pupils can learn in a distraction-free environment. Pupils openly offer support and help to their fellow peers. They respond positively to staff requests and direction. Pupils are happy and safe at the school. They are aware of who they can talk to if they have a concern.

All pupils enjoy an extensive range of extra-curricular activities. These opportunities help develop the interests and talents of pupils. For example, pupils take part in a wide number of sporting and creative clubs.

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

The school has established an ambitious and well-structured curriculum for all pupils. This allows pupils to build on their existing knowledge and skills, starting from their experiences in the early years. Teachers' subject knowledge is very strong. This helps them to deliver the curriculum effectively. Their knowledgeable choice of learning activities enables pupils to become resilient and confident learners. They have a detailed

understanding of pupils' needs. Teachers adapt learning activities well so that regardless of pupils' differing needs, each pupil has the support that they need to learn alongside their classmates. This helps all pupils in the school achieve well across the curriculum.

The school prioritises reading. Pupils benefit from a carefully considered range of reading resources that promotes a love of reading. Older pupils talk enthusiastically about reading and the opportunity to become an author, for example in writing their own content for the newsletter.

Children in the early years start to learn phonics as soon as they enter the school. They read books that are closely matched to their knowledge of phonics. Children and pupils benefit from their immersion in a language-rich setting across the school. Teachers' regular checks ensure that those who struggle are identified quickly and receive effective support. As a result, pupils read confidently and fluently by the time they leave Year 1.

The school ensures that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified early. Parents and carers recognise the additional lengths to which the school goes to ensure that pupils' needs are met, and families can access the support they need. This allows the opportunity for pupils with SEND to achieve exceptionally well alongside their peers.

Pupils' behaviour in class and around the school is exceptional. This results in their ability to learn in a calm and orderly atmosphere. Children in the early years quickly develop their awareness of routines and the school's high expectations for behaviour. This prepares them well for the next stage of their learning. Pupils are polite, respectful and welcoming. They respond well to the opportunity to play an active role in helping peers. For example, all older pupils act as 'buddies' to younger children, supporting and guiding them in and out of the school. They value this role and recall how it was influential to themselves when they started at the school. Pupils value their time in school, and this is reflected strongly in their attendance.

The school has developed opportunities for the wider development of pupils. These have allowed pupils to take on a range of responsibilities across the school. For example, older pupils support lunchtime activities with younger children from the early years. The school has provided a range of school council groups, which directly influence activities in the school and the wider community. One example is 'PALS', where older pupils have arranged social events for elderly people in the community who live alone.

The school has fostered a very strong improvement culture among staff. Staff appreciate the opportunities to train and the support given to manage workloads. The school's stated aim to provide a 'flourishing' setting for all is a strongly held belief. The school lives up to this ideal.

The governing body knows the school very well. Governors ensure challenge and support in equal measure. They have an informed and knowledgeable understanding of the school's quality of education that pupils receive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in December 2014.

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	119424
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10348176
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	138
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Philip Skupski
Headteacher	Joanne Embley-Peers
Website	www.mellor.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 March 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school is a voluntary-aided Church of England school and last received a section 48 inspection for schools of a religious character in February 2020. The next scheduled inspection is due to take place in February 2027.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- 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 met with members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body.
- The lead inspector spoke with a representative of the diocese.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered the responses to the Ofsted surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Iain Sim, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Paul Edmondson

Ofsted Inspector

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