

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Chowbent Primary School

Laburnum Street, Atherton, Manchester M46 9FP

Inspection dates:

29 and 30 April 2025

Outcome

Chowbent Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to attend this nurturing school. They enjoy its happy atmosphere, which is calm and purposeful but not regimented. They benefit from strong academic and pastoral care. From the Reception Year, they know that they are expected to behave well, and they do.

Pupils are aware that staff require them to work hard and reach their full academic potential. They take pride in their work, sharing their accomplishments and celebrating those of their peers. Most pupils achieve well in most subjects and are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Pupils take advantage of the opportunities which the school offers them to develop their talents and interests. They continue Chowbent's proud tradition of choral singing in school and in the wider community. Older pupils learn to play a range of musical instruments. Pupils participate in a variety of sports, including cricket and outdoor adventure. They have fun and widen friendships during the school's residential visits. These help them to learn skills such as working in teams and being resilient and independent.

Pupils support local charities and take part in 'litter picks'. They respect and take an interest in people who are different from themselves, including in religion and culture.

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

During times of change for the school, strong leadership has ensured stability and continuity of provision for pupils' academic and wider development. Since the previous inspection, the school has very effectively addressed the identified areas for improvement.

The school's curriculum, including for English and mathematics, is ambitious. For each subject it clearly sets out essential learning. Starting from the early years, pupils build their understanding, skills and knowledge over time. There are well-considered links between subjects. For example, when pupils are learning about Greece in both history and geography, their design and technology project is to make Greek sandals. Teachers frequently revisit what pupils have learned previously. Pupils remember and explain their prior learning very well.

Strong subject leadership, including support and monitoring, contributes to teachers implementing the curriculum in the way that the school expects. Teachers have good knowledge of the subjects that they teach. They present information clearly and give pupils well-devised opportunities to practise what they have learned. The school regularly checks what pupils know and remember. Teachers use this information well to adapt future teaching.

Staff who teach early reading are skilled. Children begin their reading journey in the Reception Year and are well prepared to make a flying start in Year 1. The school checks regularly how well pupils read. It provides effective support for struggling readers. Most pupils learn to read accurately and fluently by the end of year 2.

The school encourages pupils to read for pleasure. Pupils read frequently in school and at home. They talk excitedly about their favourite authors.

The school quickly identifies the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This enables staff to give them the help that they need to follow the same ambitious curriculum as their peers and achieve well.

The school is peaceful and orderly, in lessons and at social times. There is an atmosphere of mutual respect. Skilled staff help those pupils with specific emotional or behavioural needs so that they can successfully learn alongside their classmates. From the Reception Year, children learn skills such as listening to adults and following instructions. This positive behaviour continues throughout the school. However, sometimes a small number of pupils lose concentration and do not pay attention to important teacher explanations and instructions. At times, teachers do not notice this and do not check that the whole class has understood. On these occasions, some pupils waste valuable learning time and do not achieve as well as they could.

The school promotes pupils' broader development effectively. This begins in the early years when, for example, children learn about protecting nature. Chowbent's comprehensive programme for personal, social, health and economic education gives pupils an awareness of matters such as healthy relationships and being good citizens. A programme of regular events linked to the curriculum, including visits to museums and galleries, enhances pupils' cultural development.

Staff enjoy working at this school and are proud to do so. They know that, before changes are made in the school, the impact on their workload and well-being is considered.

The school's governors bring valuable experience to their roles. They make sure that they know the school well and use this information to inform decisions. They contribute strongly to the continued development of the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, teachers do not check if all pupils are concentrating and have understood the main teaching points. Where this happens, some pupils waste important learning time. The school should make certain that its well-established teaching sequence includes ensuring that pupils focus on their work, do not lose valuable learning time and achieve as well as they should.

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 May 2015.

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	106443
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	10366728
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	145
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Susan Heapy
Headteacher	James Randle
Website	www.chowbent.wigan.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	11 and 12 December 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use alternative provision for any pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation of the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the school's first routine inspection since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and took that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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 of safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work.

- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher, other members of the leadership team and the leaders for SEND.
- The inspector had a discussion with governors, including the chair of governors.
- The inspector held discussions with two representatives of the local authority.
- The inspector had discussions with groups of pupils about their experience of school. She observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at social times.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted Parent View and Ofsted's online staff and pupil surveys. She spoke to a cross-section of staff about their experience of working in the school, including their views about workload and their well-being.

Inspection team

Liz Kelly, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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