

# Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Coppice Primary Academy

Burlington Avenue, Coppice, Oldham, Greater Manchester OL8 1AP

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Inspection dates:

12 and 13 November 2024

## Outcome

Coppice Primary Academy has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The head of this school is Andrew Hulmes. This school is part of Focus Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Helen Rowland, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Paul Spencer. There is also an executive principal, John Taylor, who is responsible for this school and one other.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Coppice Primary Academy are true advocates for the positive work that the school carries out. They speak enthusiastically about the warm relationships that are woven through the school's close-knit community. Pupils delight in their education and relish learning new information. They experience a true sense of happiness, fulfilment and friendship through their life at school.

Pupils are caring and cooperative towards each other. Head pupils, easily recognisable in their red sweaters or cardigans, act as positive role models for others, including children in the early years. Children quickly learn to follow school rules and routines. This makes for a calm, orderly environment, which is purposeful and focused on learning.

The school is ambitious for pupils' learning across the curriculum. In the main, pupils achieve well, with many being ready for the next stage in their education. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

The school offers pupils a wide range of opportunities to develop their talents and interests. Pupils of all ages can attend activities such as origami, cookery and sports clubs. Pupils are encouraged to take on leadership responsibilities, such as sports leaders, eco-warriors or school councillors.

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

The school has mapped out a clear and ambitious curriculum that starts in the Nursery Year and finishes at the end of Year 6. Pupils learn subject-specific information, including vocabulary, in depth. This helps them to build up a secure body of knowledge over time. Staff routinely check that pupils can remember and apply important information. They address most misconceptions effectively, so that pupils do not carry gaps in their knowledge. As a result, many pupils learn well.

The school's published provisional data for writing in 2024 showed that some pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 was significantly below the national average. The school's previous methods to develop pupils' handwriting, and for older pupils to develop their spelling knowledge, were disjointed. With the support of the trust, the school has prioritised action to bring about improvement. It has introduced a more consistent approach to help older pupils practise spelling patterns. The school has also identified specific development opportunities to enhance staff's subject knowledge and understanding. However, the school has not gone far enough in identifying the key foundational knowledge that pupils should learn and how this should be consistently delivered. This means that staff are sometimes unclear about what they should teach to help pupils become fluent and competent writers.

Reading is a high priority in the school. Children in the Nursery Year start learning the skills that they will need to help them learn the phonics code. Children in the Reception Year then get off to a secure start in learning to read. Any pupils who do not keep up with the pace of the phonics programme are spotted in a timely manner and given additional support to help them to catch up. Most pupils become fluent and confident readers by the end of Year 2.

Pupils with SEND benefit from being involved in the full life of the school. The school uses appropriate strategies to quickly identify pupils' areas of need. Trained staff provide a wealth of support for pupils, both academically and emotionally.

Pupils are extremely proud of their school. They endeavour to live up to the school's rules. Pupils are inherently respectful and sensible. They converse confidently and articulately with staff, visitors and each other.

The school's work to support the families of pupils who do not attend school regularly has had some impact. However, too many pupils still have significant periods of absence that affect both their academic and social development.

The school's provision for pupils' personal development is broad and rich. The school has thought carefully about how to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain. This thinking includes pupils benefiting from learning a variety of skills, such as first aid. Older pupils enhance their understanding of democracy through a visit to London. Pupils study important global issues and current affairs. The school offers pupils further experiences, such as visiting a nearby secondary school to take part in competitions.

Members of the trust and the local governing body are highly analytical. This enables them to provide effective challenge and support to drive the school forward. They ensure that areas for development are quickly and successfully addressed while being mindful of staff's workload and well-being. Trust leaders and governors place a sharp focus on maximising the benefits of pupils' time at 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)**

- Some pupils have not been given sufficient guidance about correct letter formation or spelling. This leads to a lack of automaticity in their writing and impedes their ability to become effective writers. The school should further refine its identification of the foundational knowledge that pupils learn in writing, including in the early years. Furthermore, it should develop staff expertise to deliver the practice of handwriting and spelling consistently and effectively.
- Absence rates, including persistent absence, for some pupils remain too high. This means that these pupils miss out on important learning and social opportunities. The school should strengthen the effectiveness of its approaches and the work that it carries out to support families to improve levels of attendance.

## **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 April 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

|                                            |                                                                                      |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 139704                                                                               |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Oldham                                                                               |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10348288                                                                             |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary                                                                              |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Academy sponsor-led                                                                  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 3 to 11                                                                              |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                                                                                |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 537                                                                                  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | Board of trustees                                                                    |
| <b>Chair of trust</b>                      | Paul Spencer                                                                         |
| <b>CEO of the trust</b>                    | Helen Rowland                                                                        |
| <b>Executive Principal</b>                 | John Taylor                                                                          |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Andrew Hulmes                                                                        |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.coppiceprimaryacademy.co.uk">www.coppiceprimaryacademy.co.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | 1 May 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005                                |

## Information about this school

- This school is part of Focus Trust.
- The school runs an on-site breakfast club.
- The school does not use any alternative provision for pupils.

## 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.

- The inspector held meetings with the CEO, director of education for the trust, executive principal and the head of school. She spoke with the assistant headteachers, staff and pupils.
- The inspector spoke with members of the board of trustees, including the chair of trustees and members of the local governing board, including the chair of governors. She also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector observed some pupils from Years 1 to 3 read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- 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 around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector met with leaders who are responsible for attendance, behaviour and pupils' personal development. She observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, break times and around the school.
- The inspector looked at a range of policies and documentation relating to pupils' welfare and education.
- The inspector spoke with staff about their workload and well-being. She also took account of the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. She also spoke with some parents during the inspection.
- No pupils completed Ofsted's online survey.

## **Inspection team**

Sheena Clark

His Majesty's Inspector

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