

# Inspection of Ribblesdale School

Queens Road, Clitheroe, Lancashire BB7 1EJ

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Inspection dates:	1 and 2 July 2025
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

The school has high aspirations for all pupils, including children in the early years. Children and pupils enjoy coming to school. They learn about the 'Ribblesdale way' which supports their positive behaviour and conduct. Staff foster positive relationships with pupils. Pupils are respectful, and open doors for staff and visitors. The vast majority of pupils are polite and want to learn. They achieve well across a wide range of subjects in the primary and secondary phases of the school.

Pupils have access to a rich set of experiences that promote their personal development. Enrichment workshops cultivate pupils' imagination and creativity. Pupils enjoy participating in a plethora of activities, including chess, forensic science, geometric art, astronomy, calligraphy, volleyball, the repair shop and festival fashion. Activities, including the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and sports, such as biking, golf, skiing, swimming, tennis and running, help to promote pupils' confidence and well-being.

Pupils give generously of their time to the local community. They raise money for charities and local organisations. Pupils value the opportunity to take leadership roles as reading ambassadors, sports leaders, well-being ambassadors and as members of the eco committee. Pupils develop an understanding of the wider world through a range of educational visits both in the United Kingdom and abroad.

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

The school has developed an ambitious curriculum, with a wide range of subjects across the primary and secondary phases of the school. Subject curriculums from the early years upwards are well designed. The school has clearly set out the knowledge that pupils will learn in a logical order. This helps children in the early years, and pupils across the school, to build their understanding. The school identifies quickly the additional needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). It provides support which is mainly appropriate for these pupils.

In 2024, Year 11 pupils did not achieve as well as other pupils nationally in a small number of subjects. This was due to previous weaknesses in how these curriculums were designed and delivered. The school has improved the design and teaching of these curriculums so that pupils are learning more securely than in the past.

Staff appreciate access to a range of training. In the main, they deliver the curriculum well. Staff use their secure subject knowledge to present and explain information clearly to pupils. However, occasionally, some activities that some staff design do not help to build pupils' understanding sufficiently well. Consequently, some pupils, including some pupils with SEND, do not learn as well as they could.

Staff regularly use checks on learning to find out what pupils know and typically support pupils well to fill any gaps in their knowledge. However, sometimes, some staff do not address the gaps in pupils' knowledge well enough. Consequently, some pupils move on to new learning too quickly.

Reading is a high priority. Children start to learn phonics as soon as they start in the early years. They enjoy listening to stories and singing songs. Children are well supported to develop their language and communication skills. Pupils read books that are matched closely to the phonics that they know. Weaker readers across the school receive appropriate support from skilled staff. This is helping them to catch up with their reading knowledge. The school promotes pupils' love of reading very well. Consequently, many pupils enjoy reading for pleasure.

Classrooms are calm and orderly. Pupils are supported well to improve their behaviour. The school has effective processes in place to monitor attendance. It uses this information to put in place appropriate support to help pupils improve their attendance. All this means that pupils' attendance is improving over time and many pupils attend well.

The school promotes pupils' personal development extremely well. Pupils learn about topics such as domestic violence, misogyny and how to keep themselves mentally and physically healthy in a relationship. They find out what it means to be a good citizen and learn about the protected characteristics. Pupils typically have a secure understanding and respect of other people's beliefs and values. This promotes tolerance and respect for others. Pupils sensibly debate and evaluate moral and ethical issues.

There is a comprehensive programme for careers advice and guidance. Pupils benefit from work experience and mock interviews. All pupils move on to further education, employment or training, which is a testament to the support that they receive in school.

Staff enjoy working at the school. They appreciate the steps that it takes to look after their well-being and workload. Governors support the school effectively, particularly with the recent development of the primary school. They, together with school leaders and staff, have helped to improve the quality of the education that pupils receive.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- At times, some staff choose activities that do not help pupils to learn subject content sufficiently well. As a result, some pupils, including some pupils with SEND, do not achieve as well as they could in certain areas of the curriculum. The school should ensure that staff continue to receive support to design effective learning activities. This will help pupils to deepen their understanding and retain their knowledge.
- At times, some of the checks on pupils' learning are not as effective as they could be. Consequently, gaps and misconceptions in some pupils' knowledge are not identified or addressed promptly. This means that some pupils move on to new learning before they are ready. The school should strengthen the expertise of some staff in identifying and

addressing pupils' errors and misconceptions. This will help ensure that pupils build their knowledge securely over time.

## 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>	119716
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10377980
<b>Type of school</b>	All-through
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,413
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Bernadette Matterson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Anne-Marie Horrocks
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.ribblesdale.org">www.ribblesdale.org</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	11 and 12 February 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school opened a primary school building in 2023. It is designed to house pupils from Reception to Year 6. Currently there are children in Reception class and Year 1 only. The primary school building is situated at Higher Standen Drive, Clitheroe BB7 1FT. This is approximately one mile from the secondary school building.
- A new headteacher was appointed in 2020. In addition, there have recently been other changes in leadership and staffing linked to the development of the primary school and growth of the secondary school. This includes the appointment of a primary school leader and other leaders across the school. In addition, there have been some changes in the membership of the governing body, including the appointment of a new chair.
- The secondary school uses four registered alternative providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The primary school provides a breakfast club for pupils.

## Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This is 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 spoke with the headteacher, primary phase leader, other senior leaders and members of staff.
- The lead inspector spoke with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. He also spoke with two representatives from the local authority. An inspector spoke with representatives of alternative providers that the school uses.
- Inspectors conducted visits to both of the school's sites.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their experiences in school and their views on behaviour and bullying. They also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and around school.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation documents and records of pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- 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.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, English, history, art and design and science. For each deep dive, they discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspectors also looked at the curriculum and pupils' work in some other subjects.
- An inspector observed pupils in the primary school reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- An inspector spoke with parents at the primary school at the start of the school day. Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.
- Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils.

## **Inspection team**

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