

Inspection of a good school: Lealholm Primary School

Lealholm Bank, Whitby YO21 2AG

Inspection dates:

6 July 2022

Outcome

Lealholm Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Set in a rural, isolated part of North Yorkshire with 24 pupils on roll and a river school curriculum, pupils who attend Lealholm Primary school get a unique experience. The close proximity of the river Esk means that pupils can build rafts, photograph the river at different times of the year, and enjoy its natural beauty.

Relationships between pupils are wonderful. Older pupils take responsibility for younger pupils. There is a positive, happy atmosphere running throughout the school. Pupils are flexible and adapt well to the nature of the building. The staffroom doubles up as a classroom and the key stage 2 classroom is also the dining room. This does not concern pupils. They are familiar with routines and very much at home in this environment.

Pupils say they are happy. They feel safe and well looked after. Each pupil nominates two trusted adults every year. If they have a worry, they speak to these staff. Pupils say they get good advice and adults support them.

Behaviour is impeccable. Pupils are polite, well-mannered and respectful. In lessons, pupils are considerate of others. They take turns and make sure everyone has a chance to learn. The two classes have age ranges of four to seven and seven to eleven. Pupils are tolerant and patient. They know that adults will need to support certain age groups at times. They get on with their work and enable lessons to run successfully.

Pupils have learned about bullying. They say it does not happen at school. If it did, they are adamant that adults would quickly sort it out.

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

Senior leaders, including trustees and governors, have managed some recent staffing turbulence effectively. The decision to make the chief executive officer the new headteacher has transformed the school. Staff morale is high. Staff feel valued and

appreciate the career development opportunities that the trust provides. Senior leaders are 'outward facing'. They are fully aware of the limitations that could stifle a very small school. They are determined this will not happen. There are strong links within the trust schools and every opportunity to work with other schools and organisations is encouraged.

Leaders have thought carefully about how to organise the curriculum for two classes. This includes what content needs to be delivered, and importantly, how it will be delivered. Teachers are skilful. With support from teaching assistants (TA), pupils access curriculum content that is matched effectively to their needs. For example, in mathematics, the teacher provides separate input for each year group while other pupils work independently or with support from the TA. Adults check if pupils understand what they are learning regularly. If any pupil does not grasp a concept, teachers offer extra support, either one to one or in a small group. Some curriculum changes are quite new. Leaders are still monitoring and evaluating the impact of these changes.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well. Where required, additional adult support is in place. Teachers adapt the curriculum so that these pupils can access key knowledge in different subjects. Questions are structured slightly differently and specific resources are used to help clarify understanding. Pupils also receive some teaching before the lesson. This helps them become familiar with specific vocabulary and subject content.

Leaders have recently changed the phonics reading programme. All staff have been trained with the intention that everyone is a reading expert. The curriculum works well. Pupils in early years and key stage 1 receive a daily, structured session where they learn and practise letter sounds. Pupils confidently use their phonic knowledge to read fluently. They have books that are accurately matched to the sounds they are learning. This means that pupils get to practise and secure the sounds they need to know. The trust English hub leader provides ongoing reading support. This enables staff to deliver a high-quality reading curriculum.

Staff and pupils talk about the 'family' feel in school. Leaders have created a warm, welcoming environment for pupils and staff. The positive ethos is matched by the high expectations from staff. They expect pupils to work hard and behave well. Pupils respond to this wonderfully. They are proud of their school.

Leaders are acutely aware of the need to give pupils as many wide-ranging experiences as possible. Leaders have created 'oaths'. These include challenges, experiences and activities. Through this initiative, pupils will visit a city, discover the heritage of their local area, attend at least one club per year and have a cultural experience. All pupils recently attended an art workshop run by Andy Goldsworthy, for example. They were inspired by his work. Pupils talked with real enthusiasm about sculptures and stacking rocks. Although leaders have put in place trips and activities, they are aware of the need to support the personal development of pupils. Further work is required to help pupils be prepared for the wider world.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school and trust work together effectively to ensure pupils are kept safe. The trust safeguarding compliance officer has designed a robust checking system. This ensures that all staff are up to date with relevant training and keeps staff abreast of any new legislation they need to know.

Leaders maintain detailed records and work effectively with external agencies. Importantly, leaders have instilled the culture of 'it could happen here.' There is no complacency from staff. They know what signs of concern to look for and are not afraid to have challenging conversations.

The personal, social and health education curriculum teaches pupils how to stay safe online, in the sun and specifically about safety in water.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Recent changes to the curriculum are not fully embedded and impact has not been measured. This means that leaders do not have a clear picture of how well all aspects of the curriculum are working. Leaders should ensure that the whole school curriculum, from early years to Year 6 is carefully reviewed.
- Pupils have historically not been given opportunities to broaden their experiences. As a result, some pupils lack confidence and independence. Leaders should ensure that the wider curriculum helps to prepare pupils for secondary school and beyond.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Lealholm Primary School, to be good on July 2013.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	144682
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10227610
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	24
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Matthew Brown
Headteacher	Christina Zanelli
Website	www.lealholm.n-yorks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school joined the Yorkshire Endeavour Academy Trust in February 2018.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the 2020-21 COVID-19 pandemic. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors did deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and physical education. Inspectors spoke to leaders about the curriculum and met with teachers from the lessons visited. Inspectors looked at pupils' work and spoke to pupils.
- Inspectors listened to a range of pupils read from different year groups.
- Inspectors met members of the governing body and the chair and vice chair of trustees.
- Inspectors looked at the single central record and spoke to leaders, teachers, governors, and pupils about safeguarding.

- Inspectors considered the responses made by parents to Parent View, Ofsted’s online questionnaire, including any free-text responses. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted’s online staff questionnaire and responses to Ofsted’s pupil survey.

Inspection team

David Milligan, lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Janet Madden

Ofsted Inspector

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