

Cliffe Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Main Street, Cliffe, Selby, North Yorkshire YO8 6NN

Inspection dates

12–13 October 2016

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher leads the school effectively. Together with her leadership team, that includes subject leaders and governors, she has driven school improvement strongly. Teaching is now good. As a result, pupils are making good progress throughout the school.
- The latest pupil progress information and work in pupils' books show that pupils of all abilities achieve well from their starting points. Pupils' progress is accelerating rapidly in reading, writing, mathematics and other subjects.
- Teachers' effective use of assessment to inform planning, their strong subject knowledge and skilled questioning to deepen understanding ensure that all pupils are challenged well.
- Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to teaching and learning and support pupils' confidence and self-esteem.
- While the level of challenge in the work pupils do is generally good, teachers' expectations could be higher, especially in the quality of the work pupils produce; for example, checking for accuracy in spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- Leaders check the quality of teaching and learning rigorously to ensure that all pupils make the progress they should. They also check that everything possible is done to keep pupils safe at school. The school is a happy, caring place.
- Children in the early years make a strong start to their learning because provision for them is good. They settle quickly and flourish because they are happy at school and want to learn. Children are prepared well for Year 1.
- Pupils' behaviour is consistently good in school. They conduct themselves well at all times and are kind to others. They know that school is important; their positive attitudes to learning contribute significantly to their achievements.
- The curriculum provides pupils with interesting activities to widen their experiences and deepen their knowledge and skills. Learning is strengthened further through a range of visits, visitors and other events that also support their good personal development and well-being.
- Leaders and governors have taken effective action to secure good improvement since the previous inspection. They have an accurate overview of the school's current performance and what needs to be done to improve further.
- Pupils have a very good knowledge of their local community and how to be good citizens. They know to respect others from different faiths and cultures. Their knowledge and understanding of the diversity that exists in modern Britain today are less secure.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Have higher expectations of all pupils, especially in the quality of the written work they produce, making sure that they apply their basic skills of spelling, grammar, punctuation and presentation accurately.
- Do more to promote pupils' awareness and understanding of the diversity represented in modern Britain today.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher has high expectations of herself, her staff and her pupils. She has been relentless in her pursuit of excellence because she wants the best for the pupils. Through rigorous monitoring and effective support and training for staff, she has secured improvements in the quality of teaching and consequently, the outcomes for pupils. Teamwork is highly effective among staff; they all feel valued in their efforts.
- The drive to improve teaching and raise pupils' achievement has been successful. The headteacher and subject leaders monitor teaching and learning rigorously. The procedures to monitor pupils' progress and identify quickly where pupils are at risk of falling behind are highly effective. As a result, any gaps in learning from weak teaching in the past are addressed well. Pupils are making good progress throughout the school. The capacity to improve further is good as commitment to school improvement is high.
- Leaders at all levels, including subject leaders, have the support they need to fulfil their roles and responsibilities effectively. Teachers work with other schools to develop good practice and improve provision. For example, leaders review their assessments with other schools to ensure consistency and accuracy. Within school, weekly pupil progress meetings ensure that all pupils stay on track to make good progress. This diligence has resulted in pupils' overall good achievement this year. The targets the school has set for pupils for next year, while ambitious, are achievable.
- Governors discuss pupil progress data with leaders each month and are well informed about how pupils in each class are progressing. Teachers are held to account for the quality of their teaching and the progress of pupils in their classes. Staff know that any pay awards they apply for will be dependent on how well their pupils achieve.
- The curriculum gives appropriate priority to reading, writing and mathematics and teachers weave these skills through other subjects effectively. For example, pupils examine graphs showing features of climates and compose letters to reflect how archaeologists might have felt on unearthing ancient tombs in Egypt. Pupils suggest topics they want to explore and teachers develop these ideas to make learning even more relevant and engaging. Pupils learn to play string instruments, join clubs for gymnastics, cookery and gardening to extend their skills and interests further. Visits to the seaside, theatres and museums widen pupils' experiences beyond school.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through the school's strong ethos of kindness, care and respect. They 'grow a pound' by baking cakes to raise funds for charity and enjoy celebrating events such as World Book Day. They consider global issues such as the challenges refugees face around the world and so grow as young citizens. Their understanding of British values, including fairness and equality, is developed well. As playground pals and school councillors, they take their responsibilities seriously. While they know their local community well and understand that they should respect the faiths and traditions of communities different from their own, their broader understanding of diversity in modern Britain today is less well developed.
- The school uses its pupil premium funding effectively to support the learning and well-being of disadvantaged pupils. Pupils receive the support they need to enjoy everything the school offers. Specialist staff are involved where pupils face more

challenging barriers in their learning. Home–school links with parents are strong. Any concerns or issues that arise are addressed promptly to secure good outcomes for these pupils.

- The school uses its primary schools sports funding well to extend provision for physical education and increase expertise among staff, for example in gymnastics. The funding provides a specialist coach in this discipline who inspires pupils' love of gymnastics. The school promotes healthy lifestyles well. Pupils enjoy many opportunities to compete with other schools. Participation in sports clubs in school and further afield is good.
- The responses to the online survey (Parent View), and conversations with parents during the inspection, indicate that parents are very happy with the school and how it looks after their children and supports their learning. They say that the school has improved since the last inspection and their children love school and achieve well.
- The school has received effective support from the local authority. The local authority's review of the school's performance is accurate. It identifies where further improvement is needed to strengthen provision and raise achievement further for all pupils.

Governance of the school

- The governors, led by a very knowledgeable chair and vice-chair, have a range of skills and experience to support and challenge school leaders and staff. Governors are highly committed to making the school the best it can be for all pupils and to ensure that the teaching is of high quality. They supported the headteacher effectively through the considerable level of turbulence in staffing in the last two years, and have been instrumental in driving school improvement with rigour.
- Governors have a very good understanding of the pupil progress data and how this relates to the performance of pupils nationally. They monitor the standards closely within the school by scrutinising the school's performance data and hold leaders to account for the progress that pupils make. Any lapses in the performance of teachers or pupils are challenged immediately.
- Governors monitor the funding for primary sport and for disadvantaged pupils. They know the impact that this spending has on outcomes for pupils. They scrutinise any pay awards to check that they reflect teachers' performance. The performance management of the headteacher is rigorous. Governors know targets for pupil outcomes this year are high, and have every confidence in leaders and staff that these targets will be realised.
- The headteacher and governors ensure that the school's policies for safeguarding and all other statutory policies are up to date and that parents are kept fully informed about the school's work and their children's performance. Leaders and governors meet and greet parents at the school gate and communications are very effective as a result.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders and governors ensure that all staff undertake the required training to protect children and keep them safe. They ensure that the policies are reviewed and updated regularly to safeguard pupils. The required checks are carried out to certify that staff are eligible to work with children.
- The school is a safe, happy place where pupils know they will be well looked after. Staff understand their responsibilities to keep pupils safe and the action they must take if they have any concerns regarding pupils' welfare and safety. The school's procedures

are robust. Leaders take prompt action if concerns arise and involve other agencies where necessary to keep children safe. Parents are kept fully informed about the school's procedures to safeguard pupils via the school website and regular newsletters.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved markedly since the last inspection and is now consistently good across the school. Weak teaching has been tackled effectively. All pupils now make good progress from their starting points.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is good and they go the extra mile to make sure learning is interesting and fun. Most teachers explain tasks very clearly and are particularly good at making pupils think about their learning by asking probing questions. This helps to deepen pupils' understanding, and inspires in them the confidence to challenge themselves and work on tasks independently before they seek help.
- Pupils grasp key learning points quickly, particularly in mathematics and English. This is because teachers explain learning well and encourage pupils to discuss their work and raise any questions before they tackle tasks. The work that teachers plan is well structured to develop knowledge and skills step by step. Teachers know their pupils well and plan work that challenges pupils of different abilities appropriately. They deploy teaching assistants to maximum effect and consequently all pupils make good progress.
- Practical activities are well planned. Teachers are very aware of the limitations on space, for example in the hall for gymnastics and in classrooms when conducting investigations. With this in mind, teachers modify tasks so that learning is effective and pupils remain safe. Pupils in Year 5/6 conducted themselves sensibly and safely when they explored irreversible changes when making plastic using milk and vinegar.
- The school's approach to teaching phonics is effective. Teachers and teaching assistants guide learning well, often in small groups, to help individual pupils gain confidence in their early reading skills. Pupils say they like reading and most read regularly. They also enjoy teachers reading to them and say that this helps them to improve their skills. Older pupils were particularly positive about guided reading, where 'you really get inside the characters and plots and find ideas and new words for our stories'.
- The teaching of writing has improved significantly this year because of the increased focus on developing pupils' skills. Staff have had extensive training on how to improve the teaching of writing, and the impact is evident in the quality of the work seen in pupils' books since last year. While pupils' confidence to write well has increased, many, including the most able pupils, fail to use the spelling, grammar and punctuation skills that they have acquired in English accurately in other subjects. This is particularly so in key stage 2, where in their excitement to write more, pupils' careless slips go unchecked. This detracts from what otherwise would be high-quality work.
- Mathematics is taught well. Good emphasis on correct mathematical vocabulary and setting calculations out systematically helps pupils cement their understanding and apply previous learning more confidently when handling multi-step problems. Teachers expect pupils to be able to explain the methods they have used in these calculations and to check for accuracy; for example, by applying the inverse calculation rules. This in-depth teaching is helping pupils to make sense of their learning and avoid simple

errors; for example, when considering place value of large or small numbers.

- With a high emphasis on investigation skills throughout the school, pupils have many good opportunities to explore; for example, the conditions worms prefer to live in and how these might be different for woodlice or other animals. They know that physical features such as rivers and mountains have a bearing on climate and habitats. By studying the Vikings and Mayan civilisations, they begin to understand how the past shaped the future. A love of learning is evident in pupils' individual 'challenge' tasks.
- Pupils who find learning difficult or who struggle to manage their behaviour receive effective support to help them make good progress. Skilled support staff make a significant contribution in classrooms and in pupils' personal development.
- The most able pupils, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, are challenged through higher-level tasks that encourage them to use their initiative to find solutions and apply previous learning in new situations. Weekly challenges help them to extend their ideas well. These challenges are not compulsory, but most pupils like to do them.
- The feedback that teachers and other staff provide through marking or during lessons gives good guidance as to how pupils need to improve their work. Most pupils respond well, because they want to get it right and be acknowledged for their efforts. Engaging displays around the classrooms and elsewhere celebrate pupils' previous work well.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils are very eager, confident learners and they settle quickly to their work. Routines are established well from the early years and teachers have high expectations of all pupils.
- Pupils enjoy working with each other and rise well to challenge – persevering even when they find work difficult. They are not afraid to ask for help, knowing staff are at hand, but teachers encourage them to help each other if they can first.
- Pupils say that they are well looked after at school and that staff will help them if they are upset or worried about anything. Playtimes and lunchtimes are happy, orderly events because pupils know what is expected from them regarding behaviour. Older pupils befriend younger ones and look out for them if play becomes too boisterous or if any have no one to play with. These friendships (PALs) are delightful to see and model for children how they should behave towards others when they socialise.
- The school works hard to promote respect and tolerance and pupils develop a good sense of responsibility as they progress through the school. Community spirit in the school is strong. Younger pupils play happily and safely alongside older ones. Pupils say some name-calling does occur but PALs or staff intervene promptly. A number explained that, 'It is wrong to call names because it is unkind and hurtful.'
- Pupils are very proud of their school, saying, 'It is the best, because we are like one big family.' Teachers provide many opportunities to support pupils in their learning and development. For example, pupils were overwhelmingly positive about the school trip to Scarborough and also how even the teachers dressed up as Roald Dahl characters earlier this year. One older pupil said, 'I didn't think teachers would do stuff like that!'
- Pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes bullying because they say teachers reinforce these messages regularly. They know that internet chat rooms and

social media sites can pose dangers and that the school computers block such websites. Pupils say that there is no bullying in school, but if it does happen they know to tell someone straight away.

- Pupils know how to keep safe at school and outside. They are aware of road safety and fire safety and the hazards of drugs, alcohol and smoking. They trust staff in the school and know who to go to if they are worried or upset.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite, courteous and respectful in school. They are kind and caring towards others, and to be otherwise is not acceptable.
- Pupils are very attentive in lessons and respond to instructions promptly; for example, tidying away at breaktimes. They are keen to learn because they know that school is important. Pupils say that lapses do occur on occasions among a few pupils, especially when work does not engage them sufficiently or is too difficult, but staff manage these lapses quickly and discreetly so as not to disrupt learning for others.
- Leaders know the pupils well and take any misdemeanours seriously. Pupils understand the sanctions and rewards systems thoroughly and regularly refer to school rules to check their conduct. Expectations are high and pupils are quick to remind others if they are not behaving appropriately. Relationships among pupils are very good.
- Pupils enjoy school and most arrive on time. Attendance is currently above the national average. Most pupils attend every day because they say they do not want to miss anything. The attendance of one or two pupils is low but for valid reasons. The school's procedures to check on any unaccounted absence are rigorous and effective.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils' achievement has been raised since the last inspection largely due to the improvements in teaching. Pupils of all abilities make good progress. From broadly typical starting points in the early years, attainment at the end of Year 2 in 2016 in reading, writing and mathematics was above that of pupils nationally. In the last two years, the Year 6 cohorts have been very small. In these years, Year 6 pupils made good progress in reading and mathematics. Progress in writing was not better than expected for pupils in Year 6, but was good for other year groups.
- The proportion of Year 1 pupils who reached the expected standard in the phonics screening check in 2015 was above the national average. It has increased further this year because the teaching of phonics is good.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard at the end of key stage 1 is above age-related expectations. A significant number of pupils exceeded expectations in reading, writing and mathematics. Unvalidated data for pupils' performance in Year 2 in 2016 was also strong.
- Pupils are making good progress this year, with an increasing number exceeding age-related expectations. With such small cohorts, comparisons with schools nationally are difficult. From work in pupils' books and the school's own data, pupils' progress is good. Pupils are on track to make good progress this year and an increasing number are exceeding expectations.
- There were no disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 in 2016. Elsewhere in the school, these

pupils are making good progress and working to at least age-related expectations. From below-typical starting points, some are exceeding these expectations. Disadvantaged pupils make good progress because they are supported well.

- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive the support they need to achieve well. Teaching staff know their pupils well and accommodate their individual needs effectively. Staff work closely with parents if concerns arise and recruit the support of specialist agencies where necessary to ensure that pupils make the best progress they can. Parents are very positive about the support they and their children receive to help children achieve well.
- The most able pupils make good progress because they are challenged well. As they gain in confidence they rise to challenges enthusiastically because they want to achieve well; they say, 'We have to work hard to get into the top sets at secondary school.' They know learning is important if they want good jobs one day. Many of these pupils exceed age-related expectations and are performing better than pupils nationally.
- Pupils enjoy reading and gain in confidence and fluency as they progress through the school. The most able readers use many strategies to decode words and make sense of their reading. They correct themselves quickly when inaccurate use of punctuation results in reading that does not make sense. They talk about how the author might use various features, such as personification, to make the text more interesting and how they might use these ideas in their writing. Almost all pupils, including children from the early years, who read to the inspector said they loved reading because they liked learning things. Their book reviews show reading is a regular feature of homework.
- Following the introduction of a new strategy to teach writing, pupils' skills in writing are improving quickly. Before putting pen to paper, pupils talk through their ideas and explore features of good writing to embellish their work. They borrow ideas from books they have read to increase their skills. Through work in other subjects, for example by recording investigations in science or listing ingredients to make a cake, they learn to use the correct format for the task. They know what makes a factual text different from imaginative writing and apply appropriate features accurately. The quality of writing that pupils produce in their English books is not replicated as well in other work.
- Pupils achieve well in mathematics because the teaching of basic skills is good. Pupils build successfully on their strong grasp of number and calculation as they move on to more complex multi-step problems that require them to interpret information. The most able pupils progress rapidly because they apply these basic skills confidently in new work. Less confident learners receive good support. Teachers make sure that pupils use a range of strategies in their work to calculate answers quickly and accurately.
- Pupils make good progress in subjects such as science, history, geography and religious education because teachers make the learning interesting. Pupils take time to discuss their ideas and opinions and share information. While some might not be overly confident in their basic literacy and numeracy skills, pupils of all abilities enjoy learning about people and places in Africa or how the second world war affected people's lives day-to-day as well as long term, or how Hindus worship at home as well as in temples.

Early years provision

Good

- Leadership and management of the early years are good. Effective teamwork ensures that staff work to provide the best possible start to children's learning in a safe, caring and stimulating environment.
- Children visit school on numerous occasions before they start in their Reception Year. These visits, some with their parents and some through pre-school providers, give children a sense of belonging and familiarity when they start. They settle quickly and are ready to learn as a result. Home visits and close working relations with the pre-school and parents all contribute to children's confidence when they attend full time.
- Most children join the school with skills and knowledge that are typical for their age. There is variation because cohorts are often very small. By the end of Reception, children, including those who are disadvantaged, make good progress from their starting points across all the areas of learning. The vast majority reach a good level of development and some exceed this level and so are well prepared for Year 1.
- The classroom and outdoor spaces are full of intrigue and expectation. Children explored what was on offer with delight and expressed squeals of joy as they found materials; for example, in their scavenging for different coloured leaves and twigs to make patterns. Those children fishing in 'blue goo' for letters to make three-letter words were very persistent in managing the tricky tweezers they used to fish, to increase their dexterity.
- Children work with others safely and sensibly, sharing equipment and taking turns in a caring way they have learned from their teachers. Behaviour is good, and those children who sometimes find it difficult to learn or manage their behaviour are supported well.
- Staff are very precise in their planning, knowing what each child needs to do next. They make sure that children try things they find more challenging; for example, reading, writing and counting. The focus on the teaching of phonics is a strength and a number of children are already working at above age-related expectations so early in the term. Some can read simple words and compose short sentences by sounding out accurately what they want to write. Their grasp of number is developed well.
- Whether children work directly with staff or select their own tasks, learning is effective. On occasions, a few children find it difficult to grasp new learning as quickly as others. This does not worry them unduly because they know teachers will help them improve. Assessment procedures are very rigorous and reliable. Data reflects good progress. Teachers' expectations are high and most children rise to the challenge happily.
- Staff take good care of the children and are well aware of their responsibilities to keep children safe. They have undertaken the required training to carry out their duties well.

School details

Unique reference number	121529
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10019738

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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	112
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Carole Middleton
Headteacher	Suzanne Hay
Telephone number	01757 638426
Website	www.cliffe.n-yorks.sch.uk
Email address	headteacher@cliffe.n-yorks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4–5 November 2014

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school has close partnerships with other schools in the local area.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and are supported with pupil premium funding is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school has experienced a high turnover of staff since its last inspection.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited lessons to observe learning and to talk to pupils about their work. Some of these observations were carried out with the headteacher. The inspector looked at pupils' work in books, alongside observations with the headteacher.
- The inspector listened to pupils read and met formally with pupils to discuss their experiences of school life. The inspector talked to pupils informally during lessons and around school and took into account the views of the 49 pupils who submitted their views via Ofsted's online pupil questionnaire.
- The inspector checked the school's documentation on safeguarding, attendance, behaviour and the quality of teaching. She also looked at the school's analysis of its own work, its improvement plan, and information about pupils' progress and teachers' performance management.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher and other key leaders, including subject leaders. The inspector also had a meeting with the chair of the school's governing body and two other governors.
- The inspector also took into consideration the views of the 30 responses to the Ofsted online Parent View questionnaire, as well as the views parents expressed during the inspection, including the 31 text messages sent in to Ofsted. The inspector also took into account the views of staff, including those submitted online through the staff questionnaire from Ofsted.

Inspection team

Rajinder Harrison, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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