

Fishergate Primary School

Fishergate, York, North Yorkshire YO10 4AP

Inspection dates

8–9 November 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Fishergate lives up to its motto 'Achieving great things together' in everything it does.
- The exceptional leadership by the headteacher and staff team has created a climate of high expectations, a love of learning and an insistence on the very best for pupils.
- Governors are committed and knowledgeable. They support and challenge leaders effectively and make a valuable contribution to the development of the school.
- Outcomes for all pupils at the end of key stage 2 are good in reading, writing and mathematics enabling pupils to leave school well prepared for their next stage of learning.
- The precise tracking of pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics means leaders and staff have a detailed understanding of how well pupils are doing and what next steps pupils should take. This is not as clear in some foundation subjects.
- In key stage 1, outcomes in writing are not as strong as they are in the early years or at key stage 2. This is especially true for those who struggle with their writing.
- Pupils' personal development, welfare and behaviour are outstanding. Pupils conduct themselves extremely well around school. Their attitudes to learning in lessons are very positive and many play an important part in supporting their own learning and the learning of others.
- Leaders are diligent in carrying out their duties for safeguarding. As a result, pupils say that they feel safe in school. Their welfare needs are very well met.
- The provision for early years is outstanding. High-quality leadership and teaching create a stimulating learning environment and ensure that children have the best possible start to school life. As a result, they flourish.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is outstanding. Pupils have a wide range of opportunities both in the curriculum and in the community to practise these skills. They demonstrate the respect and care of each other saying that it's alright to be different.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to develop teaching and learning so that it is outstanding and allows all pupils to make rapid progress by:
 - ensuring that all teachers have consistently high expectations of all pupils so that every pupil makes rapid progress each year
 - further developing the roles of teaching assistants to accelerate learning and progress in all subjects
 - using the skilful subject leaders to continue to lead, develop and embed best practice so it is consistent in other subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The inspirational leadership of the headteacher has brought about rapid improvements in the school. She is ably supported by her deputy and leadership team. Leaders' passion and commitment and thorough knowledge of what makes excellent teaching enthuses staff and develops their knowledge, skills and understanding.
- The school's statement: 'Achieving great things together' is embodied throughout the learning and environment of the school. Pupils' uniqueness is celebrated along with developing respect, empathy and a zest for learning, all within a happy and safe environment. The result is pupils who are caring, considerate and who love learning.
- Senior leaders know their school well. The strengths of the school and areas for improvement are accurately identified in the detailed self-evaluation and school development plans. The school rightly prides itself on the development of subject leaders who debate aspects of their subject, share good practice in teaching and learning and monitor performance in their subjects effectively. As a result, staff say they have been empowered to lead their subject and to support staff. They have seen an improvement in staff confidence and knowledge in most areas of the curriculum. This was seen in an art session where the knowledge and skills of watercolour were shared explicitly with pupils.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning is thorough and contributes to the improving practice of teachers and outcomes for pupils. This is because leaders are adept at fostering the abilities and talents of staff, giving them opportunities to refine their practice, for example through 'drop ins', team teaching and observing each other. Staff meet weekly to plan, adapt and review lessons as well as discuss new and innovative ways of delivering curriculum content. This has resulted in some exciting projects such as the music and English programme. It also offers an excellent opportunity to support and guide staff and new teachers.
- Senior leaders comprehensively gather assessment information which is used to discuss pupils' learning with teachers and plan interventions. Teacher assessments are used to pinpoint opportunities to move pupils on in their learning. This is evident for groups of pupils including the disadvantaged and those who are struggling and need help to catch up.
- Pupil premium funding is used very effectively to reduce any barriers to learning that may be experienced by disadvantaged pupils. Monitoring is evaluated carefully by the headteacher and governors to make sure that disadvantaged pupils are successful and can play a part in everything the school has to offer. For example, it is used to support some pupils by providing music lessons and buying their instruments.
- The primary school physical education (PE) and sports funding is also well used. Pupils take part in a wide range of activities during and after school such as gymnastics, dance and running. The funding has also enhanced teachers' own skills in delivering quality PE lessons.
- The leadership and organisation of special educational needs are very effective and the additional funding provided is used well. Teachers identify pupils' needs swiftly. They use good-quality resources and interventions are appropriate and effective. Teachers

identify concerns which are picked up the same day and then adults can spend a short period of time making sure that pupils understand ready for the following day.

- The school offers a diverse and broad curriculum that excites pupils and contributes to their enjoyment of learning. Subjects such as science, art and design and music are popular with pupils because they are well taught. One pupil explained, 'You learn lots of things you didn't know before.' However, leaders have correctly identified that tracking pupils' progress in some other subjects is not as highly developed as it could be. As a result, leaders and governors do not have a thorough enough understanding of learning and achievement across some foundation subjects in the curriculum.
- The excellent promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development means that the school is an environment where pupils mix happily together. Through assemblies and the curriculum, pupils learn about the wider community, global responsibility and respecting people from different backgrounds and with different characteristics. They learn about tolerance, democracy and the rule of law. Pupils benefit from the many and varied after-school clubs including watercolour, Chinese, sewing and the popular choir.
- The school actively seeks to work with secondary school colleagues to ensure high-quality transition links for pupils. This has resulted in some joint working across school to ensure that the pupils are well prepared for their next stage of learning.

Governance of the school

- The governance of the school is effective.
- Governors know the school well and are confident to ask challenging questions. They are conscientious in their duties and enjoy taking part in the life of the school. This includes regular visits where they focus on aspects of school life so that they are able to question and confirm the judgements made by school leaders.
- The governing body has a good understanding of performance management procedures and supports the headteacher in holding staff to account. This ensures that the management of teachers' pay is effective.
- Governors carefully monitor the pupil premium and the PE and sports funding to make sure that it is spent effectively to make a difference to pupils.
- The governing body is vigilant about safeguarding and, to this end, has appointed a safeguarding governor to monitor all safeguarding procedures and welfare-related matters.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Robust systems are in place which are understood by staff. There is a clear message that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Records are detailed and kept securely. Staff undertake regular and appropriate training and safeguarding has a high priority in the school. There are updates on related issues as they arise, including those related to keeping children safe from radicalisation and extremism. Leaders are persistent in cases where the school is concerned for pupils' welfare. Effective relationships with

other agencies and with parents ensure that pupils are kept safe and their welfare needs are met.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Throughout the school, teaching is now consistently good. Support and training ensure that the teaching of reading and mathematics, in particular, is effective. The teaching of writing is becoming increasingly effective particularly in key stage 2. However, leaders acknowledge that some pupils in key stage 1 do not make the progress they should. Leaders accept that there is still more to do to make sure that all teachers challenge pupils especially in writing at key stage 1.
- Teachers know their pupils well. They have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. As a consequence, pupils pay attention in lessons and settle quickly to the work that teachers have set for them. Work is well planned and takes into account the needs of every pupil.
- Leaders have developed strong systems that identify the gaps in pupils' learning which have emerged as a legacy of weaker teaching. These gaps are being tackled effectively through timely support and good-quality teaching. In key stage 1, careful tracking of pupil progress is showing that current pupils in the school are improving their skills more quickly.
- Teachers use a range of resources and equipment to support pupils' learning well, particularly in the early years and at key stage 2. All teachers model strategies to support pupils' learning effectively, asking searching questions and allowing pupils to work things out for themselves. Pupils are encouraged to investigate their own methods when solving problems. For example, when pupils were deciding the best material to use to filter the mud out of water, they had to think carefully about what they thought would happen and then record what they discovered. Pupils were highly engaged and excited sharing their results and questioning each other. They all said that they liked this way of learning.
- The school's marking and feedback policy is used effectively by all staff across the school. Work in books shows that pupils are using a consistent strategy to improve their work. It is effective in both English and mathematics. For example, comments seen in some English books not only acknowledged good use of adjectives but also challenged pupils to think about using short sentences for impact. In mathematics, there were good examples of where pupils had been challenged to apply their mathematical skills in different contexts.
- The assessment of pupils' work in subjects other than English and mathematics is still developing. However, the curriculum is well planned and ensures that all pupils have a rich and creative curriculum which allows them to explore and find out things for themselves. Leaders have ensured that there is progression and that teachers' planning work enables pupils' skills to develop appropriately. This was seen in the high-quality art work where pupils were learning about watercolour, mixing and wet on wet composition. Across the school, pupils were practising this and were able to build on, and refine, their work.
- The use of teaching assistants is not always effective. Too often they work with the less able pupils and, at times, complete the work for them. In observed lessons when

the teacher is teaching, teaching assistants are observing for too much of the time. However, some teaching assistants are very adept at supporting interventions outside the classroom.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- The importance placed on pupils' personal development and welfare is central and very visible in the school. Staff and governors are conscientious in their responsibility to ensure that the school provides a safe and nurturing environment in which pupils can thrive and succeed.
- Staff treat pupils with consideration and respect. As a result, everyone feels welcomed and valued. Adults model respectful and caring behaviour in lessons, around school and in the way in which they engage with pupils. Consequently, pupils behave similarly and are thoughtful and compassionate citizens. Inspectors were frequently asked by pupils if they were 'having a nice day in our school'.
- The very large majority of parents spoken to by inspectors and those who responded to Parent View expressed praise for the school and the work of the staff. Parents said that their children were happy, safe and well looked after. A number of parents were keen to say that their children were thriving. They put this down to the staff's skills at nurturing and building confidence.
- Pupils are proud of their school and told inspectors that they were well looked after by adults. The vast majority of pupils throughout key stages 1 and 2 are confident learners who feel involved with their own learning. They said they liked the challenges of finding things out for themselves in lessons and working together. One pupil said, 'It's all about teamwork and helping each other. That's what's important to us.'
- The school has developed a 'can do' attitude to everything new they encounter. Pupils make a valuable contribution to others' learning by offering help and support. For example, in early years, two boys consulted with each other before agreeing and then answering a question.
- Pupils were unanimous in their view that they felt safe in school and all knew about how to keep themselves safe, personally and online. Pupils are actively involved in the life of the school. The school councils are proactive in helping to shape future events including support for charities.
- Pupils were keen to share how they support children from service families. They told inspectors that staff produce a 'welcome to our school' book with photos for new children but also, they Skype ex-pupils who have moved to different schools in other parts of the country. One boy said, 'It must be hard to keep having to make new friends so we think it's good to let them know we still care.'
- Pupils enjoy school not only because they find their lessons interesting but because of the number of extra activities they can do after school, including sports. For example, pupils talked about the giggles club for young carers to share their experiences and the school choir of 50 children, who are currently practising for the 'Big Sing' in Manchester in January.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around school. They are extremely polite and well-mannered and can regularly be heard asking adults and each other how they are, and opening doors for each other. They are courteous when speaking to visitors and interested in sharing what they are learning as well as asking questions.
- There is a very productive atmosphere in the majority of classrooms. Pupils are encouraged and confident to work without the constant attention of adults. They are eager to participate in lessons, visibly enjoying activities. They view learning as very important, valuing it highly.
- Pupils are fully aware of how to behave and the consequences of poor behaviour. They say that incidents of inappropriate behaviour do happen but are infrequent. They are dealt with quickly by teachers and responded to appropriately by pupils. The school's records indicate that incidents of derogatory, racist or homophobic language are uncommon. Pupils confirmed that bullying was rare and quickly followed up. This was reflected in the few parents expressing concern through Parent View.
- Pupils enjoy school and their attendance is currently broadly in line with all pupils nationally. There are strong systems to monitor absence which are implemented meticulously. Persistent absence in school is below that of others nationally. The few pupils who are persistently absent are given appropriate support to help them get back on track quickly.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Since the previous inspection, leaders and teachers have worked hard to ensure good levels of achievement in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, at the end of key stage 2, outcomes have been above the national average. Most-able pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics across all key stages.
- Pupils acquire phonic knowledge well and make good progress in their reading skills from their initial starting points. The provisional results in 2017 indicate that achievement in phonics at Year 1 will be above the national average.
- The 2017 pupil achievement at the end of key stage 2 continues to be above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils achieving greater depth has improved and appears to be in line with the national average. This, however, represents good progress given pupils' low starting points.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in combined reading, writing and mathematics dipped in 2016 at the end of key stage 1 and was below the national average. Pupils entered key stage 1 with the weaker skills in reading, writing and mathematics and did not make as rapid progress by the end of Year 2. This was partly due to staffing disruption in the early years which was swiftly addressed by leaders, and a small number of pupils who were very close to achieving the standards expected for their age but did not do so on the day of the tests.
- The school's own assessment information and work in pupils' books show that good

progress is currently being made in reading and mathematics across the school. However, there is still a way to go for some pupils to achieve as well as they should, particularly in writing. Teachers are working hard to address a legacy of inconsistent teaching so that pupils' progress in writing accelerates. Leaders are aware that progress, particularly for less able pupils, must be consistently strong in order for them to achieve the expected standard by the time they leave school.

- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are very well assisted by staff who have received training in order to support pupils' individual needs. As a result, these pupils are making good progress from their individual starting points.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those in receipt of the pupil premium funding make the same good progress as other pupils in the school and achieve as well as others nationally. The school uses the pupil premium funding well, supporting pupils to make good progress from their varying starting points.
- Pupils who enter the school with English as an additional language are well supported and their attainment and progress, while below that of their peers, is improving rapidly especially in key stage 2. Pupils who speak English as an additional language were proud to tell inspectors how they were helped to be able to read and write well. In mathematics, the majority of pupils with English as an additional language make good progress from their starting points.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- The majority of children start the school with skills and knowledge well below those typical for their age. Skills are least developed in literacy, communication and mathematics. Children make rapid progress. They benefit from a vibrant and stimulating environment in which they learn. This is coupled with the high expectations by adults, to make sure children thrive and learn and enjoy a very positive start to school.
- Over the last three years, there has been a steady improvement in the proportion of children who reach a good level of development at the end of Reception. Standards are now comparable to national figures. This represents very good progress from the children's starting points and ensures that they are well prepared and confident to begin in Year 1.
- The early years provision is led confidently. Leaders have a clear view of how to improve provision and children's learning successfully. These improvements are based on a thorough understanding of children's development as well as flexibility to adapt to the needs of individual pupils and high expectations of them.
- Safeguarding is effective. Risk assessments are appropriate and classrooms are a safe environment inside and out, while still allowing children to try out new experiences and take appropriate risks. One child explained to the inspector what you had to do to keep safe with fireworks.
- The way that teachers assess and track children's learning is of high quality. This information is gathered constantly and used effectively to plan a curriculum for children that is exciting, interesting and relevant. As a result, adults know and respond to the

individual learning needs of the children to great effect, including the most able and children that are disadvantaged. This ensures that the additional funding is used very effectively to provide resources and support for disadvantaged children.

- Throughout the early years setting, provision is highly consistent. It is skilfully organised and routines are established very quickly. Teachers create a rich and varied learning environment for all children, both inside and outdoors. As a result, children are excited about their learning and confident in their abilities. Activities are fun and led regularly by the interests of the children. They capture their imagination and allow them to practise their skills. For example, children were asked to design something using the construction materials. They produced a drawing and list of materials they would need, practised their writing, talked about their ideas with each other, counted how many tools they would need and used the materials to create their design.
- The quality of teaching is outstanding. Adults demonstrate excellent knowledge about young children's learning and are highly skilled at asking questions to draw out children's knowledge and extend them to think more deeply about their learning. The importance placed on fostering reading, writing, speaking and listening and mathematical skills is very evident, with regular chances for children to write, practise their letters and sounds and use numbers in all they can do. Children are already confident to speak in sentences to adults and their peers and are excited to show visitors what they have done and involve them in their play. In the early years, teaching assistants effectively model good questioning and shape children's learning as well as assessing progress.
- Independence is encouraged as soon as children start Reception. Consequently, they are happy to get themselves ready to learn. They confidently put on outdoor clothing to play outside and will sit at activities unsupported by adults because they are clear about what they need to do. For example, children were following instructions on how to create multicoloured patterns and talked to each other to check they were doing it right.
- The strong emphasis on creating a caring and nurturing environment is evident from the very positive relationships adults have with children. Children play and learn together extremely well. For example, after children had built a digger, they took turns in seeing how they could make each one better. Children have an excellent attitude to learning and behaviour.
- Staff and parents have extremely positive relationships. Leaders take time to get to know children and families to ensure that the start of school life is as smooth as possible. Parents are actively encouraged to contribute to the learning journals and there are plenty of opportunities during the year to attend events and celebrations. In turn, parents are highly appreciative of the way in which their children thrive and grow in a stimulating and happy environment. As one parent said, 'There are always big smiles from my daughter on the way to school.'

School details

Unique reference number	121277
Local authority	York
Inspection number	10031063

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	305
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair	Jackie Hudson
Headteacher	Christina Clarke
Telephone number	01904 555335
Website	www.fishergateschool.com
Email address	fishergate.primary@york.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	12–13 June 2013

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is a smaller than average primary school.
- The majority of pupils are White British and there are a small number of pupils with English as an additional language. The school also has a small number of children from service families.
- The number of pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding is below average.
- The number of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is well below the national average.
- In 2015 and 2016, the school met the government's floor standards which set a minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all classes. They observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms and assessed the school's promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They observed pupils at the start of the day, breaks, lunchtimes and in after-school clubs.
- The inspectors looked at the work in pupils' books, including those of children in the early years. They also looked at English and mathematics books with subject leaders.
- An inspector listened to a small number of pupils read.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, the special needs coordinator, early years leader and three foundation subject leaders. They met with colleagues responsible for safeguarding, including child protection and attendance.
- The lead inspector met with three members of the governing body, including the chair. A telephone conversation was held with the external school adviser representing the local authority.
- Two groups of pupils from key stage 1 and key stage 2 discussed their opinions about the school and their learning with inspectors. There were also informal conversations with pupils around school at break, at lunchtimes and after school.
- Inspectors took account of the 68 responses to the online Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, the 20 responses to the online staff questionnaire and 51 responses to the online pupil questionnaire.
- Inspectors talked briefly to parents as they were bringing their children to school.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the information of pupils' attainment and progress, the school's own evaluation of its performance and development plan, records of checks on the quality of teaching and learning and the school's curriculum planning documents. Behaviour and attendance records and information relating to safeguarding were also scrutinised.

Inspection team

Jen Cave, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Christopher Pearce	Ofsted Inspector
Zoe Westley	Ofsted Inspector
Larissa Thorpe	Ofsted Inspector

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