

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



5 September 2018

Miss Jennifer Hartley
Headteacher
Wheatcroft Community Primary School
Holbeck Hill
Scarborough
North Yorkshire
YO11 3BW

Dear Miss Hartley

Short inspection of Wheatcroft Community Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 18 July 2018, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in April 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

The school has continued to grow from strength to strength since the last inspection. You have developed a strong leadership team to help you to check and continue to improve the quality of education provided. Staff morale is high. Staff are treated with respect and provided with high-quality training. The governing body ensures that pupils flourish at Wheatcroft.

This is a fully inclusive school that has many strengths. Pupils' differences are not only welcomed but also embraced. Pupils have a good understanding and keen awareness of themes such as autism, selective mutism and stammering. Pupils know how to show care and consideration to their peers. Their behaviour is excellent.

Leaders place the care and welfare of pupils, and their families, at the heart of all that they do. There is clear determination to ensure that no pupil is ever held back by low expectations. The assumption is that every child can achieve. Leaders and teachers set high expectations for pupils and are relentless in their drive for each child to reach their full potential. You use a wealth of highly effective strategies to support pupils' mental health and well-being so that pupils are ready and able to learn. The well-staffed before-school facility, for example, ensures that pupils make a positive start to the school day. Pupils said that they really enjoy eating the slice of granary toast provided to all at morning breaktime. Pupils also take part in mindfulness and Tai-chi sessions.

You are passionate about ensuring that the school's core values of 'being a caring community, bringing the locality and learning to life and music' are all central to the school's curriculum. Pupils experience a rich and vibrant curriculum, which brings learning to life through meaningful contexts. A wide range of trips, including residential visits to East Barnby and France, effectively promotes pupils' self-confidence and self-belief. The school is now applying to become a 'Beach school' after using the local beach in innovative and exciting ways to enhance pupils' learning.

Sport and music are also seen as vital to the development of pupils' well-being. High-quality after-school clubs, such as Zumba, orchestra, singing squad and musical theatre, ensure that pupils are able to learn new sporting and musical skills; these clubs are all well attended. Pupils pride themselves in their musical ability. Pupils sing beautifully. This reflects in the school being chosen to sing the backing track for a play written by Sir Alan Ayckbourn, which is now used in the play in Broadway. Pupils sing the school song with pride. They talked about the lyrics: 'Just work hard and be kind. We all learn and care', and said that this is part of 'what we do here'.

You have taken effective action to address the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection, when you were asked to improve pupils' achievement in reading and the teaching of phonics in key stage 1. The phonics leader has been relentless and successful in her drive to improve the quality of phonics teaching across the school. Phonics teaching is now strong. Teachers have a good understanding of pupils' needs. Additional adults are used well to support different groups of pupils. Frequent and effective tracking of pupils' achievement in phonics is used to check that pupils are making good progress. Any pupils who are not doing well enough are given focused support to ensure that they catch up quickly, including the few pupils who do not pass the Year 1 phonics screening check. Pupils can apply their phonic knowledge effectively in their writing. A good standard of writing is evident in pupils' books. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has improved and is now above average.

You are passionate about making sure that the school continues to improve even further. You confidently discussed with me justification for decisions made for bringing this about. Your leadership team members are all very knowledgeable about the subjects and areas that they lead. They play a key role in making sure that the quality of teaching is good and continues to improve. However, you know that there is scope to improve the quality of teaching even further by sharing the most effective teaching practice among staff. Similarly, although leaders collect and analyse a wealth of information and data about the school's performance, opportunities to use this to shape school improvement plans are sometimes overlooked. You know that doing this more effectively is an important next step.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Leaders and governors are diligent in all matters relating to safeguarding and take their responsibilities very seriously. They make sure that all recruitments checks are carried out on the suitability of staff and keep up to date with safeguarding regulations. All staff

have received training, for example on the 'Prevent' duty, so that they know how to recognise and report causes for concern. Records show that leaders take prompt and effective action to ensure that pupils receive the support they need. You involve external agencies as appropriate and are tenacious in following up referrals. Records are detailed and of high quality.

Pupils' behaviour, both in and out of the classroom, is excellent. In class, they show the school 'character traits' of courage, citizenship, tolerance, integrity, compassion, effective communication and being resilient. Pupils can discuss these traits and ways in which they learn about them in school. Pupils said that they feel safe and are happy. When talking about what makes people different, one pupil commented, 'We all believe in different things, but we're all human. We're all just friends.'

Pupils are confident. They embrace opportunities to shine both in school and in the local community. For example, Year 6 pupils won the Scarborough school council's debating competition. Pupils have a valued voice in the school. The school council meets with governors to reflect on their successes throughout the year. This is celebrated at a governors' meeting, in which the pupils' own opinions are shared with governors.

Inspection findings

- At the start of my visit, we agreed a number of key lines of enquiry for the inspection. Firstly, I looked at how effectively leaders use data to track pupils' progress. You and your leaders are extremely fastidious in your collection and analysis of data and other information showing the school's performance. Your confident middle leaders, for example, have a detailed and accurate understanding of what this information shows about pupils' performance in their subject areas. Leaders are also very knowledgeable about the progress of different groups of pupils and can pinpoint trends in performance, including strengths and weaknesses in pupils' outcomes. For example, identified weaknesses in pupils' speaking and listening resulted in the provision of a speech and language unit. Nevertheless, you acknowledge that making sure that this wealth of data and information is used even more effectively to influence decisions about future school improvement is an important next step.
- I also looked at whether pupils are being challenged enough. This was because in the last two years, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher standards at the end of key stage 1 has been below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Similarly, a below-average proportion of pupils have reached the higher standards in writing at the end of key stage 2. Inspection evidence confirms that pupils are challenged effectively. Pupils' work in books shows high levels of challenge and high expectations. Highly skilled adults use questioning effectively to challenge pupils' thinking and to encourage them to think more deeply. Pupils are now even starting to ask challenging questions of themselves and others. School information shows that the proportion of pupils reaching the higher standards has increased.
- I also wanted to check whether pupils in key stage 1 are making good progress from their previous starting points. This was because in 2017 standards of attainment by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics, although better than in 2016, were below average. Current data shows that standards of attainment at key stage 1

have improved and pupils are making strong progress from their starting points.

- Leaders continue to develop high-quality teaching. Leaders and teachers work well together to make sure that any gaps and misconceptions in pupils' knowledge and understanding are identified and addressed. This has helped to improve the quality of teaching throughout the school considerably. Nevertheless, opportunities for staff to share the most effective teaching practices that are evident are sometimes still missed.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that they:

- continue to build on the positive improvements made in the quality of teaching through sharing the most effective practice among staff
- use more effectively the school's data and information collected to shape school improvement plans.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for North Yorkshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Eve Morris
Ofsted Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, the deputy head, the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo), the phonics leader, a group of governors, the school council and a representative from the local authority. I evaluated documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, the school development plan, information about pupils' progress, minutes of governing body meetings, behaviour and attendance records and information about safeguarding. I considered the 50 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. I listened to some pupils read. You and I visited every classroom together to observe teaching and learning and to scrutinise pupils' work in their books.