

Pool-in-Wharfedale Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Arthington Lane, Pool-in-Wharfedale, Otley, West Yorkshire LS21 1LG

Inspection dates

22–23 January 2019

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	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders, including governors, have successfully steered the school through a period of instability. As a result, effective action is being taken to halt a period of decline in the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes.
- Leaders use knowledge and research to make improvements to the curriculum and to teaching. This is having a good impact on pupils' progress. The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to develop knowledge and skills in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Governors are a school strength. They challenge senior and middle leaders. However, until recently, assessment information has not been useful enough to improve standards, particularly at key stage 1.
- Pupils' personal development and welfare are outstanding. The staff's work around the mental health and well-being for pupils and staff is exceptional.
- Leaders, including governors, have created a school whose nurturing Christian ethos permeates the entire school community.
- Children in the early years make a good start to their school life. Over time, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development, by the time they leave Reception, has been consistently above the national average.
- Behaviour in the school is good. Pupils get on well together in the playground, move around school calmly and are very polite. Attendance is good and very few pupils regularly miss school.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and happy in school. Parents and carers overwhelmingly agreed.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. This is particularly the case in mathematics, where teachers plan well to meet pupils' learning needs. They use questions skilfully to check what pupils have learned. However, teachers' questioning does not consistently allow pupils to think more deeply about their learning in other subjects. Assessment information is not consistently used to challenge all pupils to reach the highest standards.
- Current pupils' books show that they are making good progress. However, at key stage 1, some pupils do not receive the challenge they need.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the impact of leadership and management on pupils' outcomes by:
 - better using assessment information so that governors and leaders can hold staff to account
 - having a clear, shared understanding in school of what the highest-quality outcomes look like, particularly in key stage 1.
- Further improve teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - assessment information is used effectively so that all pupils are consistently challenged in lessons, particularly across key stage 1, so that they build on the good start made in early years in reading, writing and mathematics
 - teachers and additional adults probe pupils' thinking more through effective questioning.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Senior leaders have successfully steered the school through what has been, at times, a challenging period over the last academic year. Staff absence, a local school's admission policy consultation and an external investigation resulted in a significant demand on the headteacher's time. This restricted the time available for checking the quality of teaching and learning. As a result of these diversions, pupils' outcomes took an unexpected dip in 2018.
- The headteacher has encouraged staff to develop a curriculum that is underpinned by the latest research. Many parents commented that the headteacher is 'inspirational'. The headteacher, ably supported by the acting deputy headteacher and other leaders, effectively uses knowledge and research to improve pupils' outcomes and reduce staff workload. This can be evidenced in recent improvements to the teaching of mathematics. Teachers are encouraged to sequence their teaching using resources, including the outdoors, to support fluency and problem-solving. Leaders regularly check that this work is having an impact and, consequently, pupils are making good progress.
- School leaders have created a strong ethos of developing the whole child through the school's distinctive Christian values. Strong relationships are obvious among pupils and staff. Together, they promote the school's vision to 'Believe and Achieve'. Underpinning this ethos is the work leaders have started to support pupils' and staff's mental health and well-being. Together, this creates a palpable sense of community.
- Leaders and governors know their school very well. They have identified actions to improve the quality of education further. After the dip in 2018 outcomes, leaders took swift action to halt this decline. However, they do not use assessment information precisely to ensure that all pupils are challenged to achieve the highest standards, particularly in key stage 1.
- Teachers, including those with leadership roles, have benefited from a broad package of professional development opportunities. They welcome the chance to develop their skills and progress in their careers. Pupils can become part of the Junior Leadership Team or a 'Pool Pal'. Pupils have a voice in decision-making and value the chances they have to make a difference within school and the wider community.
- The primary physical education (PE) and sport funding is used well. It engages pupils in sport and active lifestyles. Teachers are coached by professionals to develop their skills and understanding. As a result, over time, the quality of PE provision in school continues to improve. Funding is used to provide competitive sports for pupils, such as basketball and Kwik cricket. After a visit from a gymnast, a former pupil was so inspired that they are now part of the British Gymnastics team.
- Additional funding for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) has a positive effect on learning for this group of pupils. From their different starting points, they are now making strong progress. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) knows pupils well as individuals and ensures that staff and

resources are well matched to pupils' needs.

- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to provide support for disadvantaged pupils' needs. Outcomes do vary over time, as the numbers within cohorts are very low. Some pupils have complex additional needs, but, over time and from their different starting points, they make good progress.
- The local authority and the local cluster of schools support the school well. Staff work closely together to develop a better understanding of what good-quality teaching and learning looks like across year groups. Middle leaders, through this partnership, have the chance to participate in a leadership development programme.
- Parents' views of the school are, in the main, positive. They agree overwhelmingly that their children are safe, happy and well looked after during their time at school.

Governance of the school

- Governors are a strength of the school. They know the school well and are not afraid to challenge. The chair of the governing body instils in governors a sense of moral purpose to 'prepare pupils for life going forward' through developing excellence in school.
- Governors have an accurate view of the school. Recently, they have attended assessment training, which has sharpened the way in which they hold leaders to account for pupils' outcomes. At present, it is too early to see this impact in end-of-year pupil outcomes.
- Governors are appointed based on a wide and varied skill set. Consequently, they can meet their statutory duties with regard, for example, to safeguarding and financial expertise. A clear succession plan is in place and there is a mix of established and newer governors to maintain the strength of governance over time.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Appropriate and robust checks are conducted to ensure the suitability of staff to work with children.
- Leaders ensure that appropriate risk assessments are in place for any visits and to maintain the security of the school site. Clear procedures are in place and staff and pupils are fully aware of these.
- The designated safeguarding leaders have a good knowledge of their roles. They ensure that staff training is relevant and up to date, as well as their own training. While their caseload may be small, this does not stand in the way of leaders accessing professional development to improve the school's pastoral work.
- Pupils understand safeguarding issues, including how to stay safe online. The school's digital leaders are planning an internet safety week next month. Pupils, across a range of classes, are knowledgeable about the dangers of cyber bullying and the importance of personal privacy online.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers use their secure subject knowledge to plan lessons that are well organised, sustain their pupils' interests and build on their curiosities. For example, 'Thoughtful Thursdays' have been introduced so that pupils can use an image to support their thinking and empathy. At the same time, they develop meaningful links between different areas of the school's curriculum.
- Teachers have increasingly high expectations of what pupils can achieve. This is evident in the quality of pupils' work over time and in their improving presentation. Teachers usually match work well to pupils' needs and abilities, although for some pupils, this is not as strong in key stage 1. Assessment information is not consistently used to support pupils' next steps in learning.
- Since the last inspection, leaders have improved the teaching of mathematics. Teachers create good quality models, which develop fluency, reasoning and problem-solving skills. Pupils are encouraged to question adults and are confident to provide a commentary of their understanding when discussing work. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils were able to challenge the teacher's explanations of perimeters to arrive at the correct answer. Teachers' questioning in mathematics allows pupils to think harder, although they do not apply similar questioning skills consistently to other subjects.
- Reading is valued by everyone in school. Pupils who read with the inspectors used phonics, as well as other reading skills, to read with fluency and expression. Pupils' records over time show there is an emphasis on reading both at school and at home. Leaders are developing pupils' reading skills, so they think more carefully about different aspects of comprehension when reading in class, or at home.
- Improvements in the curriculum have provided richer opportunities for pupils to write in subjects other than English. Pupils are starting to take more pride in their work. They are developing the new school handwriting style in more than just the handwriting lessons and transfer English skills into other areas of the curriculum. For example, they effectively take notes in history to support a First World War diary extract and use bullet points to create a list of planets in science.
- Teaching assistants are effective and well deployed. They listen to pupils and support their thinking. As a result, relationships and pupils' attitudes to learning are positive.
- Pupils value homework, whether this is reading, mathematics or 'Learning Pool'. A Year 2 pupil was able to recall finding out facts about nocturnal animals and was proud he could still remember the definition of nocturnal. Pupils say they like having a choice around home learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Leaders' actions to promote social, emotional and mental health provision in school are

exemplary. The ethos of the school actively promotes developing the whole child and is recognised as a 'Mind Mate friendly school' for the way leaders promote mental health strategies for staff and pupils.

- Pupils are confident and self-assured. This comes from the nurture, care and trust given by staff in school, including those at breakfast club. Pupils say that if someone was unkind or being bullied, which is rare, they would talk to an adult. If they felt they did not want to talk to an adult, they would use the 'chatterbox' in class and staff would respond.
- Older pupils relish the responsibility of being a 'Pool Pal'. With training, they are encouraged to support the efficient running of their school during assembly or at lunchtime. For example, they lead activities and games with younger friends. An accredited programme of 'young leaders' encourages pupils to consider their role as British citizens in their community. As a result, pupils talk enthusiastically about their work supporting local charities and are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well and enjoy school. They move around the school in a calm and orderly manner, holding doors open and politely welcoming visitors.
- Attendance continues to be above national averages, therefore learning proceeds uninterrupted for pupils.
- Pupils report that there are very few incidents of inappropriate behaviour. School records confirm this and detail any actions taken.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Typically, the proportion of pupils who reach the expected standards in the Year 1 phonics screening check is just below the national average. Staffing is stable and adults have a strong subject knowledge. Pupils use their phonic knowledge well when reading. Current assessment information shows that pupils are better placed to achieve the expected standard than at the same time in previous years.
- Leaders were quick to acknowledge that the dip in the 2018 results at key stages 1 and 2 was not what the school was expecting. Over time, standards in reading and writing, by the end of key stage 1, have been broadly in line with national standards. However, in mathematics, pupils' outcomes have not been as strong. Recent improvements to the teaching of mathematics have resulted in pupils, across the whole school, improving their fluency, reasoning and problem-solving skills. Pupils are typically confident mathematically and are successfully tackling work at an age-appropriate level. For example, in a lesson on multiplication, pupils could confidently justify their mathematical thinking to the teacher and explain the importance of setting out their work to avoid errors and misconceptions.
- The SENCo ensures that pupils with SEND have well-focused support. As a result, pupils make good progress from their different starting points.

- Over time, the most able pupils have made good progress to ensure that they achieve as well as they should given their capabilities.
- Leaders have introduced clear end-of-year expectations for staff and this information is starting to be used to inform planning, teaching and curriculum provision. As a result, current assessment information and pupils' books show that pupils are now making good progress. However, over time, for a small number of pupils at key stage 1 they have not had enough challenge for their different starting points.
- Pupils make good progress across a range of subjects other than English and mathematics. Subject leaders ensure that there is a broad curriculum, which means that outcomes across different subjects are good. The music leader, for example, has developed a curriculum that develops pupils' skills and knowledge across school. Music teaching is enhanced by opportunities to sing, play the recorder and take part in local festivals and events. All leaders give careful thought so that the curriculum inspires pupils.

Early years provision

Good

- Children start the Reception class with knowledge and skills that are typical for their age. Over time, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development has remained above the national average. The proportion of children exceeding the expected standard has been less consistent, especially in mathematical areas of learning. Nevertheless, children make good progress during their time in the early years.
- Leaders and staff have ensured that the early years curriculum is interesting, engaging, broad and balanced. Children develop curiosity and want to find out more. Activities have a clear purpose behind them and build upon what the children have previously learned. Indoor provision is thoughtfully resourced and is based upon children's interests and learning themes. Leaders recognise that the outdoor learning environment is yet to be developed to the same standard.
- Staff are clear about their responsibilities when managing children outside and closely supervise the provision's external access gates. Children's welfare is given a high priority and children are safe. Suitably qualified first-aiders are on hand should an incident occur.
- The development of children's language and communication skills is given a high priority. Daily sessions of whole-class and small-group teaching help children to develop their knowledge of letters and sounds. In addition, they improve their vocabulary and gain a deeper understanding of what is being said. They were excited to feel the 'buzz' of the new sound 'z'. Adults skilfully use questions to encourage children to explain themselves clearly. As a result, they quickly gain confidence to engage in conversation with others.
- Children develop perseverance and resilience through the range of activities on offer. They cooperate with each other and learn to take turns. For example, two girls took turns to be the teacher in the school role play area. Behaviour is good and is well managed by adults who are positive and encouraging when giving their instructions.

- The teaching of early reading skills is highly effective. All staff are well trained. They help children to use the sounds that they learn in their independent writing and when hunting for letters outdoors. As a result, children make good progress and are well prepared for the next stage of their education in Year 1.
- Monitoring is thorough. Leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the early years. They track children's progress carefully and know when children are not sufficiently challenged. Leaders look for ways to develop the provision further. There is a strong drive to improve standards. A recent decline in achievement in the proportion of children exceeding mathematical areas of learning has resulted in a member of staff working closely with the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics. Mathematics provision is now visited by other teachers as an example of strong and improving practice.
- Parents comment that their children are well cared for and safe in the early years. They value the comprehensive information given to them before their children start school and in the first weeks of the school year. Some parents would welcome even more information about how to support their children to learn throughout the Reception Year.
- Staff work closely with an on-site pre-school provision and, with other local schools, have developed a consistent approach to information sharing during transition into the Reception class. As a result, children make a good start and quickly settle to their new school environment.

School details

Unique reference number	108000
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	10085344

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	201
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joanne Pellow
Headteacher	Sally Fox
Telephone number	01132 843 151
Website	www.pool-in-wharfedale-leeds.co.uk/
Email address	info@poolprimarysch.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	27–28 January 2015

Information about this school

- Pool-in-Wharfedale is a smaller than average-sized primary school. It has one form entry starting in Reception.
- The school runs a breakfast provision.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND, including those with an education, health and care plan, is average.
- The school has been awarded Healthy School status, Mind Mate Friendly status and Leeds Music Education Partnership Champion School.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes across the school. Senior leaders accompanied inspectors during some of these observations.
- Inspectors listened to two groups of pupils read and held discussions with three further groups of pupils. They also talked informally with pupils around the school.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work across the curriculum and across all year groups to determine the accuracy of assessment and the sustainability of pupils' progress.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders and subject leaders. Discussions were held with a variety of school staff, including office and lunchtime staff. Inspectors also met nine members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. Phone conversations were with the chair of governors and a representative from the diocese.
- Inspectors talked to parents at the start of the school day as well as taking account of the 83 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 82 free-text responses from parents. Two phone calls to Ofsted were also considered.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed during lessons, at playtimes and lunchtimes and around the school site.
- Inspectors examined several documents, including the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan and information relating to pupils' achievement, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Ian Clennan, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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