

Inspection of a good school: Fitzwilliam Primary School

Second Avenue, Fitzwilliam, Pontefract, West Yorkshire WF9 5BA

Inspection dates:

14–15 January 2020

Outcome

Fitzwilliam Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school sits at the heart of the community. 'Working and growing together' is their aim. This is consistently promoted, as are British values, which helps pupils to be responsible, fair members of society.

Leaders are ambitious for what pupils can achieve. They want every pupil to be the best they can be. All staff have high expectations for behaviour. Pupils respond well. They are well behaved, polite and friendly.

Pupils say they feel safe and are happy. They say bullying is not an issue in their school. There are times when friends fall out, but nothing more serious. They know that trusted adults will support them if they ever have any worries.

Pupils are proud to come to this school. Many enjoy taking on extra responsibilities. These include acting as school council representatives or subject ambassadors. They know that leaders will listen to their opinions and take them into account when making decisions.

The many trips and visitors the school provide bring learning to life. These experiences help pupils to gain knowledge and skills and create lasting memories. Pupils have opportunities to try new things and to follow their interests by attending after-school clubs. These include choir, art, football and debating.

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

Leaders have recently redesigned the curriculum. This new curriculum has been in place since September 2019. Plans show what pupils will learn in each subject. They make it clear how pupils will build on learning, year on year. However, a number of pupils have gaps in their knowledge and skills from work in previous years.

Pupils, including the disadvantaged, achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. They work hard and take pride in their work. They are not put off by challenging tasks.

They are eager to know how to improve their work. However, work in other subjects, such as geography, is not as strong.

Leaders have put lots of things in place to help pupils to remember their learning. These include class scrapbooks, knowledge quizzes and assemblies. Reminders are displays on walls and in books. These are helping some pupils. However, others are unable to recall learning, even with their previous work as a prompt.

Most children start school with knowledge and skills which are below those typical for their age. The caring and highly skilled early years staff help them to settle quickly. Children respond well to routines and boundaries and flourish. Staff encourage children to be independent and to explore. They join in with play and use questioning skilfully to extend children's learning. They build strong relationships with parents and carers. This is helping parents to come into school confidently and help their children with their learning at home.

Leaders see reading as the key to unlock learning across the curriculum. Staff foster a love of reading. Most pupils look forward to their daily story time. Staff are well trained to teach reading. Most pupils quickly learn the names of letters and the sounds they make. They are able to put these sounds together to read and write words. Pupils who begin to fall behind get extra support to catch up. The books that pupils use to practise their reading are generally well matched to their phonics knowledge. However, the books some pupils use are too challenging. Work to extend pupils' vocabulary is helping most to understand their reading. However, some do not have sufficient background knowledge to understand the challenging texts they read.

Mathematics is a strength of the school. Work in arithmetic is especially strong. Most pupils work systematically and check their work carefully. They are able to apply their knowledge to solve problems in different contexts. Recent work to improve pupils' ability to reason has been very effective.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are generally well supported by adults. However, some do not access the resources they need to be able to work more independently alongside their peers.

Work on promoting personal development is a strength of the school. Pupils enjoy learning about different cultures and religions. They show great interest in looking at similarities and differences. They are able to consider different points of view relating to their own community. For example, in work about the miners' strike, they considered the views of the miners, the unions and the politicians.

Leaders have received effective support from the trust to improve the quality of education in the school. They have successfully improved staff well-being and reduced workload, without effecting the quality of lessons.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make appropriate checks to ensure that all adults in school are suitable to work with children. They maintain accurate and up-to-date records of these checks. Staff are well trained. This means that they know what to look out for. They are vigilant and report all concerns. Leaders make sure that vulnerable pupils get the support they need.

Pupils learn how to manage risks and keep themselves safe in a range of different situations. Almost all parents who made their views known during the inspection say they know their children are safe and well cared for in school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum for foundation subjects is now well sequenced but relatively new. As a result, some pupils have gaps in their learning in foundation subjects. This means that they do not always have a solid foundation on which to build new knowledge. This new curriculum needs to become fully embedded so that pupils no longer have gaps in subject knowledge.
- A small number of pupils with SEND do not have the resources they need to enable them to work independently. This means that they sometimes rely too heavily on adult support. Leaders, and teachers, need to make sure that all pupils have appropriate resources, matched to need, to help them to work with increased independence.
- The books that some pupils use to practise their reading could be better matched to their phonics knowledge. Some are too challenging, and pupils become frustrated. Leaders, and teachers, need to refine the choice of books these pupils are asked to read to more precisely match their phonics knowledge.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Fitzwilliam Primary School, to be good on 8 April 2014.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

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

Further information

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

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

School details

Unique reference number	144449
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	10121774
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	236
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	John North
Headteacher	Susan Harrison
Website	www.fitzwilliamprimary.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school joined Inspire Partnership Multi-Academy Trust in May 2017.

Information about this inspection

- I met with the deputy headteacher, the foundation stage manager, the SEND coordinator and some subject leaders.
- I met with five members of the governing body and the chair of the trust board.
- I met with the chief executive of the trust and the school improvement partner.
- The arrangements for safeguarding were checked. This included checks on the single central record, staff training and safeguarding records.
- I analysed the school's self-evaluation document and plans for improvement.
- I talked with pupils in lessons and at breaktimes. I also took account of the 11 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire.
- I talked to a number of parents at the start of the school day. I also took account of the 95 responses to Ofsted's survey, Parent View.
- I took account of the 12 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

- The subjects considered as part of this inspection were reading, mathematics and geography. I carried out deep dives in these subjects. This entailed meeting with senior leaders, subject leaders and teachers, looking at curriculum plans, visiting lessons, speaking to pupils about their learning and scrutinising pupils' work. I also listened to pupils read and observed teachers listening to pupils read.

Inspection team

Chris Cook, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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