

Inspection of Whitehill Community Academy

Occupation Lane, Illingworth, Halifax, West Yorkshire HX2 9RL

Inspection dates: 22–23 January 2020

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are very happy and enjoy coming to school. Attendance is above the national average. Pupils look very smart in their school uniform and they wear this with pride. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. There is no bullying. If pupils fall out, the staff work quickly to help pupils make friends again.

Pupils really enjoy curriculum enrichment sessions every Friday afternoon. They get the chance to learn new skills such as woodwork, cooking, sewing and British Sign Language.

This school is very inclusive. There is a large staff team to help pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders have recently set up 'leaps and bounds' to give extra help to pupils who need it. Staff have had extra training to help them calm pupils down. There are no permanent exclusions and hardly any fixed-term exclusions.

Parents and carers appreciate how much leaders do to support their children and families. Parents choose this school because they know how good it is.

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

Children get off to a flying start in early years. Relationships between adults and children are positive and nurturing. Children feel safe and settled, so they are thriving. Parents told inspectors that they are welcome to visit for phonics workshops. They are looking forward to the 'great big bedtime story' session that is coming soon. Teachers regularly update parents about their child's progress.

Teachers put resources inside and outdoors that catch children's interest and imagination. Children share and take turns. They are engrossed in their learning and persevere when they are using their fine motor skills. Children sit still and listen attentively when they are learning phonics. Children in Reception Year are well prepared for Year 1.

Even though children achieve so well in Reception, teachers in Year 1 go back over early phonics work. They delay teaching the Year 1 sounds in September. Pupils achieve results that are above the national average in the Year 1 phonics screening check. However, pupils who do not reach this standard have not had long enough to learn the new Year 1 sounds. The Year 1 phonics curriculum starts in November, which is too late for those that need extra practice.

In key stage 2, leaders have prioritised checking that pupils know the meaning of words. They have asked teachers to spend a lot of time teaching the whole class what different words mean. Some pupils already know the meaning of words that teachers explain.

Reading has a high priority. Leaders have been very successful in getting parents to hear their children read every day. Almost all parents are doing this. However, teachers do not hear pupils read very often. The whole class reads a vocabulary sheet together, but pupils read their reading books less often to their teacher.

Teachers would like to hear pupils read their reading books more often. Leaders welcomed this challenge. Pupils told inspectors that they would like to read to their teacher more often. This would help all pupils make better progress, but it would help the struggling readers most of all. Leaders know this, and they are thinking again about the way that they have balanced the reading curriculum.

Leaders asked staff to work together in curriculum teams. Middle leaders successfully lead these teams. All subjects have been carefully planned. Leaders have identified the most important content to be covered in each subject. Teachers make sure that pupils can see how their learning is connected. This helps pupils to remember important ideas and concepts.

The mathematics curriculum is well designed and implemented. It is sequential and builds on prior learning. Pupils are given frequent opportunities to apply their mathematical knowledge to reasoning and problem solving.

Teachers have good subject knowledge in science. They use scientific language precisely in lessons and pupils understand this vocabulary. Pupils enjoy science investigations. This practical work helps pupils remember their learning.

Pupils enjoy learning about history and comparing how things have changed over time. Pupils say that history is now taught regularly, and they are proud that they know much more about it. Some pupils said that they even know more than their mum and dad.

Teachers feel highly valued and well supported with their workload. Parents told inspectors what a brilliant job the headteacher is doing. Pupils said that the most important thing that they would not change about their school is the headteacher.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding leaders are supported by a team of learning mentors. They work closely together to make sure that pupils are safe.

Leaders have recently improved their policy and procedures to make sure that pupils with special dietary needs are kept safe. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) writes individual healthcare plans for pupils with medical conditions. The SENCo follows government guidance and recommendations closely.

Governors do not rely solely on the information that leaders provide. They asked the local authority to audit safeguarding arrangements last October to check this externally. Governors challenge leaders appropriately.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers are holding pupils back by spending longer than they need revising earlier learning in phonics. This prevents those pupils who struggle to learn to read from having maximum time to practise the new sounds they are taught in Year 1. Leaders should ensure that teachers follow the phonics programme at the intended pace and check to make sure that pupils are meeting the milestones set for their age, at each stage of the phonics programme.
- Teachers do not hear pupils read their reading books very often. This is slowing the progress of struggling readers who need frequent practice reading books that are well matched to their phonics knowledge. Leaders should review the curriculum balance between vocabulary teaching and the opportunities pupils are given to read their reading books to an adult in school. This will help all pupils to become equally confident and fluent readers.

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	136547
Local authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	10121905
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	702
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Bo Scholefield
Principal	Jimmy Sayles
Website	www.whitehillacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- This school converted to academy status. The school is a member of the I-Trust Education multi-academy trust.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

- During the inspection, we met with the principal, chair and vice-chair of the board of trustees and other senior and middle leaders, including the SENCo, subject leaders and those responsible for safeguarding.
- We did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science and history.
- We spoke to pupils about their learning and heard pupils read. We visited lessons and discussed pupils' work with leaders of deep-dive subjects. We discussed pupils' learning with teachers following visits to their lessons. We met two newly qualified teachers to discuss their induction, training and support.

- We spoke to pupils and staff at breakfast club, and at breaktime and lunchtime. We also spoke to pupils in separate focus groups. We visited 'leaps and bounds' before school and during lessons.
- We evaluated documentation, including the school improvement plan, minutes of meetings of the governing body, records of behaviour and exclusions, and safeguarding records. We evaluated education, health and care plans and documents linked to pupils with additional medical needs. We reviewed complaints made by parents and evaluated leaders' response to these complaints. We evaluated the website, which is fully compliant with statutory requirements.
- We spoke to parents before school and in a focused parents' group.

Inspection team

Tracey Ralph, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Louise Greatrex	Ofsted Inspector
Janet Lunn	Ofsted Inspector
Dan Murray	Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2020