

Inspection of a good school: Highcliffe Primary School

Hutton Lane, Guisborough, North Yorkshire TS14 8AA

Inspection dates:

10–11 March 2020

Outcome

Highcliffe Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

The new headteacher has ensured that Highcliffe Primary school continues to improve. She has addressed emerging weaknesses and built on previous strengths. She works hard with her staff to create a supportive culture in which pupils and staff feel valued and listened to. Staff feel well supported and enjoy their work. Pupils and parents love this nurturing, inclusive school.

The headteacher has high expectations of pupils' behaviour. The school is calm and orderly. Pupils behave well in lessons and at social times. They are considerate and polite to each other and to staff. Pupils play together cooperatively in the playground and say they feel safe. They know bullying can happen, but say it is rare. Staff are skilled in dealing with concerns.

Pupils know staff expect them to try and achieve their very best. They concentrate well on their tasks and are keen to make the most of their learning. Teachers plan lessons that help pupils be successful learners. Staff have carefully planned a curriculum to excite and engage pupils. Pupils say they enjoy their lessons across a number of subjects.

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

The school leaders have rightly focused on ensuring that all children succeed in gaining their basic skills in mathematics and English. School leaders, including governors, recognise that standards in reading have not been good enough and have taken action to address this. Subject leaders in mathematics and English have worked hard to improve matters and address any gaps. They have implemented a programme of work to help pupils become better readers.

Teachers now have a detailed and systematic approach to helping pupils know their letters and the sounds they make (phonics) by the end of Year 1. Changes in reading materials and better teaching make sure pupils now get accurate and

precise help with matching the sounds that letters make. Pupils that needed to catch up have been spotted and are being given extra help. Pupils' reading books match their phonics skills and their reading is rarely stilted or hesitant. Some gaps in understanding are apparent in Year 2 pupils but this is being addressed. Teaching assistants are yet to be fully trained in these approaches but are skilful in helping children read their books successfully. In key stage 2 lessons teachers place an emphasis on pupils' understanding of how reading texts are put together, alongside nurturing a love of reading.

An understanding of how a love of books can help children become better readers is at the heart of the school's planning. Pupils are excited by the stories they are hearing. They talk with enthusiasm about their preferred books and writers. Pupils talk about the content and ideas they have come across in class books. Teachers choose books very carefully to help support their topic work in other subjects, alongside those they enjoy reading themselves. However, in key stage 1, some pupils found recalling their story time difficult.

The way learning is ordered in mathematics is well organised and helps pupils build up confidence. Planning ensures that learning is developed from the Reception class through to Year 6. This is evident in the lessons which teachers are delivering and in the pupils' works. Teachers quickly spot any gaps in pupils' understanding. They know the subject well and check that pupils have a secure understanding before they move them on. Pupils are making the progress they should in mathematics across the school.

Teachers plan lessons and learning that improves pupils' knowledge in all other subjects. The order in which key facts and key words are taught has been well planned and delivered. The curriculum is planned right through the school from Nursery to Year 6. Pupils recap important knowledge on a regular basis. They use quick quizzes and fact checkers to test their understanding. The ability of children to remember more is impressive. In Year 1 history, pupils were able to remember key facts about Captain Cook and Neil Armstrong and talk about pioneers and explorers in some detail. Opportunities for pupils to use and apply this information to answer deeper questions in history are not as well planned.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) do well. They thrive because they have their needs identified quickly. Clear plans are put in place to meet their needs, with additional help and resources when needed. They get extra help at other times and this is planned so they do not miss out on other subjects.

Pupils have regular lessons, awareness days and assemblies which help them understand and recognise similarities and differences between people in the local community and the wider world. An extensive range of in-school and out-of-school activities gives pupils a chance to develop their skills and talents.

Pupils' attendance is improved. Pupils enjoy their lessons and say they can concentrate on their work. They seldom get disturbed. Some pupils who find controlling their emotions difficult get sensitive support from skilled staff.

The governors make sure the headteacher is tackling the improvements needed and make key decisions to support any necessary changes. They check that disadvantaged pupils and those that need to catch up are doing well. Some of the information that should be on the school website is missing.

In discussion with the headteacher, we agreed that how well the current actions to improve outcomes in reading have been sustained may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

A culture of safeguarding is central to the life of the school. Staff know their responsibilities to keep children safe. Leaders make sure staff are kept up to date with training. They carry out checks on staff to ensure that they are safe to work with children. Comprehensive systems identify and support those children who need extra help.

Pupils know about the risks they might face. They are taught the basics of online safety. For example, they know not to share personal information online. They can explain that they would tell an adult if they had any worries.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

Some pupils in key stage 1 have gaps in their phonics knowledge and an underdeveloped love of reading. The new approaches to the teaching of phonics and promoting a love of reading are not fully embedded. Training for teaching assistants and further embedding of the agreed practices are needed to ensure those that need to catch up can do so quickly.

Pupils do not get enough opportunities to use and apply their good grasp of facts and knowledge to key subject concepts. The school's curriculum has been focused on ensuring that pupils have strong subject knowledge and pupils can remember more. This has led to a facts and vocabulary focus for assessments. School leaders should revisit what they want pupils to apply their learning to in the foundation subjects so that pupils can apply their learning more deeply.

Parents do not have full access to the information they require on the school website. As a result, parents cannot be sure which subjects and topics are being taught and when. School leaders need to ensure that the school website is fully compliant with Department for Education requirements.

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 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 school to be good on 20–21 April 2016.

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	131457
Local authority	Redcar and Cleveland
Inspection number	10110826
Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	389
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Mr Derek Benn
Headteacher	Miss Nicky King
Website	www.highcliffeprimary.org
Date of previous inspection	20–21 April 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a larger-than-average-sized primary school.
- A new headteacher took up post in 2017.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.

Information about this inspection

- During the inspection I spoke with pupils in selected groups, in lessons and at playtimes. I spoke with the governing body, a representative from the local authority, the headteacher, other senior leaders and staff. I looked at a range of documents including those about attendance, safeguarding and checks on the suitability of staff.
- I looked at 27 responses from parents in response to Parent View (Ofsted's online survey). I spoke to a number of staff individually about what it was like to work at the school.
- I looked in depth at reading, mathematics and history. This involved talking to subject leaders, classroom teachers and pupils. I watched some parts of lessons and looked at examples of pupils' work. I also listened to how well pupils read their books with a familiar adult.

Inspection team

Jonathan Brown, lead inspector

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