

# Inspection of a good school: Rawthorpe St James CofE (VC) Infant and Nursery School

Rawthorpe Lane, Rawthorpe, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD5 9NT

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Inspection dates:

4–5 March 2020

## Outcome

Rawthorpe St James CofE (VC) Infant and Nursery School continues to be a good school. However, inspectors have some concerns that one or more areas may be declining, as set out below.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Rawthorpe Infant and Nursery is a happy place to learn. Pupils at this school are a delight. They are welcoming and friendly to visitors. Leaders work hard to ensure that everyone feels part of the school's diverse community. Pupils appreciate how staff care for them and support their well-being.

Pupils work hard in lessons and take pride in their work. They speak excitedly about the 'golden chair'. This encourages them to work hard. Pupils spoken to said they are not worried about bullying. They know what to do if it happens. Parents and carers are positive about the care their children receive. However, some pupils do not attend school as often as they should. This means that they miss out on some of the curriculum on offer.

Leaders have made some improvements to the curriculum, including in the early years. However, pupils do not achieve as well as they should in reading.

Leaders have made sure that a range of fantastic experiences broaden pupils' horizons. Pupils willingly take on leadership roles in school, such as school councillors, helpers and buddies to younger children. There are many different clubs for all pupils to take part in. Some favourites are Christian art, Reading and Around the world.

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

Over time, some pupils with low starting points have not achieved as well as they should. These pupils are not well supported to catch up quickly, particularly in reading. Leaders,

including governors, want all pupils to achieve well. However, governors have not sufficiently challenged leaders when too few pupils have reached expected standards.

Most children enjoy reading. Leaders have prioritised reading and are developing pupils' love of reading. During the inspection, pupils enthusiastically took part in World Book Day. Leaders have recently introduced a new approach to the teaching of phonics and early reading. Books are well matched to pupils' phonics knowledge. However, phonics is not consistently well taught. Consequently, some pupils are not reading with age-appropriate fluency. This affects their ability to learn well in different subjects. Some staff who support struggling readers have not been trained in the school's phonics programme. This means that pupils are not catching up quickly enough.

Pupils learn the full range of national curriculum subjects. Leaders have designed a topic-based curriculum. Subjects are coherently linked together through different themes. Leaders have identified what they expect pupils to learn in each half term. These expectations become more demanding as pupils move through the school.

In science and mathematics, leaders sequence lessons so that pupils learn in a logical order. Lessons build on what pupils already know. In mathematics, teachers make sure that pupils understand and apply their skills by problem solving. Pupils can explain their thinking. They revisit their learning often, which means they can, for example, quickly recall number facts when needed. Pupils enjoy mathematics. The quality of pupils' work in mathematics is strong.

Leaders and staff promote pupils' wider development well. Pupils' personal, social and emotional development is a strength of the school. Teachers encourage pupils to debate issues that broaden their thinking. Pupils develop respect for other cultures and faiths. They recognise their similarities and celebrate and respect their differences. Many pupils join a wide range of lunchtime activities and after-school clubs, such as sports and mindfulness. Leaders encourage pupils to join in and they closely monitor which children attend clubs.

Children in the early years settle well because staff are caring and support children effectively. Adult-led learning helps children to develop their phonics knowledge from nursery. Similarly, children develop secure number knowledge when working with staff. Staff think carefully about the knowledge children already have and what they need when they enter Year 1. Children enjoy lots of exciting visits, such as to Bradley Woods and Cliffe House.

Staff expect pupils to behave well and they do. Pupils' attendance overall remains below the national average. Leaders monitor attendance. They have plans to improve attendance, including working with families. This is an ongoing area for development.

Leaders consider the workload and well-being of staff. Teachers say that leaders give them the right support and training to carry out their work. Staff are proud to work at this school.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors ensure that the right checks are in place to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. Staff receive regular safeguarding training. They are knowledgeable about keeping pupils safe. Leaders and staff are vigilant. Leaders responsible for safeguarding know pupils and their families well. They have prioritised the support for vulnerable families. They are persistent when concerned about a pupil's welfare. They secure timely and effective help from outside agencies when required. Pupils are taught how to minimise risks to their safety, including when online.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not ensured that the curriculum helps all pupils to achieve as well as they can across subjects. Governors do not hold leaders to account well enough for the quality of education in the school. They do not challenge leaders effectively about important aspects of the school, such as pupils' outcomes and attendance. As a result, pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Those responsible for governance need to hold senior leaders to account more stringently to improve pupils' outcomes, particularly for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- The teaching of phonics is not fully effective. There are inconsistencies in the way phonics is taught. As a result, pupils, particularly the low-attaining pupils, do not consistently achieve as well as they should in early reading. While there is a clear curriculum plan for phonics, some staff have not received the necessary training and support to implement this effectively. Leaders should act swiftly to ensure that staff are well trained to teach phonics effectively. Leaders need to ensure that pupils who struggle to read catch up quickly. They should ensure that pupils gain the knowledge they need to become fluent readers by the end of key stage 1.
- Too many pupils do not attend school regularly enough. As a result, some pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Leaders should improve the attendance of all pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged and those with SEND. They should build on recent strategies, including working closely with external agencies and parents, so that everyone understands the importance of good attendance.

## 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 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 second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 16 July 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	107700
<b>Local authority</b>	Kirklees
<b>Inspection number</b>	10121870
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	286
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Peter Rock
<b>Principal</b>	Michael Kent
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.nlconline.org.uk/infant">http://www.nlconline.org.uk/infant</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	12 July 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is designated as having a Church of England character. It is part of the Diocese of Leeds.
- The school is also part of the Netherhall Learning Campus.

## Information about this inspection

- I met with the principal, the head of school, senior leaders and other members of staff. I met with a representative from the local authority and a group of governors, including the chair of the governing body. I spoke to a representative from the Diocese of Leeds.
- I observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school, including at playtimes and lunchtimes. I gathered pupils' views about the school through formal and informal discussions.
- I scrutinised a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, records of governors' work and safeguarding documents.
- I considered the responses to Ofsted's parent questionnaire, Parent View, and the staff survey results.

- I did a deep dive in the following subjects: reading, mathematics and science. In doing so, I visited lessons and reviewed pupils' work. I spoke to pupils about their learning and listened to them read. I also met with teachers.

### **Inspection team**

Jean Watt, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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