

Inspection of a good school: Lightcliffe Church of England Primary School

Wakefield Road, Lightcliffe, Halifax, West Yorkshire HX3 8SH

Inspection dates:

1 and 2 December 2021

Outcome

Lightcliffe Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Lightcliffe Church of England Primary is a caring school where relationships are strong. Everyone is well looked after. Staff are good role models and pupils appreciate the care and support they receive. Staff are proud to work here.

Leaders have ensured that there are clear and consistent expectations for how pupils should behave. These recently refreshed ideals result in positive behaviour in lessons and around the school. Pupils are kind and supportive of each other. When fallouts happen, they are quickly resolved by adults. Pupils have every opportunity to ask for help from trusted adults. Equally, pupils say that they turn to their friends if they need support. Recent initiatives such as anti-bullying week have focused pupils' thinking. One pupil reflected that this week had inspired her to consider the impact of others' actions.

Pupils enjoy school. The atmosphere in school is calm and purposeful. Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning. They listen to their teachers and one another attentively. They thrive in the high expectations for their academic progress. All pupils describe their school as a happy and safe place.

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

The school provides a good quality of education. Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is rooted in clear ambition and aspiration for its pupils. Curriculum plans have been constructed effectively by leaders who have strong subject expertise. They have ensured that there is a clear sequence of knowledge and skills from Reception to Year 6. Teachers use 'knowledge organisers' with pupils. These highlight what information is the most important and what pupils need to know. They also highlight key vocabulary. On occasion, these are too generic and do not focus on subject-specific language enough. Teachers ensure that other adults support pupils in lessons effectively. Their input is effective because leaders have prioritised the development of these well-trained adults.

Leaders are in the process of introducing a new approach to the teaching of phonics. It is leaders' intention that this will create a more consistent approach throughout Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. Pupils attentively participate in interesting and enjoyable activities. They are supported by knowledgeable staff. Leaders have plans to deliver additional training to teaching staff and to work with parents to support them to help their children to read at home.

Leaders have recently implemented a new mathematics curriculum. Through this, they ensure that pupils, from the very earliest stages, gain a deep and secure understanding of the subject. Teachers and support staff help pupils to remember facts and concepts in mathematics through well-considered, sequenced lessons. Teachers are skilled in the teaching of this subject and help pupils to remember information through carefully designed activities. Leaders' work to ensure that they are highly ambitious for the strongest mathematicians is a recent, positive development.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. Teachers and teaching assistants know the needs of pupils with SEND and support them with skill. Some parents expressed concerns about the current quality of provision for pupils with SEND. Leaders have secured the support of special educational needs coordinators from the trust due to some instability in the leadership of this area. This is effective.

This is a nurturing school. Pupils learn how to look after their mental health and are eager to support others who may be struggling. Many pupils look forward to their forest school lessons to learn outdoor skills and teamwork. There are many popular after-school clubs. Both music and sport are important parts of the life of this school. The well-attended school choir sings a range of challenging pieces with impressive skill. Pupils also spoke of cross-country running inspiring them to be successful in local athletics events.

In discussion with the headteacher, the inspector agreed that ensuring that leaders' new approach to early reading is firmly embedded and an emphasis on the teaching of ambitious, subject-specific vocabulary may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The safeguarding of all pupils is a priority in this school. Leaders ensure that all staff and governors are well trained. Governors actively challenge the school leaders and are instrumental in supporting them in this essential work. The curriculum is effective in teaching pupils about online safety and the safeguarding risks that they might face. As a result, pupils show clear understanding and have mature attitudes to the dangers they may encounter. The school has well-trained safeguarding leads who competently support staff and advise as necessary. Leaders have good links with safeguarding professionals in the trust and the local authority. The school's single central record, which details recruitment checks, is meticulously kept.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders are in the process of implementing a newly designed curriculum for reading. Senior leaders should ensure that the curriculum leader for early reading has sufficient opportunity to embed this new approach. This includes ensuring that all teaching staff are trained effectively.
- Pupils' use and knowledge of subject-specific vocabulary are not consistently strong. Sometimes pupils lack the precise words to explain concepts or their thinking. Leaders should further develop pupils' wide and rich use of subject-specific vocabulary throughout the curriculum.

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/outstanding. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Lightcliffe Church of England VA Primary School, to be good in November 2012.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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	144865
Local authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	10200600
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	411
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Paul Whitman
Headteacher	Graham Hilton
Website	http://www.lightcliffeprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This school is a member of the Abbey Multi Academy Trust.
- The headteacher took up his role in September 2020.
- This school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics and history. Here, the inspector met with subject leaders, visited lessons, talked to pupils and teachers and looked at pupils' work. In reading, the inspector also listened to pupils read to familiar adults.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the assistant headteacher, subject leaders, groups of teachers and support staff and members of the local governing body, including the chair.
- The inspector met with the chief executive officers of Abbey Multi Academy Trust.

- The inspector reviewed safeguarding records, including the single central record of recruitment checks on staff.
- The inspector considered the views of parents who responded to Ofsted’s parental questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View.
- The inspector considered the views of staff from one-to-one conversations and took account of the responses to Ofsted’s staff survey.
- The inspector spoke with pupils formally and informally about their day-to-day experiences at the school. The responses from pupils who completed Ofsted’s pupil survey were considered.

Inspection team

Marcus Newby, lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

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