

Inspection of a good school: White Laith Primary School

Naburn Drive, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS14 2BL

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 May 2022

Outcome

White Laith Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

White Laith is a school community which lives and breathes the school motto: 'Aspire not to have more, but to be more'.

All staff in school are committed that pupils will develop not just academically, but personally. Leaders think hard about how to help pupils develop moral purpose. Pupils are taught that they can make the world a better place by the way they speak to, and behave with, others. They are kind, courteous and respectful. They look out for each other, as well as themselves. When someone is struggling, pupils notice it and try to help out. They do so, as one pupil said, 'not because we are told to, but because it is right to'.

Bullying is exceptionally rare. Pupils are confident that if it happened it would be sorted out immediately. Pupils feel safe and enjoy coming to school.

All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) learn a curriculum that is designed to stimulate and challenge them. What pupils learn builds over time so that the knowledge and skills they have by the end of Year 6 means they are ready for the next stage of their education.

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

In most subjects, leaders have developed curriculums that detail what pupils will learn in each unit. The curriculums clearly identify the knowledge and skills pupils need to know before beginning their new learning. Teachers check that pupils have secure prerequisite knowledge before they start new teaching. When they identify gaps, teachers adjust their teaching to give pupils the best chance of being successful with their new learning.

Leaders have developed curriculum thinking so that, in most subjects, what pupils learn in Year 1 builds on what pupils have learned in the early years. Adults plan opportunities to ensure that children get more challenging opportunities as they get older. For example, in the early stages of Nursery, children use an assault course prepared by adults to develop

their balance and coordination. Later, pupils design their own assault courses to use under the supervision of adults.

In some subjects, teachers assess learning at the end of a 'unit'. This provides teachers and leaders with information about what pupils have learned in the short term but does not provide information about whether pupils can remember in the longer term. This prevents leaders from being able to judge the effectiveness of the curriculum at helping pupils know, remember and be able to do more.

Reading is given a high priority. All staff have had training to ensure the selected phonics approach is being applied with consistency. It is clear what pupils are expected to know at each stage. Leaders have made careful adaptations to their phonics curriculum to ensure that pupils who are not at the expected stage, as a result of COVID-19 related absences, are able to 'catch-up' in a sustainable manner. Pupils throughout school enjoy hearing adults read to them, as well as having the opportunity to read to adults. Those pupils who may read less frequently to an adult at home have additional opportunities to read to staff in school.

Pupils with additional needs are supported effectively throughout school. Teachers are given clear information about the needs of individual pupils and strategies they can use to support pupils. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) works with staff and other leaders to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies and make any adaptations that are necessary to allow pupils to be successful with their learning.

At break and lunchtimes pupils take full advantage of school grounds that provide a wide range of stimulating opportunities, including a bird hide, a barefoot trail, trees to climb and a story circle. They show respect for their surroundings and play calmly together.

Leaders, including governors, have a commitment to ensuring that staff focus on tasks and activities that benefit the pupils. They have sought views of all staff and made changes where necessary.

White Laith is a 'singing community'. Weekly, staff and pupils come together to sing as one, accompanied by a professional pianist. Opportunities are taken throughout to embed vocabulary from within the music curriculum: harmony, 'in the round', crescendo. One song sung weekly states, 'Sing together, every girl and every boy. With a voice that sings of hope and peace and joy'. This sums up why the weekly singing session is a highlight of the school week for very many pupils and staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding within school. All staff know the risks to pupils, are aware of the potential signs of concern and know how to report them in school. The importance of this responsibility is regularly communicated to staff through weekly briefings. Leaders ensure that, where they have concerns regarding a pupil, they work with external agencies to secure necessary support.

Pupils study a personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum that teaches them about the risks they may face and steps they can take to stay safe. Pupils are taught that they have a responsibility to not just look out for their own safety but that of others. Leaders ensure that pupils know who they can report any worries or concerns to.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Curriculum plans, in a small number of subjects, do not clearly identify the crucial knowledge and skills that pupils must know prior to starting the study of a new unit. This means that teachers cannot check whether pupils know what they need to know and are unable to make necessary adjustments to their teaching. Leaders need to ensure the curriculums in these subjects make this clear.
- Assessments of longer-term learning is not established in most subjects. Assessment focuses upon checking that pupils have learned what has just been taught, rather than whether they have a depth of knowledge and understanding of all that has been taught. This means that leaders cannot accurately evaluate the effectiveness of their curriculum design and implementation and make any necessary adjustments.

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 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 second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2011.

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	107932
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	10200274
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	245
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Peter Whelan
Headteacher	Nicola Sheerin
Website	www.whitelaith.leeds.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	1 November 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has an above-average proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is well above average.
- The school is part of the Leeds East Primary Partnership.

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 leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher, the SENCo, the leaders in charge of the PSHE education curriculum, the designated safeguarding leads and a group of governors.
- The inspector met the early years leader, visited the Nursey provision and Reception, and spoke with children.

- The inspector took account of a wide range of documentary information, including school policies, school self-evaluation, records of behaviour and attendance, minutes from governing body meetings and information regarding safeguarding processes.
- The inspector carried out deep dives into reading, mathematics and history. In each deep dive, the inspector reviewed curriculum documentation online, discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector listened to pupils reading.
- The inspector held conversations with leaders of computing and art to discuss curriculum planning and samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector observed pupils at break, lunchtime and when moving around school.
- The inspector spoke to a range of staff over the course of the inspection and considered responses to the staff survey.
- The inspector spoke to parents at the end of the school day, considered written communication from parents and reviewed the responses to Ofsted's Parent View survey.
- The inspector met formally with groups of pupils, reviewed responses to the pupil survey and spoke to others informally throughout the inspection.
- The inspector met the school improvement advisor.
- The inspector observed the weekly whole-school singing session.

Inspection team

Steve Wren, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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