

Inspection of Weelsby Academy

Weelsby Street, Grimsby, Lincolnshire DN32 7PF

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 June 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to school because they feel cared for and successful. Staff have high expectations of how pupils should behave and how well they can do in their work. Pupils have the utmost respect for their teachers and so rise to these expectations.

Children in the early years get off to a flying start in their knowledge and attitudes. They use what staff have taught them when working independently. Children are highly focused on what they are doing as the environment is so well matched to what they have been taught and what they need to learn next.

This excellent start is built on as pupils progress through the school. All pupils and staff understand the behaviour policy. Staff are consistent and nip any small issues in the bud so that pupils can get on with their learning. Pupils know that issues like poor behaviour or even bullying do occasionally happen. However, they know that staff will sort these problems out, and so pupils feel happy and safe.

Leaders have come up with creative approaches to improve pupils' life skills and understanding of the world. Some pupils form a 'mini police' squad in school that works with a local police officer to talk about issues they see in and around school. Pupils are taught how to save money and how to manage their finances. They get chance to put this into practice by saving up for books and toys in the school shop, 'Weelsbystones'.

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

Leaders have worked with leaders from other schools in the trust to design a curriculum that works for pupils in Weelsby. This curriculum has reading and language at the front and centre. All staff understand this and are totally committed to helping children to read with success and enthusiasm.

The progress that pupils make in their early reading is exceptional. Leaders make sure that pupils master the basics in phonics early on. Nearly all children can read well by the time they reach Year 2. Pupils are also taught how to spell using their knowledge of phonics. Staff are highly skilled in teaching phonics, and all use the same strategies. Pupils do not waste a moment in their taught sessions. Pupils who fall behind are given extra help. They enjoy these extra lessons as they are delivered with energy and expertise by staff. Pupils are successful in them.

Leaders have made sure that children are ready for phonics through the highly effective teaching in the early years. The curriculum in early years has a clear focus on language development. Children learn stories off by heart and then make up their own using words and phrases that they have remembered. Staff break down the learning into very small steps for children. Children enjoy what they are doing because staff give precise instructions and make expectations clear.

Children in the early years get an effective grounding in all areas of the curriculum. This is then built on as pupils move through school. Leaders have planned what pupils will be taught in each year and how this uses what pupils already know. Although this is clearly planned out for teachers, in some cases, teachers lack important subject knowledge in parts of the curriculum. This can mean that teachers miss opportunities to address misconceptions or do not spot when they have given work to pupils that they are not quite ready for.

In most cases, pupils remember what they have been taught in the past. Teachers use many ways to check what pupils have remembered. One example is the 'same day intervention' strategy in mathematics where teachers check what pupils have done halfway through the lesson. Teachers change what they are doing based on the information that they gain from assessment. Teachers also use the 'RAG' system to look at a wide range of work and see if pupils have any gaps in their understanding. Pupils get work that is matched to these gaps.

Leaders have considered how all pupils will be supported through the curriculum. They know that the focus on reading and language will help all pupils, particularly those who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers support pupils with SEND by making changes to anything that might be a barrier to their success. Leaders recognise that some pupils with SEND with specific difficulties in writing would benefit from further support. Leaders have started to train staff on how to provide this.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and leaders make sure that they attend regularly. Attendance has improved dramatically since the last inspection.

Children in the early years are taught about how to be kind and take turns. As with the rest of the curriculum, this is built on as pupils move through school. Pupils know about British values like respect and democracy. They have a good understanding of healthy relationships and how to keep themselves safe online.

Trustees and members of the academy advisory board (AAB) are clear on their roles. Trustees provide extra resources when needed. Members of the AAB check that these resources are being used well to improve the quality of education in the school.

Staff are well supported in the school. Leaders, including trust leaders, provide a wealth of training and development opportunities. These include watching expert teachers in this school or other schools and working with subject specialists.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Trustees are proactive in spotting key issues that might affect families in the school community. They have ensured that leaders check that all staff have a thorough understanding of how to spot any possible signs of radicalisation.

Leaders in school also train staff well in other significant safeguarding issues, such as criminal exploitation. Staff notice and log any small concerns that they have. Leaders are quick to spot a pattern or build-up of these concerns and then act appropriately. Leaders have a close working relationship with the police and social care, and act swiftly to notify these agencies when they feel that there is a need to.

Leaders carry out the checks needed on any alternative providers that pupils attend. Members of the AAB check that they are doing this.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects in key stages 1 and 2, some teachers lack aspects of important subject knowledge. Teachers sometimes miss when pupils have not fully understood something. Teachers sometimes do not consider the precise teaching and work that pupils need. Pupils make mistakes that are not corrected, or struggle to complete tasks when this happens. Leaders should ensure that teachers have the subject knowledge that they need in all the subjects across the curriculum.

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	138279
Local authority	North East Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10227428
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	353
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Steven Hodsman
Head of academy	Catherine Davenport
Website	www.weelsby.org.uk/
Date of previous inspection	13 and 14 September 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses three alternative providers that are each based in a registered school: Phoenix Park Academy, Western Primary School and Eastfield Primary Academy. Four children currently attend these alternative provisions (AP).
- The school has a nursery for three- and four-year-olds.

Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with the head of academy, executive principal, deputy chief executive officer of Delta academies trust, two trustees and three members of the AAB about the educational offer in the school.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, English, mathematics, art and design, and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Each deep dive included a visit to the early years.
- Inspectors also looked at books in science and some foundation subjects to see what pupils had been learning in those subjects.
- Inspectors spoke with leaders about pupils with SEND and visited some pupils with SEND in lessons.
- Inspectors looked at how leaders support pupils with specific behavioural needs. Inspectors checked on all the pupils who attend AP and how leaders checked on their progress.
- Inspectors checked the record that leaders keep on staff who work in the school. Inspectors spoke to leaders about how they work with other agencies to keep children safe and looked at some examples of when they had done this.
- Inspectors evaluated the four parent and carer responses to Ofsted's survey, Parent View. Inspectors spoke with over 20 parents outside about their views of the school.
- Inspectors evaluated the 89 responses to the pupil survey and the 17 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

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