

Inspection of Castleton Primary School

Green Lane, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS12 1JZ

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 October 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Castleton Primary School is a safe haven for pupils. Some teachers taught many parents and carers when they were pupils at Castleton themselves. This helps staff in the early years to establish trusting relationships with parents quickly. This partnership helps children to settle happily when they start school.

Pupils behave well most of the time. Very occasionally, a few pupils are unkind to others. Staff usually solve the problem completely. Leaders need to make sure that this happens every time. Leaders have introduced a new behaviour policy to help them with this.

The diverse pupil population at Castleton helps pupils to learn about different faiths and cultures first hand. Pupils speak more than 30 different languages between them. Pupils are proud to share their cultural heritage with their friends. This helps prepare all pupils well for life in modern Britain.

Leaders want the very best for every child. They go above and beyond to give pupils experiences beyond Leeds. Leaders provide lots of opportunities for educational visits that enrich the curriculum. These include residential visits from Year 4 onwards. Leaders even take some pupils away on holiday in August. This broadens pupils' horizons and improves their mental and physical health.

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

Leaders have earned a reputation in the community for meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. This is richly deserved. Governors appointed a second special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) for the early years. This is helping leaders to identify children with SEND quickly. The early years SENCo also leads the setting. Consequently, she is well placed to guide staff on each child's individual needs.

There are more than 40 children in the provision for two-year-olds. Despite this high number, the setting is calm and nurturing. This is because staff are experts. They speak to children patiently. They gently help children learn to take turns. Children have an afternoon sleep if they need a rest. Staff respect parents' wishes about each child's routine. This consistency is helping children to thrive.

Some pupils continue to need help with their speech and language development in key stage 1. Governors have employed a speech therapist to assess pupils and design individual speech therapy programmes for staff to follow. Staff encourage all pupils to speak in full sentences. If pupils ask for something using one word only, teachers put this word into a full sentence using standard English. They encourage the pupil to repeat the full sentence. This is improving pupils' spoken language.

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum for early reading and phonics. However, key stage 1 teachers are following the curriculum plan too slowly. Teachers spend too long recapping sounds that pupils already know. They do not move pupils on quickly enough to new learning. This is slowing pupils' progress when they are learning to read. Despite this, pupils achieve well in reading by the time they reach Year 6.

The curriculum in other subjects is equally ambitious. Teachers make learning interesting and enjoyable. This is part of the reason that pupils behave well in lessons. Teachers provide opportunities for practical work in science. For example, Year 6 pupils describe the digestive process accurately. They remember squeezing objects through a pair of tights to demonstrate peristalsis in the small intestine. This practical work helps scientific knowledge to stick in pupils' minds long term.

In some subjects, including computing, music and languages, leaders have employed subject specialists to teach throughout the school. The expert subject knowledge of these specialist teachers helps pupils to achieve well. It also reduces class teachers' workload. Class teachers analyse the assessment information in all subjects. As a result, they know how much progress pupils in their class are making in every subject.

The curriculum for pupils' personal development is effective. Pupils in Year 6 climbed Pen-y-ghent to raise funds for cancer research. Other walkers praised and encouraged pupils in this gargantuan and fully risk-assessed effort.

Leaders realise that pupils' attendance is not good enough. Staff collect some pupils from their homes every morning, in the school minibus, and drive them to school. Despite leaders' best efforts, some pupils are persistently absent. They are missing out on the good education on offer. Their poor attendance is slowing their progress.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that all staff and volunteers are suitable to work with children.

Leaders work well with other professionals to keep pupils safe. Leaders understand their duty to cooperate and share information. If child protection conferences are scheduled during school holiday periods, leaders ensure that a member of staff from Castleton Primary School attends. Governors monitor safeguarding arrangements frequently.

At the time of this inspection, nine pupils had been referred to the local authority as children missing education. Leaders had followed the correct procedures to make these referrals within suitable timescales.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers do not follow the Year 1 curriculum for early reading and phonics at the required pace. This slow delivery does not meet the needs of pupils well. Leaders should ensure that Year 1 teachers follow the Year 1 curriculum for early reading and phonics at an effective pace.
- Some pupils do not attend school regularly. The rate of persistent absence is too high. Pupils miss vital learning. Leaders should continue to work with parents to improve pupils' attendance.

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.

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	107962
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	10227198
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	491
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Judith Norfolk
Headteachers	Andrea Riley and Alistair Darnell
Website	https://www.castleton.leeds.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The two co-headteachers are both employed full time.
- The school includes provision for two-year-olds. Some of these children receive additional funding. Some two-year-olds attend from 8am to 6pm.
- Castleton Children’s Centre is located in a separate building, sharing the same address and postcode as the primary school. The provision for two-year-olds and the nursery provision are based in the children’s centre building.
- The school funds a separate class for eight pupils with complex communication needs. This provision is also located on the children’s centre site.
- The school uses one registered provider of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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 met the co-headteachers, deputy headteachers, the early years leader and the SENCos. The reading, mathematics, science, art and geography subject leaders also met inspectors. The lead inspector met a local authority representative.
- A meeting was held with three of the school’s governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading and phonics, mathematics, art and design, science and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils’ work.
- Pupils’ behaviour and safety were evaluated on arrival at school, at breakfast club, in the dining room and at breaktimes. Inspectors discussed pupils’ behaviour with several pupil groups and with the staff inclusion team.
- Senior safeguarding leaders met inspectors to discuss recruitment and safeguarding records.
- Inspectors spoke to parents during the inspection. Inspectors also reviewed Ofsted’s online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and survey responses from staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Tracey Ralph, lead inspector	His Majesty’s Inspector
Gill Holland	Ofsted Inspector
Judy Shaw	Ofsted Inspector

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