

# Inspection of High Clarence Primary School

Port Clarence Road, High Clarence, Middlesbrough TS2 1SY

---

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 November 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

---

The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Early years provision

**Good**

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils enjoy coming to this small, friendly community school. Pupils benefit from positive and supportive relationships with staff. Pupils say that staff listen to their ideas and any worries that they may have. Pupils trust adults to deal with their concerns quickly and effectively.

Pupils' behaviour is a strength of the school. They are focused on learning and are fully engaged in their lessons. Pupils can explain the difference between bullying and falling out. They show kindness to each other and get on well together. At social times, there is a lively atmosphere as friends play together, making use of the equipment provided for them. Pupils say that their school is like a family where everyone cares for each other. Pupils feel happy and safe.

The new headteacher has an accurate view of the school's priorities. She knows the quality of education is not good enough. Some pupils lack the support that they need to read quickly and fluently. Sometimes, in subjects such as science and geography, teachers do not focus on the most important things pupils need to learn. This makes it difficult for pupils to remember their learning over time.

Pupils, including children in the early years, enjoy a range of exciting activities to enrich their learning. Pupils know how to eat healthily and keep fit. The personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum is new. Pupils have had few opportunities to study diversity or explore fundamental British values.

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

The headteacher, along with other leaders, has made a positive start in strengthening the school. Leaders have made reading a priority. They have introduced a new programme for teaching phonics. However, some staff have not had sufficient training to ensure phonics is taught to a consistently high standard. Some pupils do not learn to read as well as they could.

Leaders have promoted a love of reading. Pupils enjoy visiting the new library. Teachers encourage pupils to read widely. Pupils enjoy the books that their teachers read to them.

Mathematics is a strength of the school. The mathematics curriculum is clearly sequenced. Vocabulary is developed well and used appropriately. Teachers have good subject knowledge. In mathematics lessons, teachers revisit previous learning and check pupils' understanding carefully. Teachers adapt the learning to help pupils to remember more. Pupils are very positive about mathematics. They say it is one of their favourite subjects.

Leaders have developed an ambitious and well sequenced curriculum. They have identified the important knowledge that they want pupils to know and remember.

However, there is some variation in how well the curriculum is taught. At times, teachers do not focus on the most important things pupils need to learn. Some tasks are not well matched to the intended learning. As a result, some pupils are unable to remember the important subject knowledge. Furthermore, leaders have not been rigorous enough in checking how well pupils recall their learning.

Leaders ensure that teachers support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. Leaders are quick to identify the needs of pupils with SEND. Adults provide extra guidance to support their learning. However, in some curriculum subjects, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to practise and firmly embed what they have learned.

Pupils behave well in lessons and concentrate on their learning. Skilled adults use consistent approaches for those pupils who sometimes need extra help.

Children get off to a strong start in early years. Adults are both caring and supportive. They help develop clear routines for children. Staff plan activities which provide children with many opportunities to practise and learn new skills and knowledge. Leaders have successfully developed rich learning environments. These environments are stimulating and resourced well. Staff model clear, simple language for all children. Adults encourage parents to be involved in their child's learning. Home visits and regular informal discussions help families to feel welcome and part of the school community.

Teachers help pupils learn how to stay physically and emotionally healthy. Pupils support charities and take part in events within the local community. They enjoy taking on areas of responsibility, such as team captains. Leaders are keen to raise pupils' aspirations. Pupils benefit from varied and interesting experiences. These include opportunities to speak with a range of professionals about their jobs. However, pupils do not have a deep enough understanding of cultural differences or fundamental British values.

Governors are highly committed to the school. They understand their strategic role and offer appropriate support and challenge. However, governors have an over optimistic view of the school's overall effectiveness. Governors and leaders are mindful of staff's workload and well-being. Staff are proud to work at the school. Staff, including those at the early stages of their career, value the support that they receive.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The staff at High Clarence Primary School know their community well. Leaders have developed a culture where safeguarding is the responsibility of all staff. There are robust systems in place to identify pupils and families who need help. Adults understand these systems well and use them when needed. There are effective procedures in place to enable leaders to support pupils and their families quickly.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including when they are online. In addition, they learn about road safety and how to build healthy relationships.

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

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

- The phonics scheme is extremely new. Some staff do not have the expertise to implement this successfully. As a result, some pupils do not learn to read as quickly as they could. Leaders have recognised this. Leaders should implement the planned training sessions and support in order to ensure that all pupils receive consistent, high-quality phonics teaching they need to become fluent readers.
- The implementation of the curriculum is not consistently strong enough. Some activities are not well designed to allow pupils to learn and remember key knowledge. This means that pupils are not able to move through the curriculum confidently. Leaders should ensure that activities in lessons are clearly focused on what staff want pupils to learn and remember.
- The PSHE curriculum is new. Pupils have had few opportunities to study diversity effectively or to explore the fundamental British values. Pupils do not have a deep enough understanding of cultural differences in British society. Leaders must ensure that the curriculum is enriched to fully prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders, including governors, do not monitor or evaluate the quality of education rigorously enough. As a result, they do not have a sufficiently clear understanding of how well pupils access and remember their learning across the curriculum. Leaders and governors should monitor the impact of the curriculum closely to ensure that all pupils can recall the essential curriculum knowledge.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	111523
<b>Local authority</b>	Stockton-on-Tees
<b>Inspection number</b>	10241168
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	77
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Ann McCoy
<b>Headteacher</b>	Nicola Caraher
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://highclarence-stockton.secure-dbprimary.com/stockton/primary/highclarence">https://highclarence-stockton.secure-dbprimary.com/stockton/primary/highclarence</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	12 February 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- There have been significant leadership changes since the previous inspection. The new headteacher was appointed in September 2022.
- The school does not use any 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 school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science and languages. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at a range of plans, spoke to teachers, visited lessons, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The lead inspector observed adults reading with some pupils.
- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead to discuss the school's safeguarding policies and procedures. Inspectors scrutinised documentation to assess how the school identifies and supports pupils at risk of harm. Inspectors spoke with a range of pupils and staff to evaluate the school's safeguarding culture.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, governors, including the chair of governors, a representative from the local authority, senior leaders, the early years leader, the special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders, teachers and support staff.
- An inspector spoke to parents during the inspection. The inspector considered the views of parents and staff as part of the review of the responses to Ofsted's online surveys. There were no responses to the pupil survey.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation. This included attendance figures, curriculum plans, school policies, local authority notes of visits, the school self-evaluation document and the school improvement plan.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, at lunchtime and around school. They talked to pupils and staff about behaviour, bullying and well-being.

### **Inspection team**

Alison Stephenson, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Mark Nugent	Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2022