

Inspection of Elements Primary School

Acre Mount, Middleton, Leeds LS10 4WR

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 January 2023

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	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a school where leaders welcome and encourage pupils to be 'world-changers'. Leaders want pupils to aim high. They have designed an 'Elements' curriculum to broaden pupils' ambitions. Pupils learn about role models who are 'world-changers'. They understand equality of opportunity and say, 'It doesn't matter what we are like on the outside; it is what is on the inside that matters.'

Pupils move calmly around school. They know the three promises of 'be ready, be respectful, be safe'. Pupils show respect in conversations with adults. They value each other's opinions when they debate about world issues.

Leaders have provided pupils with calm spaces within the classroom in order to reflect and discuss their feelings. They allow pupils to visit Hamish, the school therapy dog, to help with their emotional well-being. Pupils can talk about a 'scale of happiness' and how to get help if they have any worries. Staff recognise pupils' achievements in lessons by sounding out a horn. Bullying is rare. Pupils know how to report it and it is dealt with quickly.

Leaders offer pupils a range of clubs throughout the year, such as rugby, boxing, ballet and arts and crafts. Staff run regular cinema nights for pupils to attend. Both parents and pupils praise the 'WOW weeks', which offer experiences such as trips and themed days.

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

The 'Elements' curriculum reflects the aspirations of leaders for pupils to do well. They have mapped out the important knowledge they want pupils to learn in most subjects. They provide teachers with helpful guidance on how to check what pupils know and remember. This leads to strong learning in subjects such as science, where pupils used accurate vocabulary to name the parts of a flowering plant. In some subjects, this knowledge is not as clearly identified, contributing to gaps in pupils' learning.

Leaders have acted to improve outcomes for pupils in mathematics. Pupils practise key number facts each day in 'early bird maths'. This is helping pupils to remember important knowledge. Pupils can recall key number facts learned in previous years. When pupils struggle in mathematics, they receive prompt and effective support.

Leaders have planned the knowledge, skills and personal qualities that they want children to learn in the early years. Adults know their children well and adapt the curriculum to meet their needs. They develop children's communication skills and vocabulary through story and rhyme. Staff teach children mathematics in daily sessions. Children use their knowledge of number to solve problems when working and playing independently. Leaders continue to enhance the learning environment.

However, on occasions some staff do not use discussion or prompts to get the most from children's learning in less structured or 'free-flow' activities.

Staff have high ambitions for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders develop interventions that enable pupils to overcome barriers to learning. This support helps pupils with SEND to access the same curriculum as their peers. Despite this, the guidance that leaders give staff in order to support pupils with SEND in lessons can lack clarity and this slows some aspects of their progress through the curriculum.

Leaders have adopted a new phonics scheme to improve the teaching of reading. In a short space of time, this has become a strength of the school. Pupils enjoy learning to read. Pupils use their phonics knowledge well. Adults are experts in delivering the programme. This is because leaders have ensured that staff receive regular training and support. Leaders adapt teaching to meet the needs of their pupils. Pupils who need to catch up have extra sessions or work in smaller groups. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the books they read. They enjoy daily story time and awards, such as reading certificates. The strong reading curriculum is not reflected in the outcomes achieved by Year 2 pupils in 2022. These pupils experienced particular disruption to their learning during the pandemic and have had less time to benefit from the improvements that leaders have made.

Leaders receive strong support from the trust. Senior leaders and those responsible for governance speak with passion about the school. They act to improve the educational and wider experiences on offer for all pupils. The trust offers a wide range of professional development opportunities for staff. These opportunities support curriculum improvement, develop staff expertise and grow subject leadership. Staff, including those in the early stages of their careers, feel supported.

Pupils talk to adults with confidence. They know the school values and say that 'difference is awesome; we are all unique'. Leaders plan key focus days, to support what pupils learn about in lessons. These days are sometimes part of 'WOW weeks'. As a result, pupils can explain what fundamental British values such as freedom of speech mean. Leaders have plans to develop further links with the local church and wider community.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff know the potential risks that pupils may face. There are secure systems in place for staff to report concerns about pupils' safety. The designated safeguarding leads work with outside agencies to help keep pupils safe. Staff teach pupils how to keep themselves safe, including online. Leaders adapt the curriculum to respond to local concerns. This helps to ensure pupils stay safe. Pupils refer to key safeguarding staff as the 'fantastic five'. They know to report their concerns to these safeguarding leads, who will keep them safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, important knowledge is not clearly identified. This means that pupils do not learn the important things they need for future learning in that subject. Leaders need to work with staff to make sure that pupils learn the most important knowledge across all foundation subjects.
- Staff in early years do not consistently use their interaction to get the most from children's learning during less-structured 'free-flow' activities. This leads to missed learning opportunities. Leaders should provide training and support to enable all staff to use high-quality interactions to help children to learn well.
- There is variance in how well leaders give staff guidance on how to support pupils with SEND in lessons. This is slowing aspects of curriculum progression for some pupils with SEND. Leaders should ensure that they work with staff to provide clearer guidance on how to better support pupils with SEND.

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	145879
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	10255579
Type of school	Primary
School category	Free school (sponsored by Wellspring academy trust)
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	278
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Hearl Lenton
Principal	Carrie Green (executive principal)
Website	www.elementsprimaryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Elements Primary School was registered as open in September 2018. This is the first inspection of the school since opening.
- The school opened as a free school and is part of the Wellspring Academies Trust.
- The school uses a registered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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 with a wide range of staff, including the executive principal and subject leaders. Inspectors also met with representatives of the interim governing body and the chief executive officer of the trust.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, history, science and physical education. 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.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors scrutinised the single central record and safeguarding records. They also spoke to leaders for safeguarding and spoke to pupils and staff.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher of the alternative provision used by the school.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils both formally and informally, including single-sex groups of pupils.
- Inspectors considered a variety of school documents, including the school development plan.
- Inspectors took account of the views of staff and parents through surveys, including Ofsted Parent View, and spoke to some parents as they picked up their children from school.

Inspection team

Lesley Sullivan, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Alison Stephenson	His Majesty's Inspector
Jonathan Glazzard	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
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