

# Inspection of a good school: North and South Cowton Community Primary School

Main Road, Main Road, North Cowton, Northallerton, North Yorkshire DL7 0HF

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Inspection date:

7 March 2023

## Outcome

North and South Cowton Community Primary School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

The school community is like a happy family. Pupils and staff know each other exceptionally well. Relationships are warm and trusting. Everyone looks after and cares about each other. Pupils play their part in ensuring that the school day runs smoothly. They help out at lunchtime, for example.

Pupils have impeccable manners. Exemplary behaviour is the norm. When disagreements arise in the playground, pupils often resolve them without adult help. Staff act promptly if they are needed. Pupils always play together at playtime. Older pupils make sure no one feels left out. They make sure that younger pupils can play safely. Pupils are adamant that there are no bullies in school. They cannot recall any instances of bullying taking place.

Pupils feel safe in school. They know that teachers will help and there is always an adult to talk to. When someone gets hurt in the playground, pupils check to make sure they are all right. Pupils know how to stay safe when they move around the village between school buildings.

Staff have high expectations of pupils. They make sure pupils learn to read quickly and enjoy a wide range of books. Pupils' achievements both inside and outside school are celebrated. Pupils learn about the world beyond their village. For example, they go on residential visits and take part in activities at the local secondary school. They take part in sporting competitions such as tag rugby and football. This prepares them for the next step in their education.

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

Current leaders have prioritised reading. The detailed curriculum helps staff to teach reading well. Staff use the right resources. They ask thoughtful questions so they know the sounds children need to practice. Training has helped staff to pinpoint gaps in children's knowledge. Staff take swift action to help children catch up. Pupils therefore become confident, fluent readers.

The recently appointed subject leader wants pupils to enjoy reading. She acted quickly to widen the range of books older pupils read. All pupils listen to stories. This helps pupils develop their vocabulary. Older pupils know that reading helps them to learn other subjects.

The mathematics curriculum is well planned. It builds in clear logical steps. It is well adapted for classes of different ages and capabilities. Staff plan activities that build on the knowledge pupils already have. Staff check pupils' understanding before introducing new knowledge. Pupils with special educational needs receive the right support to help them learn. For example, staff provide resources that make mathematical knowledge easier to understand. Consequently, all pupils' knowledge develops securely.

In other subjects such as science and history, pupils' knowledge is not as secure. The order staff should teach new knowledge to pupils of different ages is not well set out. In particular, the specific knowledge needed to study each subject is not clear. As a result, staff do not know precisely enough what pupils know or what they are expected to know. This means that pupils do not always do the right activities to build their knowledge. Leaders' curriculum checks helped to identify this problem. A review of the curriculum is underway but is at too early a stage to see an impact.

Pupils apply themselves diligently at all times. They pay attention and respond well to all staff. They are eager to do well and enjoy school. The curriculum aims of 'aspire, inspire, enquire' shape the varied opportunities pupils experience. For example, younger pupils visited a lifeboat museum to help them understand Grace Darling's heroism. A visit to Edinburgh by older pupils included a visit to a Hindu temple and the university. Pupils experience a good range of sports and games. They can learn to play a musical instrument.

Staffing turbulence in recent years has been challenging. The interim executive headteacher, executive headteacher and governing body have brought stability. Plans are underway to sustain recent developments. For example, the new staff team work together effectively. They have made improvements to the reading and mathematics curriculum.

The interim executive headteacher has taken steps to make staff workload more manageable. Subject leadership has been reorganised across the federation. Experienced staff now support those with less experience. However, this is at an early stage of development. More work is needed to ensure that all subject leaders are effective.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Systems to ensure that pupils are safeguarded are thorough. Governors check systems to ensure that they are up to date and that staff have had suitable training.

Staff have good knowledge of how to safeguard pupils. They follow the correct procedures. Weekly bitesize training and information help staff to maintain safeguarding as a priority.

The curriculum supports pupils to keep themselves safe. This includes road and water safety. Visitors from the police and fire service enhance pupils' knowledge. Pupils know the dangers of using the internet and what to do if they have a concern.

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

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

- The curriculum in subjects such as science and history is not sequenced well enough. Knowledge does not build towards clear end points. Staff do not know what knowledge they should assess pupils against. This means that there are gaps in pupils' knowledge. Leaders should continue to review subject curriculums to ensure that there is sequencing of knowledge with well-defined end points. This will enable staff to have a clear idea of what pupils should know. Staff will then be able to identify and address gaps in pupils' knowledge.
- Staffing turbulence means subject leadership has only recently been established. Inexperienced subject leaders do not yet have the skills to review and evaluate the curriculum effectively. Leaders should continue to develop subject leader skills to enable them to review and evaluate the curriculum.

## **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 an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2017.

## **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>	121309
<b>Local authority</b>	North Yorkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10227037
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	17
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Gail Smith
<b>Interim Executive Headteacher</b>	Ian Mottram
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.northsouthcowton.n-yorks.sch.uk">www.northsouthcowton.n-yorks.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	5 November 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is federated with Melsonby Methodist Primary School. An executive headteacher leads both schools.
- At the time of the inspection, the executive headteacher was on maternity leave. The school was being led by an interim executive headteacher. A seconded teacher was base leader in the school. She took up post in January 2023.
- A breakfast and after-school club operates one day a week.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school had 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 held meetings with the interim executive headteacher throughout the inspection.
- Inspectors met with staff, the chair of governors and held a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and science. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited classrooms, spoke to staff and scrutinised records of children's learning.
- Inspectors also discussed curriculum plans and scrutinised pupils' learning in art and history. They spoke to pupils about their learning in history.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding records, including the single central record. They talked to staff about their views of safeguarding.
- Inspectors observed children's behaviour indoors and outdoors and at lunchtime.
- Inspectors examined a range of documentation provided by the school, including leaders' self-evaluation and school development plans and policies.
- Inspectors considered the free-text comments on Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. There were no responses from the online staff and pupil surveys.

## **Inspection team**

Susan Waugh, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Marcus Newby

His Majesty's Inspector

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