

Inspection of Sherburn in Elmet, Athelstan Community Primary School

Milford Road, Sherburn-in-Elmet, Leeds, North Yorkshire LS25 6QN

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 March 2023

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	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

The Athelstan vision 'to be the best that we can be' is at the heart of all this school has to offer. Leaders and staff have high expectations for pupils' learning and behaviour. They are determined to make sure that pupils' needs are met, both academically and pastorally.

The whole school environment is bright and stimulating. Displays are well planned to showcase pupils' work and support learning. Leaders and governors make sure that high-quality resources are made available. These complement the strong routines that pupils are familiar with.

The care that staff provide for pupils is highly evident. Parents welcome and appreciate this level of care. Pupils feel safe and are confident that adults will sort out any issues that they have. Bullying is extremely rare. Pupils know what to do if it should happen to them or someone else. Behaviour in lessons and around school is calm and purposeful.

Pupils know that they are expected to be kind, tolerant, honest and respectful. These aims have been agreed by both staff and pupils. They are reinforced by adults at every opportunity. Pupils are determined to demonstrate these attributes. They are motivated by the rewards that they receive for showing them.

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

Leaders have a clear vision for the curriculum, and they know what they want pupils to learn. They have developed an ambitious curriculum that has been designed with the youngest children in mind. The curriculum in the early years builds the foundations for Year 1 and beyond. Children are ready for their next stage of education. Teachers are well versed in addressing gaps in pupils' knowledge in English, mathematics and science. As a result, pupils make good progress. Teachers routinely check that pupils have remembered what they have previously been taught.

Subject leaders are very knowledgeable about their subjects. They have carefully considered what pupils should learn in their subject and how the curriculum is designed to build on prior learning. Leaders, through coaching and mentoring, ensure that adults are supported to teach each subject. Curriculum plans for the foundation subjects, such as design and technology, are in the early stages of being implemented.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified early in their school life. Focused support is provided. Leaders work effectively with different agencies to ensure that children with SEND receive the support and care that they need.

Leaders ensure that staff teach phonics effectively and consistently. Pupils read books that are well matched to their ability. Where pupils require additional support, they are identified immediately. They revisit the learning on the very same day. As a result, pupils learn to read confidently, fluently and with understanding. The school has invested in high-quality reading books that give reading the importance that leaders feel it deserves. Leaders are committed to ensuring that every child fulfils their entitlement of being able to read. The book-based curriculum means pupils across the school are immersed in books.

Children in the early years get off to an exceptional start. The early years curriculum has been very carefully thought out. There is clear progression from the two-year-olds through to Reception. Every opportunity is taken to engage children's interests and inspire them. In all areas of provision, children play and learn well together. Their engagement in their learning is exceptional. Staff are exceptionally skilled at talking to the children and moving them towards independence. Behaviour and relationships among the children are very positive.

The behaviour policy is simple and clear. It is understood by everyone in school. Pupils of all ages value the 'counters' reward scheme and enjoy working together, as classes, to choose their own rewards.

Leaders have developed a bespoke and high-quality personal development programme. This has been carefully thought out to ensure pupils' needs are met. Pupils feel that since joining the school, they have developed as individuals into being 'the best that they can be'. Older pupils are given opportunities to become responsible, respectful and active citizens through roles such as school councillor, snack trolley monitor and library monitor. Younger pupils are not given similar opportunities.

Adults working in school are very well supported. Workload is managed effectively, allowing staff to focus on the tasks and activities that make the most difference to pupils.

Governors have established processes to gain an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Through these, they have an accurate view of the school. They challenge and support the headteacher and other leaders effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Comprehensive records and procedures are in place to ensure that pupils are kept safe. Recruitment checks are carried out and recorded appropriately. All staff and governors receive regular safeguarding training and updates. They know the risks, including local and contextual risks to children. Staff appreciate the weekly briefing that helps them to support the most vulnerable pupils in school. Governors are fully aware of their safeguarding responsibilities.

Pupils say that there are trusted adults in school to talk to if they are worried about anything. The school council have developed 'worry slips' for pupils to alert staff of any concerns. Pupils learn to stay safe online and can talk in detail about the things that they should and should not do to stay safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders are in the process of implementing new curriculum plans in the foundation subjects. This means that subject leaders do not have a clear understanding of how the curriculum is impacting pupils' learning. Leaders should ensure that the new plans continue to be embedded so that pupils' knowledge develops effectively over time.
- Pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 have the opportunity to take on responsibilities in school. There are only limited opportunities for younger pupils to take on wider roles across the school. Leaders should provide more opportunities for pupils of all ages to take on responsibilities so they can impact positively on the life of the school and become active citizens of the future.

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	121461
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10242064
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	518
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Andrew Parmenter
Headteacher	Karen O'Donnell
Website	www.athelstan.n-yorks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 October 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school has provision for two-year-olds.

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 with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the special educational needs coordinator.
- The lead inspector met with representatives from the local governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into reading, mathematics, science, design technology and music. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders,

looked at curriculum planning, conducted joint lesson visits with leaders, had discussions with teachers, spoke to pupils about their work and looked at pupils' books and samples of their work.

- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms, around the school and at playtime and lunchtime. They spoke with pupils about their views of the school and their learning, behaviour and safety.
- During the inspection, a range of safeguarding information was scrutinised, including the school's policies and records. Inspectors spoke to pupils and observed relationships between pupils and pupils and pupils and adults. The lead inspector also met with the designated safeguarding leads.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils and Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View. This included comments received via the free-text facility. They also talked to some parents in the school playground.

Inspection team

Nicola Beaumont, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Gill Holland	Ofsted Inspector
Tracy Turner	Ofsted Inspector
Janet Keefe	Ofsted Inspector

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