

Inspection of Hall Cliffe Primary School

7 Wrenthorpe Lane, Wrenthorpe, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF2 0QB

Inspection dates: 4 to 6 July 2023

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils get a second chance at Hall Cliffe Primary School. Many have had difficult previous school experiences. This changes when they start school here.

For most pupils, managing behaviour and emotions is a struggle. At school, there are frequent outbursts when pupils get frustrated or upset. Help is always available. The wonderful pastoral support that pupils receive is helping them to get better at regulating their emotions.

Pupils feel valued, understood and special. They appreciate the calm, kind and consistent support they receive from staff. Pupils understand what bullying is. Bullying is not a problem at this school. There are very high staff to pupil ratios in class and when the pupils are outdoors. Well-trained staff swiftly manage any inappropriate behaviours.

There are high expectations for pupils. Pupils know that they are expected to work hard. Pupils respect and understand the needs of others. Many pupils who have had prolonged time out of education now enjoy reading and mathematics, and they study a full curriculum. The skilful combination of adapted personalised curriculums, high-quality pastoral care and plenty of fun activities results in an exceptional educational experience for pupils.

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

Leaders have skilfully designed a curriculum that provides pupils with the academic knowledge they require. All subjects are sequentially organised, with knowledge mapped out to match pupils' developmental age. When pupils start school, staff check what they know and do not know. Teachers are then able to adapt the curriculum to meet individual needs. As a result, pupils achieve well.

To help pupils focus and engage with the curriculum, staff employ a range of creative strategies. Lessons are chunked into small segments to support pupils' concentration. A variety of sensory resources are used, such as weighted blankets, under table pedal machines, gym balls and body pressure socks. As a result, pupils follow teacher instructions, listen attentively and fully participate in lessons.

In literacy, pupils are grouped according to their reading knowledge. Some classes have daily phonics sessions, in which pupils are taught the sounds that letters make. Most pupils quickly learn how to sound out words and then read books that are carefully matched to their reading knowledge. Reading is prioritised across the curriculum with many opportunities for pupils to read a variety of text types such as fiction, non-fiction and poetry.

Leaders provide pupils with many opportunities to develop their personal and interpersonal skills. The personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum teaches pupils about relationships, staying safe and diversity. During the week,

two additional sessions (well-being Wednesday and my curriculum) enhance the curriculum further with activities such as swimming, food exploration, community trips and visits to places of worship. Pupils also take part in a termly community kitchen event, in which they get to learn about different types of food. They cook and serve food to the local community, parents, carers and members of the Witherslack group. The school's personal development offer is exceptional and has had a significant impact for parents and families. Many comment on the positive changes they have seen with how their children cope in real-life situations.

The school offers more than academic and pastoral support. The educational psychologist, occupational therapist, speech and language therapist, plus a play-based therapist offer expert support and guidance that directly supports pupils' development. The personalised support pupils receive is often underpinned by detailed assessment information that the clinical team provides. The addition of the clinical team is invaluable.

Leaders have created a culture of trust, openness and collaboration. The board of directors, school staff and parents share the same vision and aspirations for pupils. At times, there are difficult incidents to deal with, but everyone looks forward and not backwards. Positive relationships between all stakeholders ensure that everyone is striving to give the pupils the best possible chance to succeed in life.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff attend daily safeguarding briefings, in which current information is shared. As a result, staff know exactly why a pupil may be behaving in a certain way and therefore what support to offer. The ongoing training leaders provide ensures that all staff are aware of the signs of concern to look out for, especially given the complex needs of many pupils. The designated safeguarding lead checks incidents and makes sure that all appropriate agencies are involved when required. Record-keeping of concerns is meticulous. The curriculum teaches pupils how to keep themselves safe. Staff use every opportunity to make appropriate safeguarding references in day-to-day teaching.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	142674
DfE registration number	384/6004
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	10283783
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5 to 13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	34
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Witherslack Group
Chair	Bonny Etchell-Anderson
Headteacher	Claire Traynor
Annual fees (day pupils)	£70,638 to £103,587
Telephone number	01924 614490
Website	www.witherslackgroup.co.uk/hall-cliffe-primary-school
Email address	hall-cliffe-primary@witherslackgroup.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	26 to 28 March 2019

Information about this school

- All pupils have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan) or are in the process of an assessment for an EHC plan. Pupils have a range of learning needs, including attention deficit hyperactivity disorder; autism; social emotional and mental health needs, and speech, language and communication needs. Many pupils have suffered significant trauma.
- Pupils currently attend the school from five local authorities.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school received an additional Ofsted inspection in March 2020. The school met all of the independent school standards.
- The school currently does not have any early years children or secondary age pupils on roll.
- The school has no religious affiliation.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors did deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics, PSHE and history. Inspectors spoke to leaders about the curriculum and met with teachers from the lessons visited. Inspectors looked at pupils' work and spoke to pupils about the curriculum, behaviour and what it is like to attend this school.
- Inspectors looked at curriculum documents from a range of subjects.
- Inspectors listened to a range of pupils read from different year groups.
- The lead inspector met with the regional director and chair of the board for the Witherslack Group.
- Inspectors looked at the single central record of recruitment checks and spoke to leaders, teachers, governors and pupils about safeguarding.
- Inspectors observed pupils at breaktime and lunchtime.
- Inspectors considered the responses made by parents to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, including their free-text contributions, plus staff

and pupil surveys. A number of parents were also spoken to during the inspection.

- The lead inspector met with the school's in-house therapy team.

Inspection team

David Milligan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Garry Stout

Ofsted Inspector

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