

Inspection of a good school: Welholme Academy

Welholme Road, Grimsby, North East Lincolnshire DN32 9JD

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 June 2023

Outcome

Welholme Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending Welholme Academy. They are polite and love learning. Pupils behave well in lessons and at playtimes. They enjoy the space and the range of activities they can take part in. If pupils struggle to manage their behaviour, they know that adults will help them.

Staff quickly forge trusting relationships with children when they join the school in the early years. Positive relationships between pupils and staff are strengthened further as pupils progress. Pupils are happy and feel safe. They try their best to live out the school's vision of aspiration, collaboration, nurture and resilience.

Most parents and carers are satisfied with leaders' response if their child is bullied. A small number of parents are not. The principal is aware that some parents would like leaders to improve communication with parents. Pupils say that when bullying happens, adults deal with it straightaway.

Leaders have developed a cultural passport for pupils. Staff plan visits and visitors for pupils with the aim of widening their experiences and broadening their understanding of the curriculum. Pupils talk positively about the visits that they have had from the emergency services, where they deepened their knowledge of how to stay safe.

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

Leaders have developed a strong reading curriculum. They are clear that learning to read and reading well are vital for the success of all pupils. As a result, staff are skilled in teaching phonics from the start of the early years. Pupils use their phonic knowledge to read and spell unfamiliar words. Pupils quickly build their confidence with reading, as books are well matched to the sounds they know. Those pupils who take longer to secure their phonic knowledge have tailored support to help them keep up. This means they develop their skills and love of reading. Pupils enjoy reading a range of carefully chosen texts in lessons. They are encouraged to develop a love of reading by visiting the school library and the local library.

In mathematics, leaders have developed a curriculum that identifies the knowledge that pupils should learn and the sequence in which they should learn it. This helps pupils build knowledge over time so they can achieve well. Pupils become confident and fluent in calculations and other aspects of mathematics. Pupils use correct mathematical vocabulary. They remember the knowledge that they have been taught. This helps them to understand new learning. As a result, pupils achieve well.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive effective support so that they can access the full curriculum. They are identified swiftly. Staff have received training in a variety of areas, including autism awareness and Makaton. There are links with outside agencies, such as the educational psychologist.

Children start the early years from the age of two. Teachers plan a range of activities that children enjoy. Staff provide effective support so that children engage in learning both in and out of the classroom. For example, outdoors, children were learning to balance on beams and ropes.

The curriculum identifies what pupils should know in each subject. Leaders have made sure that the content of the curriculum is well sequenced. For example, in geography, pupils learn about the weather and climate before moving on to biomes. In some subjects, leaders check that teachers deliver these curriculums as intended and that pupils learn and remember earlier content. However, in a small number of other subjects, such as physical education (PE), leaders have not checked sufficiently how staff are delivering the curriculum. As a result, leaders do not ensure that some teachers receive sufficient guidance to deliver these curriculums as well.

Leaders place a strong emphasis on pupils' wider development. Through a mix of lessons, celebration days and assemblies, pupils learn about important topics such as how to stay healthy and how to keep safe online. There is a calendar of educational visits that aim to build pupils' knowledge of the curriculum. For example, pupils participate in residential trips, outings to a science adventure centre and days at an Ancient Egyptian museum. There are music and sports activities for pupils to attend after school. Pupils would like to attend drama and art clubs. Leaders should provide opportunities for pupils to further develop their artistic skills and abilities.

Leaders know the school well. They have an accurate view of its strengths and areas for development. The academy improvement committee has a good range of skills and experience. The committee members visit the school and receive comprehensive information from the principal. They hold leaders to account for their actions. Staff say that leaders take account of their workload and their well-being. The trust offers support and challenge to leaders and staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have safeguarding as their top priority. Staff share this view. Staff have an excellent knowledge of pupils, their families and the community. This allows them to identify any safeguarding concerns quickly. Staff record these concerns in detail. When they need to, leaders are tenacious in making sure that pupils get the help that they

deserve. The pupils spoken to said that they feel safe in school. They know how to stay safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Subject leaders have monitored the changes they have made to the curriculum. However, this has not yet had an impact on what pupils know and remember in some subjects. Leaders need to continue to support subject leaders to monitor the implementation of the changes they have made and to check the impact that these are having on enabling pupils to learn and remember more.
- Leaders have introduced extra-curricular clubs for music and sport for pupils. Some pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their artistic skills and abilities further. Leaders should ensure that these pupils have enough opportunities to hone their talents and interests.

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 June 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

Unique reference number	141289
Local authority	North East Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10240449
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	538
Appropriate authority	Board of Trustees
Chair of trust	Jack Harrison
Principal	Edward Chamberlain
Website	www.welholmeacademy.com
Dates of previous inspection	21 and 22 June 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since its previous inspection, the school has opened a nursery. The school has provision for two- and three-year-olds.
- The school uses three alternative providers that are each based in a registered school: Phoenix Park Academy, Western Primary School and Eastfield Primary Academy. Four children currently attend these alternative provisions.
- The school provides an early morning breakfast club for pupils.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, PE and mathematics. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and reviewed samples of their work.

- The inspector met with senior and subject leaders.
- The inspector met with members of the academy improvement committee and spoke with representatives from the board of trustees.
- The inspector held meetings with the designated safeguarding leads responsible for the school's safeguarding arrangements. Safeguarding records, including pre-employment checks for staff, were scrutinised.
- The inspectors spoke to parents during the inspection and considered the views of parents who responded to Ofsted's parent questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Gerry Wilson, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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