

Inspection of Netherhall St James C of E (VC) Infant and Nursery School

Rawthorpe Lane, Rawthorpe, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD5 9NT

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 June 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?

Leaders have established an inclusive culture in which all pupils are supported to develop and grow as individuals. Staff know pupils and their families well. Parents and carers appreciate being able to speak to their child's teacher if they have a question or concern.

Pupils are polite and friendly. Caring staff are attentive to pupils' individual needs. They model to pupils how to treat others. Respectful relationships between staff and pupils support pupils to feel safe in school. Pupils have a trusted adult who they can go to if they are worried about something.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils. They have established a clear and consistent approach to supporting pupils' behaviour. Most pupils behave well. Pupils know that bullying means being unkind to someone repeatedly. Pupils told inspectors that bullying does not take place in the school. School records confirm this. Leaders are alert to incidents when pupils are unkind to someone. They provide effective support for pupils who struggle to manage their emotions and feelings.

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

Children in the early years make an excellent start to their education. Leaders have established an ambitious curriculum across Nursery and Reception. This supports the needs of children in the early years exceptionally well. Adults' strong knowledge of child development and the early years curriculum supports children to be ready for the next stage of their education. Adults provide purposeful activities that enrich children's learning. Children engage in activities for sustained periods. This helps them to learn and explore new concepts. Children develop knowledge of, and confidence in, using numbers. They make comparisons between numbers. Children in Reception explain accurately what they notice about numbers and patterns.

Adults across the school consistently promote the development of vocabulary. They support discussion effectively through questioning. Leaders have identified the vocabulary that pupils should learn in different subjects. This helps pupils to build an ever-increasing bank of new words. Pupils use these words appropriately in their own work and when speaking about new learning.

Leaders have prioritised the teaching of reading in school. They are ambitious for all pupils to learn to read as soon as possible. From the beginning of Reception, children learn about the sounds that letters make. Overtime, pupils read with increasing fluency and accuracy. From an early age, children develop a love of books. They enjoy reading and listening to stories read by adults. All teachers and teaching assistants have been trained in the school's approach to teaching phonics. This provides a consistent structure to phonics lessons. Pupils respond well to this. Consequently, there is a sharp focus on pupils learning phonics. Leaders regularly check that pupils are able to read the letter sounds that they have learned confidently. Staff provide appropriate support to address any gaps in pupils'

knowledge. Leaders have enhanced the teaching of reading. Teachers now use carefully planned opportunities for pupils to read, listen to and explore a range of stories and texts. Teachers use these texts well as a stimulus for developing pupils' writing.

In key stage 1, leaders have mapped out the skills that pupils should learn. Leaders have identified the knowledge that should be taught. However, in some subjects, such as history and computing, this is not clearly defined. In these subjects, teachers lack clarity about what pupils must learn in order to build on their prior knowledge. As a result, pupils do not develop the depth of knowledge they could in some foundation curriculum subjects.

Pupils benefit from opportunities to visit local places of interest or work with visitors to the school. Visits to the theatre and attending a forest school enrich the school's curriculum. Inspiration days at the beginning of units of work provide an engaging stimulus for pupils. Pupils told inspectors about what they had learned from a visitor who showed them toys from the past as part of their history topic.

The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is a strength of the school. Leaders have developed a culture of breaking down barriers to learning. This supports pupils with SEND to achieve well. Teachers clearly identify the strategies to use to support pupils effectively. Pupils with SEND engage well in lessons. Where appropriate, they work with staff in the school's Rainbow Provision. This provision provides pupils with appropriate opportunities to develop their knowledge.

Leaders, including governors, have an accurate view of the school. New governors have strengthened the governing body, bringing additional knowledge and skills. This has enabled governors to provide increasingly appropriate challenge and support for leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive regular training and updates in how to keep pupils safe. Staff are alert, and respond appropriately, to concerns that are raised. They remain vigilant to potential signs of abuse. Leaders' knowledge and expertise enable them to maintain clear oversight of this important aspect of their work.

Through the school's curriculum, pupils learn to keep themselves safe, including online. This is taught at an age-appropriate level. For example, in Reception, children learn about devices that connect to the internet. Older pupils learn about personal information and why it is important not to share it with others.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, such as history and computing, leaders have not broken down the small steps of knowledge that pupils need to learn. This means that teachers are not clear about exactly what to teach in order to help pupils build their knowledge over time. Leaders should identify the small steps of knowledge that pupils need to learn. Teachers should then check that pupils have remembered these concepts.

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	107700
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	10255613
Type of school	Infant
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	229
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Peter Rock
Principal	Michael Kent (executive principal) Kirsty McGrath (head of school)
Website	www.nlconline.org.uk/infant
Dates of previous inspection	4 and 5 March 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Netherhall Learning Campus.
- The head of school started in September 2021.
- The school has a higher proportion of pupils with SEND than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above the national average.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- There is a resource provision on site for pupils at the school. This is called the Rainbow Provision.
- The school is part of the Church of England Diocese of Leeds. Its most recent section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, was in July 2016.

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 executive principal, the head of school and governors to discuss their work to develop the school.
- Inspectors also met with the special educational needs coordinator and those with responsibility for attendance and safeguarding.
- To evaluate the curriculum, inspectors conducted 'deep dives' in early reading, mathematics, history and computing. Inspectors met with subject leaders, visited lessons and reviewed pupils' work. In addition, they met with pupils and staff separately.
- Inspectors considered leaders' actions to safeguard pupils. They met with leaders and reviewed documentation.
- An inspector visited the school's breakfast club.
- An inspector spoke to parents at the end of the school day. The views of parents were also considered through the responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors also reviewed the responses to Ofsted's survey for staff.
- An inspector met with the school's improvement partner from the local authority as well as with an adviser from the Leeds Anglican Diocese.

Inspection team

Matthew Harrington, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Erica Hiorns

Ofsted Inspector

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