

Inspection of Hollinsclough Church of England Academy

Carr Lane, Hollinsclough, Buxton, Staffordshire SK17 0RH

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 November 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

The lead teacher of the school is Lynda O’Sullivan. This school is part of The Moorlands Primary Federation trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Jarred Eccles, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Nick Chesters.

What is it like to attend this school?

Everyone is welcome at Hollinsclough, it is a happy place to be. Many things make this school unique, which is why many families travel long distances to attend. The staff are nurturing and caring. Pupils feel part of a 'big family' and say that they all get along well with each other. As one parent, typical of many, said 'the children are friends with all children of all ages, the older ones help the younger ones and the younger ones know they are supported and look up to the older ones.'

Staff take the time to get to know the pupils well and want them to do their best. Pupils know that staff will help them in any way if they need it. The school's timetable enables pupils and their families to combine learning at home and at school. For many pupils, this provides a lifeline in developing successful attitudes to formal education.

Pupils enjoy taking on extra responsibilities such as being house captains or class monitors. They are accepting and curious about the wide range of faiths and cultures in the world and enjoy learning about and discussing these during 'faith walks'.

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

The school has developed a curriculum that builds in a logical order. This curriculum also takes in to account the mixed-age classes that pupils are in. Over the last year, the school, with the support of the multi-academy trust, has introduced new curriculums in some subjects. Teachers have recently begun to deliver the subjects in this new way. Subject leaders have not yet been able to carry out work to ensure that the essential knowledge pupils are expected to learn is being delivered effectively by staff and learned by the pupils.

Staff regularly check on pupils' learning in lessons and adapt their teaching to respond to any gaps in pupils' learning and to identify pupils who may be stuck. The multi-academy trust has provided 'end point' assessments for teachers to use in subjects to check pupils' learning. These then help teachers to plan future learning in the subject.

Children in the early years settle quickly when they join the school. Staff spend time to get to know them. They develop children's early communication skills well by asking lots of questions and consistently demonstrating to children how to speak in full sentences. Staff plan learning for pupils based on their needs. They make sure children learn across all areas of learning. However, in some areas of the curriculum, leaders have not identified the precise knowledge they want children to learn in order to prepare them well for key stage 1. This means that some content pupils learn in reception does not always prepare them fully for learning new concepts in key stage 1.

Leaders promote reading well. Pupils relish opportunities to read including when a mobile library visits the school every fortnight. Over last 18 months the school has implemented a new system for teaching phonics. Staff are well trained in the system and pupils get the support they need to learn letter sounds. They get many opportunities to practise through sessions and using the books they read. Parents receive useful guidance on how to support their child's reading when at home. As a result, pupils in Reception and Year 1 learn to read well. Furthermore, older pupils who find reading more difficult are supported well to catch up if needed.

Pupils behave well in and around school. They are very keen to learn. On occasion their excitement spills over and they shout out or talk to a friend about the subject. Staff do not always consistently address pupils' behaviour when this occurs. This occasionally slows pupils' learning.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well. The trust has provided support to make sure their needs are identified early. They receive extra adult support in lessons to help them learn. Effective training has been provided for staff on a wide range of need. Leaders have ensured that staff are able to support pupils with anxiety issues or autism.

The school celebrates diversity and uniqueness. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Educational visits, such as to a copper mine engage pupils in their learning. The school encourages pupils to 'see wonder in the world' through using the local environment, forest school and an annual 'outdoor week'.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school has recently established new curriculums in some subjects. The evaluation and monitoring of these subjects is still at an early stage. Therefore the school does not know how well some subjects are delivered. The school should ensure that all subjects are monitored effectively so as to bring about further improvement.
- The early years curriculum does not clearly set out the important knowledge children are expected to learn over time in nursery and reception in some areas of learning. This means that some content pupils learn in reception does not always prepare them for learning key stage 1. The school should identify all the important knowledge that children need to learn across the early years.

- Occasional low-level disruption limits pupils' learning in some lessons. The school needs to ensure that its behaviour management systems are applied effectively and consistently, with all staff having the necessary skills to manage pupils' behaviour well in lessons.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	142276
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10294617
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	37
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Nick Chesters
Principal	Jared Eccles
Website	http://www.hollinsclough.staffs.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	10 and 11 July 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school is within the Diocese of Lichfield. Its most recent section 48 inspection took place in January 2018. Section 48 inspections were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They restarted in September 2021. The next section 48 inspection will be within eight years of the most recent one.
- The school is part of The Moorlands Primary Federation, which consists of seven schools.
- All pupils are electively home educated but receive part of their education at school. They are registered on the school's roll. They are expected to attend school for three core days each week. A small proportion of pupils attend on additional days.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the lead inspector held meetings with the senior teacher and executive principal. He also met two members of the board of trustees.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, geography and languages. They met with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils and viewed examples of pupils' work. An inspector also spoke to pupils about science, history and music.
- An inspector observed children in the early years and pupils in key stage 1 read to a trusted adult.
- The inspectors spoke with members of staff about their workload and well-being.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school.
- The inspectors considered the responses, including the free-text comments, to Ofsted Parent View. They also considered the responses to the staff and pupil surveys. An inspectors spoke to parents at the end of the school day.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation provided by the school. This included the school's improvement priorities, school policies, curriculum documents, SEND records, behaviour records, attendance records and minutes of meetings held by the trust board.

Inspection team

Barry Yardsley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Stephanie Moran

Ofsted Inspector

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