

Inspection of a good school: Bedale Church of England Primary School

Firby Road, Bedale, North Yorkshire DL8 2AT

Inspection dates:

28 and 29 November 2023

Outcome

Bedale Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive in this welcoming and caring school. Staff have high expectations about how hard pupils should work and how they should conduct themselves. Pupils rise to these expectations and achieve well. They participate fully in lessons, relishing new knowledge. Due to the positive culture, pupils are able to learn from their mistakes. Pupils generally enjoy the challenging activities teachers provide but in some subjects the tasks set do not require pupils to think deeply enough.

Staff successfully promote the school's values: perseverance, compassion and friendship. Pupils can explain how these values influence their actions, such as playing with children who are lonely. Pupils behave extremely well, showing respect and courtesy to their classmates and to staff. Bullying is very rare. The school nurtures pupils' individual interests through the wide range of clubs on offer. Pupils actively contribute to the school community. They enjoy leadership roles, such as being house leaders and corridor monitors.

Staff know each pupil really well. As a result, most pupils find school a positive and rewarding experience. Parents and carers feel that all of the staff have their children's best interests at heart. They are thankful to staff for the dedication they show to pupils' welfare and learning. Their views were supported by evidence found during this inspection.

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

The school has ensured that the curriculum is broad with clear end points. It is thoughtfully sequenced. It enables pupils to build up important knowledge and skills over time. Subject leaders have good subject knowledge. Many have liaised with subject leaders from the local secondary school to find out exactly what pupils need to know to succeed in their next steps. For example, the geography curriculum enables pupils to use maps to build mental models of the landscape. This is an important skill for secondary school. However, despite this, the curriculum in geography, and some other subjects, does

not enable pupils to apply their subject-specific knowledge in sophisticated ways. For instance, pupils do not get the chance to explore cause and effect when they write about events in history.

Teachers skilfully introduce pupils to new content. They make sure that pupils revisit learning from previous lessons and check that they have remembered it. They make sure that those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) understand how to complete the tasks set.

The mathematics curriculum is extremely well implemented. Teaching in key stage 1 enables pupils to gain secure knowledge of essential number bonds. In key stage 2, teachers set questions that require pupils to apply their number knowledge fluently in different contexts, such as problem-solving.

Children in early years make a very good start to their school life. Subject leaders work alongside early years leaders to ensure that children gain the knowledge they need to be successful later on. For example, the idea of maps is introduced when children are taught about where their school is located. This means they are well prepared for future learning in geography. The curriculum in early years introduces children to many useful new words, which they practise during play activities.

Pupils master phonics quickly. The vast majority achieve well in the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1. Constant checking by teachers ensures that misconceptions are picked up immediately. The books pupils read enable them to practise matching the sounds that they have just learned to letter shapes. Teachers ensure that pupils who struggle to read these books fluently receive additional support.

Pupils with SEND are extremely well supported. They follow the same curriculum as other pupils. Teachers are skilled at adapting work so that pupils with SEND can learn alongside their classmates. The school has thorough systems to check that any adaptations to teaching meet the needs of pupils with SEND. As a result, pupils with SEND progress in their learning, gaining new knowledge and skills.

Pupils benefit from trips linked to the curriculum and visits from experts. These visits are carefully planned so that they provide practical insights into the topics pupils are learning. For example, as part of the geography curriculum, pupils visit Swaledale to see the effects of river erosion.

The school nurtures pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. Pupils develop their spiritual understanding through assemblies in which they reflect quietly. They deepen their cultural understanding through visits from a range of faith leaders and trips to places of worship.

Relationships between pupils are incredibly positive. They behave exceptionally well, both in class and around school. The school attendance for the current year is high due to the school's close work with families. Leaders take swift action to follow up on any absences.

Leaders and governors have a focus on staff well-being and ensuring that workload is manageable. Governors are dedicated to working alongside leaders to make the school as good as it can be. To this end, they challenge leaders when necessary.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the curriculum does not enable pupils to connect important ideas and concepts together. The school should ensure that the curriculum enables pupils to develop their ability to apply subject-related concepts and make meaningful connections between them, such as writing explanations about the impact of key events in history.

Background

When we have judged 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 November 2018.

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	121479
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10297317
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	314
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Paul Croft
Headteacher	Elizabeth Turnbull
Website	www.northyorkshire.schooljotter.com
Dates of previous inspection	27 and 28 November 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Bedale Church of England primary school is a voluntary controlled primary school. The previous inspection of denominational education given to pupils and the content of the school's collective worship, under section 48 of the Education Act 2005, was carried out in January 2020. It is part of the Diocese of Leeds. The next section 48 inspection is due in 2024.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of the schools provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- A range of meetings were held with the headteacher, leaders and staff, including early careers teachers. The inspector also met with governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- A small group of pupils with leadership responsibilities gave the inspector a guided tour

of the school. The inspector also met with a group of female pupils and a separate group of male pupils to talk about their experiences of the school, and their learning across a wider range of subjects.

- The inspector attended the 'stay and play' session in early years and spoke informally with parents.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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 inspector considered the views of parents, staff and pupils gathered through Ofsted's surveys.
- The inspector reviewed documentation relating to the school's curriculum, along with the school's own evaluation and its development plans. The inspector also sampled education, health and care plans for some pupils, as well as plans relating to the individual support the pupils required.

Inspection team

Sarah Hubbard, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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