

Inspection of a good school: The Rubicon Centre

Raincliffe Street, Selby, North Yorkshire YO8 4AN

Inspection dates:

6 and 7 December 2023

Outcome

The Rubicon Centre continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Strong relationships between pupils and staff underpin education at The Rubicon Centre. The core values of respect, resilience and responsibility are woven into the daily life of the school to prepare pupils for future employment, education and training.

In lessons, pupils concentrate on the activities they are set by teachers. When pupils' behaviour falls below expectations, adults remind them of the core values. They refocus pupils quickly and calmly. Bullying is very rare. Pupils enjoy lessons. The atmosphere in the school is calm.

Every school day starts with an 'ASK' session in which teachers ensure that pupils are ready for the day ahead. This provides a positive start to learning.

Careers provision at the school is a particular strength and is embedded into different curriculum areas. Pupils are encouraged to think about the potential careers they could pursue. They are given help to identify the college courses and apprenticeships they can access when they leave The Rubicon Centre.

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

The curriculum at The Rubicon Centre is designed to focus on the knowledge that pupils need to help them to progress positively. There is a strong focus on English, mathematics and personal, social and health education (PSHE). Leaders check what pupils know when they join the school and use this information well to help them plan appropriate activities to engage pupils' interest.

In English, teachers make meticulous checks on what pupils are learning in each lesson. They have a thorough understanding of exactly what pupils know. This information helps teachers to plan whole-class and individual activities. For example, there has been a recent focus on skills of inference in reading activities. In mathematics, there are regular

chances to recap and revisit previous learning. This allows pupils to catch up on missed learning and embed knowledge that will unlock future learning.

Leaders' focus on literacy and reading means there is a strong culture of reading throughout the school. Pupils are encouraged to complete reviews of the books they have read. These reviews are linked to the school's rewards system. Pupils are given opportunities to read ambitious texts with a variety of different characters and backgrounds. The school's stock of library books has recently been enhanced. Adults know pupils' abilities and direct them to appropriate book choices. Pupils know that adults in the school value reading. This encourages pupils to read more.

The school is a calm place. Pupils trust teachers to help them. Small group sizes help them to concentrate and get the help they need. Over time, pupils become more positive about school. Parents who expressed a view are positive about the way in which the school has changed their child's attitude to education. Leaders are aware that this work needs to continue, especially to encourage pupils to attend school regularly.

A significant proportion of school time is devoted to PSHE lessons. This is a key part of the school's work to build positive attitudes to education and to ensure that pupils become confident, resilient members of society. Pupils are given clear and helpful advice about careers and college courses. When inspectors visited, pupils were learning about hidden disabilities and reflected thoughtfully on these. There are opportunities to connect what is learned in lessons to important values such as democracy.

Staff are proud to work at this school. There is a shared sense of purpose across all adults working with pupils at The Rubicon Centre. Staff feel well supported to implement leaders' plans. There is a strong sense of teamwork and togetherness. Expertise from local schools and from the local authority is used well to strengthen the education pupils receive. Governors support and challenge the school to make continued progress. They have a clear understanding of the school and of the next steps needed to further enhance provision for pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Many pupils do not attend school regularly enough. This means they miss out on vital learning and do not reach their full potential. Leaders should continue to develop systems and processes to work with pupils and their families to improve attendance and attitudes to education.

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 January 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	137751
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10255906
Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	25
Appropriate authority	The management committee
Chair	Chris Mulqueen
Headteacher	Gareth Morton
Website	www.therubiconcentre-northyorks.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	10 and 11 January 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The Rubicon Centre provides education for pupils who have been permanently excluded, or are at risk of permanent exclusion, from mainstream education. The school works closely with six schools in Selby and the surrounding area.
- At the time of the inspection, the school made use of one other alternative provider of education.

Information about this inspection

- 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other members of the school's leadership team. Inspectors also met with members of the management committee, including the chair, and representatives from the local authority.

- Deep dives were carried out in English, mathematics and PSHE. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils, and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- 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.
- Inspectors looked at planning documents for several subjects in the wider curriculum.
- Inspectors met with pupils, both formally and informally, and with members of support staff to discuss their views of the school.
- Inspectors also met with leaders for attendance and discussed plans to improve attendance.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents, carers, staff and pupils who responded to Ofsted's surveys.

Inspection team

Matthew Vellensworth, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

David Penny

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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