

Inspection of a good school: St Nicholas Primary School

Cottingham Road, Kingston-upon-Hull HU6 7RH

Inspection dates:

5 and 6 December 2023

Outcome

St Nicholas Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

St Nicholas Primary School is a well-organised and welcoming school. Pupils are well cared for. As one parent said, 'This is a small school with a huge heart.' Staff and pupils know each other well. They chat to each other around the school and enjoy relationships that are polite and courteous. Bullying is rare. Pupils know who they can go to if they have any concerns. They appreciate the school's 'worry monster', which helps them to report their worries confidentially.

Pupils know that staff have high expectations of them, and they work hard to do well. Pupils are respectful of people's differences. They recognise that it is alright to be different. They are respectful when talking about sensitive issues, such as racism and homophobia.

The school is ambitious for what pupils can achieve. The academy trust provides a broad range of training for teachers and leaders. Subject leaders have thought carefully about the knowledge that is included in the school's curriculum.

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

The school has established an ambitious curriculum. Leaders have clearly identified the important knowledge they want pupils to know and remember in each subject. The school has identified the challenging vocabulary it wants pupils to understand and use. The school carries out regular checks to find out what pupils have remembered in each area of the curriculum. This information is then used to identify gaps in pupils' learning. The school takes steps to remind pupils of important knowledge if they have not remembered. As a result, pupils can talk confidently about what they have learned.

The school establishes strong relationships with parents as soon as children start school in the Reception class. The environment provides rich opportunities for children to develop early language skills. The school ensures that learning to read is a priority. Children start to learn to read as soon as they enter the Reception Year. The school makes sure that

children and pupils practise their reading using books that closely match the sounds they know. In lessons, teachers introduce new sounds to pupils clearly. Occasionally, adults do not notice when pupils are struggling. This means that a small number of pupils do not learn to read the new sounds well enough. If pupils fall behind, they receive extra support to help them catch up.

The school has introduced a new mathematics curriculum. Leaders have thought carefully about what pupils must know and remember in the curriculum. Pupils spend time each day practising things they have already learned. They can remember important mathematical vocabulary. All pupils have frequent opportunities to develop their problem-solving skills. However, sometimes, teachers do not check if pupils have understood what is being taught. This means that a few pupils find work too hard.

Behaviour in classrooms and around the school is good. Pupils listen carefully to what adults say. Pupils know they can visit 'The Hive' to talk to staff whenever they have worries or concerns. There are lots of opportunities for pupils to make a difference to school. For example, the well-being ambassadors have introduced an area where pupils can go if they want some 'quiet time' outside. The school's religion and world views ambassadors help to plan celebrations, assemblies, and school events. Pupils are respectful of people who have different backgrounds or beliefs.

Staff work with professionals from external agencies to provide help for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These pupils receive support to help them to learn what is set out in the school's curriculum. However, their support plans do not contain enough information to ensure that staff know exactly what to do to support pupils' specific needs. This means that the school cannot be certain that the support provided for pupils with SEND is precisely matched to their needs.

Leaders have established a strong team culture. The school takes care to consider the workload of staff. Staff feel valued and are proud to work at the school. The academy trust provides effective challenge and support for leaders and teachers. This is helping the school to flourish.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some teachers do not check whether pupils understand what they are being taught carefully enough in lessons. This means that some pupils find work too hard. Leaders should support teachers to make thorough checks on pupils' learning so that they can provide work that closely meets all pupils' needs.
- Plans to support pupils with SEND do not provide sufficient detail. This means that leaders cannot be sure that these pupils get support that is well matched to their

needs. The school should ensure that plans to support pupils with SEND have clear targets and give staff the information they need to provide precise support.

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 12 and 13 June 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	140906
Local authority	Kingston-Upon-Hull City Council
Inspection number	10290260
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	N/A
Number of pupils on the school roll	208
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	N/A
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Graeme Brook
Headteacher	Sarah Waller (Executive headteacher)
Website	http://www.stnicholasprimaryschool.org
Dates of previous inspection	12 and 13 June 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- St Nicholas Primary School converted to be an academy in August 2015.
- There have been changes to staffing since the last inspection. A new executive headteacher was appointed in January 2023.

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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspector met with the executive headteacher, head of school, senior leaders, groups of staff, groups of pupils and representatives of the academy trust.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics and art. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, looked at samples of pupils' work and spoke to pupils about their learning.
- The inspector listened to some pupils reading to an adult.
- 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 observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, as well as the responses to staff and pupil surveys.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documentation, including safeguarding records and minutes of governing body meetings.

Inspection team

Jaimie Holbrook, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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