

Inspection of Helmsley Community Primary School

Carlton Lane, Helmsley, York, North Yorkshire YO62 5HB

Inspection dates: 30 and 31 January 2024

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| Overall effectiveness | Good |
| The quality of education | Good |
| Behaviour and attitudes | Outstanding |
| Personal development | Good |
| Leadership and management | Good |
| Early years provision | Good |
| Previous inspection grade | Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

The headteacher of this school is Claire Lamb. This school is part of Ryedale Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Mark McCandless, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by David Dangerfield.

What is it like to attend this school?

Helmsley Community Primary is a school at the heart of the local community. The school is held in high regard by its pupils, parents and carers. Leaders have developed a welcoming culture in the school. Pupils enjoy learning in a calm environment. Leaders have high expectations for pupils' achievement. These are typically realised.

Pupils rise to the school's expectations of 'ready, respectful and safe.' They understand what it means to be responsible and independent learners. Pupils behave exceptionally well in lessons and around school. They are considerate to each other and build warm, positive relationships with adults. Incidents of poor behaviour are rare. Pupils are safe and cared for well by the adults at their school. At breaktimes, pupils take part in lots of physical activities. They play well together.

The school's programme for pupils' personal development is designed to prepare them thoroughly for life in modern Britain. This is delivered through the school's global curriculum. Pupils learn about their local area, as well as diversity and difference in the wider world. They develop a keen sense of responsible citizenship, for example initiating campaigns such as 'no mow in May' to protect the wildlife where they live.

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

A love of reading runs throughout the school. In the early years, children share stories with adults. They talk excitedly about what is happening on each page of the book. Older pupils in school recognise the importance of reading. They access a wide range of texts. These have been carefully chosen to be ambitious and to develop pupils' understanding of the wider world. Leaders have prioritised the teaching of reading. They ensure that staff receive the appropriate training to deliver the school's programme with accuracy and precision. The school quickly identifies pupils who have gaps in their learning. These pupils receive the support they need to catch up. Staff ensure pupils have ample opportunities to practise reading throughout the school day.

In subjects such as mathematics and science, the knowledge that pupils need to learn is carefully broken down into smaller steps of learning. This ensures that pupils achieve the school's ambitious outcomes in each year group. Consideration is given to the starting points of the curriculum in the early years. For example, in Nursery and Reception, children are immersed in early investigations of plants, through skilled interactions with adults in the outdoor environment.

In other subjects, such as physical education and art and design, subject leaders have meticulously mapped out the key knowledge and subject-specific vocabulary they want pupils to learn and when they should learn it. Teachers make regular checks to ensure that pupils have remembered this key knowledge. However, in

these subjects, the school does not use this information effectively to develop its curriculum offer further.

There is a strong inclusive culture at this school. The school ensures that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), access the whole curriculum. Teachers use individual support plans and adapt their teaching well to meet the needs of the pupils with SEND in their class. The school also ensures that it works closely with external agencies, including speech and language therapy, to give the best possible support to pupils.

In the early years, there is a focus on ensuring children develop their language and communication. Routines are well established. Children show high levels of self-control and focus. On occasion, the children are not supported well enough to become independent. For example, they do not have sufficient opportunities to choose the resources needed to complete tasks successfully.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They attend regularly and on time. However, there is a small group of pupils who do not meet leaders' high expectations. For these pupils, the relentless support provided by the school is leading to more regular attendance.

Pupils have many opportunities to discuss and debate a range of world issues through the school's global curriculum, as well as during 'Newsday Tuesday' assemblies. Pupils use their knowledge and understanding of themes such as human rights to talk maturely about what they see as fair and unfair in the world today.

Older pupils hold responsible leadership positions, such as eco-warriors or reading champions. School councillors actively make improvements to the school. Pupils are proud of the recent developments they have supported, such as creating a calm space for pupils to use outside at lunchtime. All pupils have the opportunity to represent the school in a range of sporting activities. There is a palpable sense of belonging at the school.

The school is well supported by strong local governors as well as by leaders within the trust. Pupils, staff and parents are very positive about the school. Staff appreciate the training they receive. Leaders have high regard for staff's well-being.

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, such as physical education and art and design, the school does not use the information from pupil assessments as effectively as it could to

evaluate the impact of the curriculum. At times, gaps in pupils' learning are not addressed swiftly enough. The school should review its assessment procedures to ensure gaps in pupils' learning are identified and addressed.

- The school does not consistently enable younger children to make their own choices. Therefore, children do not develop independence and consolidate their learning as a matter of course. The school should develop its planning for children's independence and resourcefulness in the early years.

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

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| Unique reference number | 148376 |
| Local authority | North Yorkshire |
| Inspection number | 10297516 |
| 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 | 168 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | David Dangerfield |
| CEO of the trust | Mark McCandless |
| Headteacher | Claire Lamb |
| Website | www.helmsley-rlt.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- Helmsley Community Primary School converted to become an academy in February 2021. When its predecessor school, Helmsley Community Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The headteacher of this school is also the executive headteacher at Kirkbymoorside Primary School and Sinnington Community Primary School.
- The school is part of Ryedale Learning Trust.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- There is a breakfast club at the school, run by school staff.

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. 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, a senior teacher and the trust's school improvement director.
- Inspectors met with the chief executive officer and representatives from the board of trustees and the primary cluster committee.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, science, physical education and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also considered pupils' learning in mathematics.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 met with groups of pupils from different year groups.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and at breaktimes was observed.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documentation, including records relating to attendance and behaviour.
- Inspectors looked at staff, parent and pupil responses to Ofsted's surveys, including Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Sarah Gordon, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Chris Sergeant

His Majesty's Inspector

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