

Inspection of a good school: Elsecar Holy Trinity CofE Primary Academy

Church Street, Elsecar, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S74 8HS

Inspection dates:

6 and 7 March 2024

Outcome

Elsecar Holy Trinity CofE Primary Academy continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Stephen Silverwood. This school is part St Mary's Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Tamara Gulliver, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Tracey Rodger.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to be a part of this caring school community. They are enthusiastic about their learning. The school has recently welcomed a number of pupils from different parts of the world. Pupils value the increased diversity of different pupils in the school. As one pupil said: 'If we were all the same, then life would be boring.' The school's Christian values shine through in how staff speak to pupils and how pupils treat each other. Pupils maturely show their understanding of equality and fairness.

Pupils have a strong belief that staff will treat them fairly. They know that staff will help them if they have any worries. Staff have high expectations about how pupils should behave in and out of lessons. From the start of Reception, children learn to follow routines and build independence. In key stage 1 and 2, pupils move through school calmly. During more unstructured times, such as playtime and lunchtimes, pupils are kind and considerate to each other.

Since the last inspection, leaders have undertaken work to improve the curriculum. The increased ambition in the curriculum is having a positive impact on pupils' learning and experiences. These improvements are not reflected in the end-of-key-stage outcomes.

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

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils. They quickly identify the individual needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with SEND access the same curriculum as their peers. In some subjects, such as history, there have been significant changes to the curriculum and how it is taught. Adults provide children in the early years with opportunities to develop the skills and knowledge they need to prepare them for their learning in Year 1 and beyond. For example, they are taught important

historical vocabulary such as past and present. As they move through the curriculum, pupils develop an understanding of historical concepts such as invasion, power and empire. In some subjects, including history, staff use assessment well to identify aspects of the curriculum that pupils need more help with. However, in some other parts of the curriculum, including areas where pupils do not perform as well as other pupils nationally, assessment is less effective. It does not provide the school with clear information about which parts of the curriculum pupils need help with.

Leaders and staff place high value on pupils learning to read. The phonics curriculum is clear and comprehensive. Most staff have been trained to deliver the phonics curriculum well. They identify pupils who need support with reading quickly. Staff provide pupils with support that is closely linked to the sounds they find difficult to remember. However, the school does not assess some pupils who need help with reading frequently enough. This means that the school does not know how quickly these pupils are catching up with their peers. Pupils in this school enjoy reading. They talk enthusiastically about books that they have read, and that have been read to them. Some books that pupils read have been deliberately chosen by leaders to promote diversity. For example, Year 6 pupils talk with excitement about how the book 'Turtle Boy' helped them to understand disability more deeply.

Leaders prioritise pupils' development beyond the curriculum. They ensure that pupils' experiences extend beyond the classroom. For example, older pupils talk about how their educational visit to the local coal mining museum helped them with their learning in history. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe online. They learn about the importance of healthy lifestyles and how to stay mentally healthy. The school helps pupils to understand about the protected characteristics and wider groups in society who may face discrimination. Pupils have regular opportunities to learn about other world faiths and cultures.

Staff understand their role in promoting a culture of high attendance in school. Leaders have introduced new initiatives to promote and celebrate high attendance. Pupils' attendance is in line with national figures. However, the number of pupils who are persistently absent from school remains high. Leaders are doing all they can to support families to ensure that pupils are in school as often as possible.

There are significant changes happening within the trust. Most staff say that they feel informed about what these changes might mean for them. Leaders support staff with their workload and well-being. Governors understand their role in helping the school to develop. They offer challenge on some aspects of school performance. For example, they challenge patterns and trends in behaviour and safeguarding incidents. However, their challenge is not clearly focused on the impact leaders are having on pupils' academic achievement.

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 does not assess pupils who need help with their reading frequently enough. This means that they do not have a clear picture of how quickly these pupils are catching up. The school should ensure that frequent assessment identifies any additional support that pupils may need to catch up with their peers.
- In some subjects, assessment does not identify the parts of the curriculum that pupils find most difficult. As a result, actions to address gaps in pupils' knowledge are not precise enough. The school should ensure that assessment of pupils' knowledge is used to identify and address any gaps in knowledge to enable all pupils to achieve well.
- Governors, including trustees, do not challenge school leaders effectively about the impact of their actions on pupils' achievement in the curriculum. This means that some opportunities to increase pupils' progress and attainment are missed. The school should ensure that those with responsibility for governance refine and enhance approaches to challenging leaders about the impact of the curriculum on offer to pupils.

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 the school to be good in September 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	141972
Local authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	10297415
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	174
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Tracy Rodger
Headteacher	Stephen Silverwood
Website	www.elsecarprimary.org
Dates of previous inspection	27 and 28 September 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Sheffield.
- The school had its last statutory inspection of Anglican and Methodist schools (SIAMS) in October 2017.

Information about this inspection

The inspector carried out this graded inspection under section 8 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 inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- 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 spoke to members of the governing body.
- The inspector spoke to executive leaders, including the chief executive officer and chief education officer.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, early reading and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector evaluated responses from parents and carers to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, and spoke with some parents dropping their children off at school. The inspector also evaluated the responses that staff and pupils gave to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Liam Colclough, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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