

Inspection of a good school: Pickering Community Junior School

Middleton Road, Pickering, North Yorkshire YO18 8AJ

Inspection dates:

20 and 21 March 2024

Outcome

Pickering Community Junior School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pickering Community Junior School is a happy and vibrant place to be. Pupils enjoy warm, respectful relationships with staff. They enjoy sharing their experiences of school, including how staff use humour and funny sayings to address various aspects of school life. Pupils see themselves as valued, active participants in creating the school's positive culture and in solving any problems that may arise.

Pupils have many opportunities to hold positions of responsibility. These positions are highly prized because pupils feel that their views are listened to. When issues occur in school, junior leadership groups, such as the school council and the newly relaunched Rainbow Rockets, work with staff to try and find solutions. The school is very much a community with pupil voice at the very heart of all decision-making.

Leaders have high expectations for all pupils. The school's approach to managing behaviour has been revised since the previous inspection, and pupils value having opportunities to take responsibility for their actions and to work through problems. This ensures that every pupil develops the behaviours they need to be a successful learner. Pupils work hard to follow the school's 'To Care' motto. They enjoy their lessons and apply themselves to their learning. As a result, they are achieving well in lessons.

Leaders have worked tirelessly to gain support from parents to improve pupils' attendance, which is now in line with that seen nationally. This is having a very positive impact on both outcomes and pupils' well-being.

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

The curriculum is ambitious and well sequenced. Staff have adopted consistent approaches to delivery in lessons so that pupils have a secure understanding of previously taught knowledge and concepts before moving on. For the majority of pupils this is working well, and they now remember more about what they have previously learned. However, the school has, rightly, identified that pupils could achieve more in some

subjects at the end of key stage 2. Leaders have been systematic in reviewing practice and implementing changes where necessary. They have already identified that the most able pupils are not being sufficiently challenged at the start of mathematics lessons. Work has already begun to address this issue, but it is not yet fully embedded across the school.

The school has recently been doing lots of work to further develop the reading offer to ensure that all pupils are fluent readers. Reading is part of every pupil's day. Phonics sessions are integral to the daily routine for those still at the early stages of learning to read. The school makes sure that all pupils have access to a range of beautiful books, many of which have only recently been published. Teachers inspire a love of reading by reading aloud whole-class texts. Pupils can be seen eagerly anticipating every word.

The computing curriculum is very strong and pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. The school is keen for all pupils to do their best. Independent activities are carefully planned in all lessons to ensure that pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and other disadvantaged pupils, make good progress. Pupils' behaviour does not disrupt learning. There is a clear sense of purpose in lessons, and low-level disruption is minimal. If pupils seem to be losing focus, staff are quick to bring their attention back.

Pupils' broader development is carefully considered and planned for. The school ensures that pupils receive appropriate personal, social and health education (PSHE) that includes relationships and sex education. Pupils learn to keep themselves safe in their day-to-day lives, including online. The school carefully adapts the PSHE curriculum to take account of pupils' needs and experiences and also in response to issues in the local community.

The school is well led and managed. Leaders, even those new to role, have a clear and precise understanding of what is working well and what needs to be improved or adapted to ensure that pupils receive the education they deserve. Staff are very positive about how they are supported to further develop their subject knowledge and teaching. Those responsible for governance bring a broad range of expertise, which they use effectively to support and challenge school leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Activities at the start of mathematics lessons do not provide sufficient challenge for the most able pupils. This means that opportunities to extend and deepen pupils' mathematical thinking are missed. The school should continue to review the content of these sessions to ensure that tasks are pitched at the right level to maximise progress for all 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in December 2014.

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	121356
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10313241
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	198
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Emily Smeaton
Headteacher	Michaela De Barr
Website	www.pickering-jun.n-yorks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 November 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school runs a breakfast club.
- The school has a formal working agreement with Pickering Infant and Nursery School.
- The school does not use alternative education provision.

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 headteacher and other leaders. The inspector spoke with groups of staff and pupils. She met with members of the governing body and with representatives of the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, computing and mathematics. For each deep dive, the inspector 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. The inspector also looked at samples of pupils' writing from across the curriculum.

- 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 during lessons and around the school site.
- The inspector spoke with parents at the school gates. She also considered the responses to Ofsted's survey, Ofsted Parent View, and to Ofsted's survey for staff.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents, including the school improvement plan and minutes of governing body meetings.

Inspection team

Jane Wilson, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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