

# Inspection of a good school: Mount Pellon Primary Academy

Battinson Road, Halifax, West Yorkshire HX1 4RG

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 April 2024

## Outcome

Mount Pellon Primary Academy continues to be a good school.

The principal of this school is Ruth Collyer. This school is part of Northern Education Trust, which means that other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Rob Tarn, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Mark Sanders. There is also an executive principal, Sara McCallum, who is responsible for this school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Mount Pellon is a welcoming and inclusive school. The 'four Rs' of respect, resilience, responsibility and reflection are central to the life of the school. Staff notice when pupils display these qualities and reward them for doing so. There is an embedded culture of respect. One pupil said, 'We should treat everyone as we would expect to be treated.'

The school has high expectations for behaviour. Pupils meet these expectations consistently. They conduct themselves well in lessons and when moving around school. Pupils are polite and respectful to adults and each other. Pupils are accepting of each other's differences. They have a strong sense of equality. Pupils learn about different world faiths and cultures. They respect people who have different beliefs or opinions to their own.

The school has high ambitions for all pupils. Leaders have a clear vision for implementing a high-quality education. Pupils study a broad and ambitious curriculum. Pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils, learn and achieve well. Parents and carers are positive about their children's achievements.

Pupils are safe. They trust adults to help them. They learn how to keep themselves safe in the community, including when online. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities, including being a school councillor or a prefect. Head students are proud to be ambassadors for the school. They support the principal and showcase the school to visitors.

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

The school's well-sequenced curriculum sets out the knowledge that pupils will learn at each stage, including in the early years. Pupils who join the school at different times in the school year are assessed quickly. Teachers ensure that pupils develop their basic skills so that they can access the curriculum effectively. In mathematics and phonics, any gaps in pupils' knowledge are identified and addressed quickly.

In some subjects in the wider curriculum, the checks that the school makes are not precise enough. The school has established clear systems for checking pupils' learning at the end of a unit of work. However, it is not clear how well pupils are learning the intended curriculum over time. In some lessons, the school does not consider the tasks that pupils are given to complete carefully enough. Some pupils struggle to remember what they have been taught in previous lessons.

The school supports pupils with SEND effectively. Pupils with complex needs benefit from the school's inclusive curriculum. Most pupils with SEND learn independently. They access the same curriculum and achieve well. Teachers carefully adapt learning to meet pupils' individual needs.

Adults deliver the phonics programme consistently across the school. Pupils read accurately and with increasing fluency because books are well matched to the sounds that they know. Pupils' knowledge of phonics builds over time as they move through the programme. Staff are well trained to teach reading. Pupils who need it are given the support that they need to catch up. Pupils, including pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils, make strong progress in reading regardless of their starting points.

Children in the early years access a range of activities. Adults prioritise the development of children's language and vocabulary. Children use the sounds that they know to read and write. They develop their mathematical knowledge from well-planned activities. Most children concentrate well to complete activities.

Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. There is no disruption to lessons. Pupils are rewarded for working hard and trying their best. They value the weekly 'proud' award. One pupil said, 'It helps us to work hard so we can get the award again and again.' Pupils look forward to the weekly celebration assembly when they are rewarded for being 'loud and proud', a 'marvellous mathematician' and the 'richest reader'.

Some pupils do not attend school regularly enough. The school takes prompt action to make sure that parents and pupils understand the importance of coming to school every day. Pupils enjoy the rewards that they receive for attending school, including tokens for the book vending machine.

The school is committed to ensuring that pupils experience the world beyond their local community. It makes sure that the personal development curriculum is adapted in response to local issues. Pupils value the opportunities to broaden their knowledge and understanding of the world. These include residential visits, team-building with a local

school, clubs and charity work. Pupils have the opportunity to work with pupils across the trust through 'NET Fest' and the 'NET Games'.

Leaders at all levels have a secure understanding of the school and the challenges that it faces. They provide appropriate challenge and support. Staff speak highly of the development opportunities provided by school and trust leaders. They are well supported with managing their workload.

## **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 wider curriculum subjects, assessment systems do not provide a comprehensive picture of pupils' retention of subject knowledge over time. This means that gaps in pupils' knowledge are not identified and addressed consistently well. The school needs to further develop systems to identify gaps in pupils' learning and check that pupils are building and retaining their knowledge over time.
- In some wider curriculum subjects, the learning tasks and activities in some lessons do not support pupils to learn the intended curriculum well enough. This means that pupils are not embedding the subject knowledge that leaders have identified as being important. The school should ensure that staff have the resources and training they need to implement the curriculum effectively in all subjects.

## **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 2019.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	139270
<b>Local authority</b>	Calderdale
<b>Inspection number</b>	10323045
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	317
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Mark Sanders
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Rob Tarn
<b>Principal</b>	Ruth Collyer
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://mpa.northerneducationtrust.org">https://mpa.northerneducationtrust.org</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	22 and 23 January 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of Northern Education Trust.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- There is a breakfast club run by the school on site.
- The school has a Nursery for three- and four-year-old children.

## 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 principal, the executive principal and the deputy CEO of the trust.

- The inspector met with representatives from the governing body and a representative from the board of trustees.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. 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 heard pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, around the school, at playtime and at lunchtime. The inspector spoke with pupils about their views on the school and their learning, behaviour and safety.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record of recruitment checks; met with the designated safeguarding lead; 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 considered responses to Ofsted's online questionnaires for staff and pupils. They also took into account the views of parents and carers using Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including comments received via the free-text facility. The inspector also talked to parents in the school playground.

## **Inspection team**

Nicola Beaumont, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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