

Inspection of Lothersdale Primary School

Lothersdale, Keighley, West Yorkshire BD20 8HB

Inspection dates:	24 and 25 June 2025
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

The headteacher is Melanie Tyson. This school is part of the Yorkshire Collaborative 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 (CEO), Jo Robinson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Jennifer Baynes.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Lothersdale Primary School under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged Lothersdale Community Primary School to be outstanding for overall effectiveness, before it opened as Lothersdale Primary School as a result of conversion to academy status. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

What is it like to attend this school?

Staff live out the school motto, 'nurture all hearts, inspire all minds', in their daily actions. They take time to get to know each pupil individually. This helps pupils be successful regardless of their different starting points. Pupils thrive at the school both academically and socially. Pupils are clear that 'bullying is not tolerated here'. They choose designated trusted adults to report concerns to if necessary. As a result, pupils feel safe and secure at school.

The school has high ambitions for pupils. These are being realised. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve remarkably well at the school. The most recent published outcomes at key stage 2 and for Year 1 phonics are exceptional. Expectations for pupils' behaviour are similarly high. Pupils' behaviour and conduct at the school is excellent.

Pupils from all year groups, including Reception Year, make up the school council. The school council hosts coffee mornings in the local village hall, where they discuss, for example, sustainability issues with local residents. The 'eco-team' contributed to planting a thousand trees in the local community to help sustain the local environment. These opportunities help pupils to make a positive contribution to the local community.

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

The school has devised a curriculum to ensure that pupils can be successful. The knowledge that pupils will learn is meticulously planned from Reception through to Year 6. Teachers check pupils' learning at regular intervals. Any pupil who is falling behind is supported to fill their gaps in knowledge. This ensures that pupils have a thorough understanding across the curriculum. Staff make clear links between different areas of the curriculum. For example, in reading lessons, pupils study texts about art and diversity. As a result, staff take every opportunity to embed pupils' knowledge of the curriculum. This helps pupils across the school, starting with children in Reception Year, to make links with their learning. For example, children in Reception connect role play activities in the 'hospital' to prior learning about Florence Nightingale. This helps them to build on what they already know.

Reading is at the heart of the school. From the first week in Reception, children begin to learn phonics. Staff have excellent subject knowledge. This ensures that pupils make rapid progress through the phonics curriculum. Any pupils not keeping up receive bespoke support to catch up with their peers. The school has a 'poet in residence' who regularly works with the pupils. The school invites parents and grandparents to read to Reception children at the end of the day. These activities ensure that pupils develop a love of reading at the school.

The school has a clear system in place to identify pupils with SEND. Staff ensure that all pupils with SEND have the support they need to help them to be successful. Staff are highly skilled in adapting the learning so that all pupils with SEND can access the curriculum. As a result, pupils with SEND achieve exceptionally well at the school.

The early years curriculum is carefully designed to nurture children's emotional development. Children inquisitively and enthusiastically access the learning environment. Routines and systems are clearly embedded. Interactions between children are kind and respectful. As a result, children are well prepared for Year 1.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They demonstrate empathy and compassion towards each other. Classrooms are active learning environments. Pupils have a thirst for knowledge and a love of learning. The school takes effective action to ensure attendance is high. As a result, attendance at the school is significantly above national average.

The school's provision for pupils' personal development is exceptional. The 'learning for life curriculum' promotes positive characteristics through the characters 'Relationship Rabbit', 'Stash away Squirrel', 'Resilient Badger' and 'Wise Owl'. Across the curriculum, staff plan opportunities for pupils to demonstrate these character traits. This helps pupils to not only be better learners but also prepares them for life beyond school. Pupils develop a knowledge of different religions and cultures by visiting places of worship and celebrating festivals such as Diwali. Pupils access an extensive range of extra-curricular activities. Inspirational figures such as Olympic athletes regularly visit the school. These opportunities help pupils to develop their talents and interests.

Those responsible for governance are highly skilled. This allows them to offer effective support and challenge to the school. The school and trust provide a comprehensive package of professional development for staff. This helps staff develop their teaching expertise and their subject leadership skills. Leaders are mindful of staff workload. Staff are appreciative of this and are proud to work here. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the education and care offered by the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	142201
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10346560
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	106
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jennifer Baynes
CEO of the trust	Jo Robinson
Headteacher	Melanie Tyson
Website	www.lothersdaleschool.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	15 and 16 July 2014, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The school provides a breakfast and an after-school club for its pupils.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 and members of staff.
- An inspector met with the CEO of the trust.
- An inspector met with the chair of the trust and four members of the local governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work. Inspectors also considered the quality of education in other subjects.
- 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 observed pupils' behaviour in a range of situations. They also spoke with pupils about their experiences at school and their views on behaviour and bullying.
- Inspectors spoke with leaders, teachers and pupils about the school's programme of personal development.
- Inspectors considered the responses shared through Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also spoke with parents and carers at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

Chris Sergeant, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Stephanie Ngenda

Ofsted Inspector

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