

Inspection of a good school: St Nicholas Church of England Primary School, West Tanfield

Mowbray Terrace, West Tanfield, Ripon, North Yorkshire HG4 5JN

Inspection date:

11 April 2024

Outcome

St Nicholas Church of England Primary School, West Tanfield continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive at this small and inclusive school. The school has a strong spirit of community. It shows genuine care for pupils and works in effective partnership with parents and carers to meet pupils' individual needs. Pupils enjoy school. They work and play happily with each other and build trusting relationships with staff.

The school has high expectations for what pupils can achieve. It has developed an ambitious curriculum that reflects those expectations. It prepares pupils well for their transition to secondary school. Pupils work hard in lessons. They show highly positive attitudes to their learning.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are polite, friendly and conduct themselves in a calm and orderly manner. Pupils show respect and kindness to others. They cooperate with each other and support each other's well-being. Pupils take increasing responsibility for their own behaviour as they move through the school.

The school provides pupils with a wide range of opportunities to develop their talents and interests. Pupils take part in clubs such as sports and music. They take on roles as eco warriors, mental health ambassadors and reading buddies. Pupils make a positive contribution to the life of the school.

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

Over the last few years, the school has developed a new curriculum that is both broad and ambitious. The school has applied considerable thought and intelligence to the design of its curriculum. It has established Nursery provision and ensured that the early years curriculum prepares children well for key stage 1. It has also increased the number of

mixed-age classes. Pupils build their knowledge and subject-specific skills in a coherent and progressive manner. They learn to work like subject specialists, such as mathematicians, scientists and historians.

The school identified weaknesses in the previous curriculum. These weaknesses, together with the pandemic, left gaps in pupils' knowledge. Integral to the design of the new curriculum is regular re-visiting of what pupils have learned before. This is helping pupils to know and remember more. However, older pupils have only experienced the revised curriculum towards the end of key stage 2. It has taken time to address previous gaps in their learning before new learning could be introduced.

Teachers have a deep and secure subject knowledge. They check pupils' understanding and select activities that secure and extend pupils' knowledge. Pupils learn without disruption. They listen attentively to their teachers and focus on their work. Pupils produce work of a high quality. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities access the same curriculum as their peers. The school identifies pupils' needs with skill and precision. It also ensures that teachers and other adults receive appropriate training. This allows them to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. Pupils with SEND achieve well.

Reading is central to the life of the school. From the start of Reception, pupils learn to read using phonics. They read books matched to their phonic ability and become confident and fluent readers. Pupils who need extra help with their reading get it. This helps Reception and Year 1 pupils to keep up with their peers. It helps older pupils to develop their reading fluency and comprehension. Also, the school promotes a love for reading. Pupils benefit from a school library, class libraries and reading events and competitions. Pupils enjoy reading and read often at school.

The school prioritises pupils' wider development. It has established a comprehensive and age-appropriate personal development programme. Pupils learn about relationships and equality and diversity. They are taught how to keep themselves safe, including online. They also take part in daily exercise that promotes their physical and mental health. Collective worship, often led by pupils or 'worship warriors', is a significant feature of school life. It develops pupils' spirituality.

The school is providing pupils with a high-quality education. Leaders, including governors, share a strong commitment to develop the school further. Governors work in collaboration with school leaders and provide effective support and challenge. The federation with another school contributes to the sharing of ideas and expertise. This supports the school's development. The school values its staff. It ensures that staff workload is manageable and prioritises staff well-being. Staff enjoy working at the school. They are part of a collaborative and inclusive staff team.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils in upper key stage 2 have only benefited from the new curriculum towards the end of their time at the school. The gaps in their knowledge caused by weaknesses in the previous curriculum and exacerbated by the pandemic have taken time to address. This means that some pupils in upper key stage 2 do not possess a deep and coherent body of knowledge in some subjects. The school should further embed knowledge retrieval strategies into the curriculum for these pupils to secure the knowledge they need for the next stage of their education.

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 on 13 March 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

Unique reference number	121524
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10322995
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	49
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Christine Burgess
Headteacher	Sarah Taylor
Website	www.west-tanfield.n-yorks.sch.uk/
Date(s) of previous inspection	12 and 13 March 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of The Federation of Kirkby Malzeard and St Nicholas Church of England Schools. The headteacher of this school is also headteacher of Kirkby Malzeard Church of England Primary School.
- The school uses no alternative provision.
- The school is a Church of England school in the Diocese of Leeds. The school's last section 48 inspection took place in November 2019.

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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders and members of the governing body.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and music. For each deep dive, the 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.
- The inspectors also discussed the curriculum in science and history. They looked at samples of pupils' work in these subjects and talked to some pupils about their learning in history.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys for pupils and staff, and to the online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Ian Rawstorne, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Shan Brough Jones

Ofsted Inspector

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