

Inspection of Highcliffe Primary School

Hutton Lane, Guisborough, North Yorkshire TS14 8AA

Inspection dates:	28 and 29 January 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

This is an inclusive school that is highly valued by all members of the community. Relationships are strong and firmly based on the school's values of Respect, Resilience and Responsibility. Parents frequently comment that the school goes beyond the academic to offer a well-rounded education. New pupils who join the school are made to feel welcome and quickly settle in.

The school provides pupils with an ambitious new curriculum, designed to deepen their knowledge and understanding. This enables many pupils to learn well, although some pupils do not attain as well as they could.

The school has high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Staff ensure that these expectations are met. Pupils behave well. They can focus on their learning without distraction. Pupils are happy and feel safe in school.

The school offers a wide range of after-school clubs to widen pupils' interests. Pupils can access many sports clubs and activities. They can also study French or become involved in the performing arts. Pupils enjoy a range of special roles and responsibilities, such as being librarians and school councillors.

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

In many areas, the curriculum is well designed and enables pupils to revisit and build on their knowledge and skills over time. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their learning. For example, in history, Year 5 pupils can recall how Olympians in Ancient Greece were deemed as gods and relate this to the broader theme of power. However, this is not consistently the case. In some areas of the curriculum, the school does not check that pupils' understanding is secure. When this happens, misconceptions persist, and pupils do not build their knowledge well enough. The school does not have a clear enough picture of the impact of its curriculum developments.

The early years provides a strong foundation for learning. A vibrant and welcoming environment entices children to discover and explore. There are plentiful opportunities for children to independently apply their learning, such as counting and grouping objects. Adults are skilled in their interactions with children to develop their language and communication skills. The early identification of children with special education needs and/or disabilities ensures that appropriate support is put in place quickly. For example, a small number of children access daily nurture provision in the 'sunshine room'. Leaders ensure that appropriate adaptations and resources are in place to support pupils to effectively access their learning.

There is a strong reading culture in school. Pupils regularly access an attractive and well-resourced school library. Pupils enjoy author visits and trips to a local bookshop. Parents are invited into school to read with their children at the 'breakfast bonanza'. All staff have been trained to deliver the phonics programme well. The school ensures that books closely match the sounds that pupils are learning. Pupils who are not 'on track' to pass

the Year 1 phonics check are identified to receive the extra help they need. Pupils can apply their phonics knowledge to read unfamiliar words. However, staff do not consistently ensure that tasks are well matched to pupils' current understanding. As a result, they sometimes struggle to access activities in lessons.

Attendance has improved significantly over recent years. Leaders swiftly identify pupils who are struggling to attend regularly or on time. The school offers practical support for families to ensure pupils are in school ready to learn.

Pupils are well prepared for life beyond the school gates. They develop knowledge of world religions, deepened by visits to a local Buddhist temple and mosque. Celebration days ensure that pupils are taught the importance of respect and valuing difference. The curriculum teaches pupils to stay safe. For example, pupils understand the concept of 'consent' and the right to say no. The school has strong links with the local community. Pupils enjoy regular visits to church and actively support both local and national charities.

Staff appreciate the strategies that leaders have introduced to reduce workload and support their well-being. They feel well supported by governors who have prioritised staff well-being during a period of uncertainty.

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 areas of the curriculum, the school does not consistently check pupils' understanding well enough. This means that gaps in knowledge are missed and pupils do not build their knowledge well enough. The school should work with staff to better check pupils' understanding so that the information gained is used to inform teaching and support pupils' learning.
- The school does not have a clear enough picture of the impact of the recent changes to the curriculum. This means that it is not able to respond to areas where implementation is less secure. The school should work with staff to develop a clear picture of how well the curriculum is enabling pupils to acquire the intended knowledge and take appropriate action where this is less secure.

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	131457
Local authority	Redcar and Cleveland
Inspection number	10346382
Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	278
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Lydia Gardner
Headteacher	Nicky King
Website	www.highcliffeprimary.org
Dates of previous inspection	10 and 11 March 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school provides before- and after-school childcare for its pupils.
- The school currently uses no alternative provision.
- The school has been part of The East Cleveland Co-operative Learning Trust since August 2013.

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 and/or sixth form 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, assistant headteachers and a local authority representative from Redcar and Cleveland. Inspectors also held discussions with other leaders and governors, including the chair of governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also reviewed the English curriculum.
- 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 gathered the views of parents informally in person and formally through responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in classes, breakfast club, playtime and when moving around school.

Inspection team

Andy Jones, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Sarah Birch	Ofsted Inspector
Angela Vear	Ofsted Inspector

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