

Inspection of St Hilda's Ampleforth Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Station Road, Ampleforth, York, North Yorkshire YO62 4DG

Inspection dates: 10–11 March 2020

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

St Hilda's is a friendly school. Pupils, parents and teachers say that it 'feels like a family'. Everyone knows one another well. Pupils of all ages learn and play together. They are happy and safe.

Teachers work hard to make sure that every child can do their best. Teachers make learning enjoyable. They encourage pupils to challenge themselves and to learn from one another. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are fully included in the life of the school. Everyone gets the opportunity to play sport as part of a team. Everyone has the opportunity to learn about the world around them.

In the past, expectations for the youngest children have not been high enough. Some children have not been ready to make a good start in Year 1. This is changing, but there is still work to do.

Pupils behave well almost all of the time. They show respect for one another and for their teachers. Sometimes they get too excited and everyone talks at once. But they know it is important to listen and take turns. They respond quickly to reminders. Bullying is very rare. Parents and pupils told us they would be confident that staff would deal with any concerns.

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

Leaders and teachers work hard to ensure that all pupils learn well. Since the last inspection, leaders have focused on improving learning in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, more pupils are now able to use and apply their skills to help them learn in other subjects.

Teachers make sure that lessons are interesting. They encourage pupils to explain their thinking and talk through misunderstandings. They encourage pupils to make links between different subject areas. For example, Year 6 pupils were keen to share the masks they had designed in art. They also talked knowledgeably about the importance of masks in Mayan culture.

In mathematics, Year 4 pupils recalled what they had already learned about fractions. They used this knowledge to solve problems. When talking about science, Year 2 pupils were able to recall what they had learned about autumn. Older pupils joined in to explain why these seasonal changes happen. Explanations included appropriate scientific vocabulary and a good grasp of the relationship between sunlight and plants. Pupils' work also showed how they build an understanding of fair testing. Leaders are writing whole-school plans for all subjects to show how lessons build pupils' knowledge over time. They know this process will take some time to complete.

Leaders have prioritised reading. Leaders trained staff well so phonics teaching improved. Since September, pupils have followed a structured programme. Most pupils are learning the skills they need to read and spell. Pupils at an early stage of learning to read now have books that include the sounds they know. As a result, pupils are gaining confidence and fluency. Those who need extra help are well supported. Teachers aim to promote a love of reading. They choose books to engage pupils' interest. They also make links with learning in other subjects. Some older pupils say they need access to a better range of books to support their learning.

Pupils with SEND are well supported. Teachers understand their individual needs. Leaders aim to ensure that pupils with SEND access the full curriculum and achieve well.

Children in the early years are well looked after. They follow classroom routines and behave well. They are confident about taking part in activities. During the inspection, children particularly enjoyed learning in mathematics and listening to stories. Staff know children well and often adapt their questions for individuals. Teachers do not always provide as much challenge when children are choosing activities independently. Staff sometimes miss opportunities to increase children's vocabulary. They do not consistently encourage children to extend their thinking when they are playing.

Pupils' personal and social development is at the heart of the curriculum. Leaders have given physical education (PE) a high priority. Competitive sport and other activities extend social opportunities for pupils. Staff and pupils are clear about how this supports physical and mental well-being. 'Green Gang' encourages pupils to learn about their environment. Leaders have made links with the National Park to enhance learning. Pupils learn about different faith traditions and different ways of life.

Leaders, including governors, have clear priorities for the school's development. Governors offer appropriate challenge as well as support. The school works in partnership with other local schools. Leaders have drawn on expertise from these schools and from the local authority. This has supported professional learning, curriculum planning and assessment.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that safeguarding has a high priority. Staff and governors are trained to a high standard. Everyone knows what to do if they are concerned about the welfare of a pupil. Although there have been few incidents, staff and leaders are not complacent.

Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They trust the adults in school to help them if they are worried. They know how to stay safe online and in other situations. They also demonstrate how they help one another to stay safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's curriculum is not yet planned and sequenced coherently enough in the foundation subjects. However, it is clear that leaders are already taking the actions needed to improve this. For this reason, the transition arrangements have been applied in this case. Leaders should design a curriculum plan to ensure that pupils in mixed-age classes are able to build their skills, knowledge and understanding of concepts over time. Leaders also need to establish clearly defined end points so that progress can be accurately assessed.
- Leaders are improving the quality and consistency of the teaching of early reading and mathematics in the early years. Improvements to the curriculum for the other areas of learning are at an earlier stage of development. Leaders should ensure that assessment includes children's comments on their own learning as well as the views of parents. They should ensure that assessment is directly linked to planning for children's next steps in all areas of learning, and that provision delivers appropriate challenge to support independent learning. Interactions between children and adults in the early years should consistently support children to extend their thinking and develop their language.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	121475
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10134911
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	38
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Clare Almond
Headteacher	James Pynn
Website	http://www.st-hildascofe.n-yorks.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	6–7 July 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school is much smaller than the national average.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science and PE. This involved talking to leaders, meeting teaching staff, talking to pupils and looking at pupils' work. We also visited lessons and listened to pupils read.
- We met three governors, including the chair of the governing body. We met the school adviser from the local authority. We also spoke to a leader from another school, who is providing some support for the early years. In addition, we met with the teacher who oversees provision for pupils with SEND.
- We met pupils formally to gather their opinions and held informal discussions across both days of the inspection. We talked about learning, safety, personal development and behaviour.

- We spoke to parents at the beginning of the school day. We also took into account the views given in 10 responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View, including free-text comments. The 21 responses to the school’s own parent questionnaire from November 2019 were also considered.
- We considered the views of staff through the four responses to Ofsted’s survey and in face-to-face discussions.
- We observed the behaviour of pupils while they were in classrooms, moving around school and on the playground.
- The school’s website and documentation were examined, including curriculum plans, SEND information, safeguarding information, and behaviour and attendance logs.

Inspection team

Gill McCleave, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

John Downs

Ofsted Inspector

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