

Inspection of Skelton Primary School

Brecksfield, Skelton, York, North Yorkshire YO30 1YB

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 July 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders create a respectful culture at this school. Pupils celebrate their uniqueness and flourish in an environment focused on equality. Leaders listen to pupils and provide them with a safe, nurturing place to learn.

There are clear routines and expectations in place for behaviour. Staff apply the behaviour policy consistently. They teach pupils to behave through the 'going for gold' initiative. This rewards pupils' positive attitude to learning and conduct. Pupils enjoy the challenge to strive for gold and feel the system is fair. Pupils can define what bullying is and know that they can tell an adult if it happens.

Adults build positive relationships with children in the early years. They help children to move effectively from one activity to another.

Leaders provide a range of activities to broaden pupils' horizons. They are aware of the importance of helping children to socialise and mix with others. Leaders purposefully involve pupils in large local events, such as the secondary school talent show, public speaking events and competitive sport.

Leaders develop many aspects of pupils' character. For example, early years children develop teamwork skills in the forest area and key stage 2 pupils build their resilience on their adventurous residential trip.

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

Leaders offer a broad and balanced curriculum for pupils from Nursery to Year 6. Leaders adapt a scheme to support teachers' subject knowledge and confidence in subjects such as geography and art. They have identified the essential knowledge they want pupils to remember at the end of each unit. However, the curriculum does not consistently meet the needs of a mixed-age class. Leaders are aware of this and are reviewing how this can be improved.

Teachers use the 'Connect' strategy at the start of each lesson. This means pupils have opportunities to make connections to learning from previous lessons. Leaders are developing this into a more structured approach called 'Super Six', where they revisit learning from the previous lesson, week, term and academic year.

Teachers group pupils for phonics teaching according to their needs. This ensures that pupils apply the phonic knowledge they have to successfully read and write new words. Adults are highly skilled in supporting pupils to read. Children start accessing phonics in Nursery in the summer term to prepare them for Reception. Leaders check regularly that pupils are remembering sounds. Pupils who are not keeping up with reading receive additional phonics tutoring. Intensive phonics training for staff, provided by the trust, has improved the quality of phonics teaching.

Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to use mathematical vocabulary. Pupils talk about their previous learning in mathematics and how it helps them to understand new learning. Leaders ensure that the mathematics curriculum is responsive to the needs of the mixed-age class. It is ambitious for pupils. However, in the wider curriculum, the curriculum and work set do not meet the needs of pupils of different ages in mixed-age classes. This means older pupils are not building on what they already know.

The early years team establishes a calm and purposeful learning environment for children. Its members ensure that children have access to a wealth of interesting and engaging resources. They use the outdoor provision effectively to support physical development. Adults help children to negotiate and manage their own risks. For example, children repeatedly jumped off high blocks over skittles with pride. Children with special educational needs and /or disabilities (SEND) in early years are identified quickly and receive the support they need. Across the school, pupils with SEND have termly targets to achieve. While the targets on the plans are appropriate, pupils have limited opportunities to practise them.

There is a whole-school approach to teaching about healthy and unhealthy relationships. Pupils describe healthy relationships as kind, nice and supportive. There are leadership opportunities for pupils. The school council are active in supporting the community to clean the nearby park. They have organised a campaign to design posters to keep the area tidy.

Staff appreciate the close working relationship with another school and the trust. It reduces their workload, which helps their well-being. The trust and local governing committee hold leaders to account well. They have a clear oversight of the school's strengths and next steps.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff have up-to-date safeguarding training through regular staff meetings. Leaders use the personal, social and health education curriculum to teach pupils how to stay safe and make them aware of local risks.

Pupils can report concerns about their welfare and safety to any adult. Pupils are confident that staff know them well. Adults notice when pupils are anxious and offer appropriate support.

Pupils know how to stay safe online. They know to use a complex password to keep their personal information safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In the wider curriculum, leaders have not mapped out the important knowledge that pupils need to learn. In addition, they have not adapted the curriculum sufficiently well to meet the needs of mixed-age classes. Leaders should work with staff to improve how well pupils in mixed-age classes learn in the wider curriculum.
- Leaders do not ensure that the tasks that teachers set pupils with SEND help them to meet their targets. They should work with staff to make sure that teaching and the tasks set enable pupils with SEND to progress through the curriculum.

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](#)' 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	146997
Local authority	York
Inspection number	10269144
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	109
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Tony Myers
Headteacher	Andrew Watson (Head of school)
Website	https://ske.hslt.academy/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school.
- The school joined Hope Sentamu Learning Trust in July 2019.
- The head of school was appointed in September 2022.
- Staff work closely with another local primary school. They share an executive headteacher and local governing committee.
- The school uses one registered and one unregistered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher, the head of school, curriculum leaders, staff and pupils.
- Meetings were also held remotely with representatives of the local governing committee and trustees. The lead inspector met with the chief executive officer.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography and art. For each deep dive, inspectors met with curriculum leaders, spoke to pupils and teachers, visited lessons and looked at their work. Inspectors heard pupils read.
- Inspectors examined safeguarding records, attendance figures, suspension documents, curriculum plans and policies.
- The views of pupils were considered from meeting with them.
- The views of staff were considered from meeting with them and from the responses to Ofsted’s staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents and carers from the responses to Ofsted’s online survey, Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Alison Stephenson, lead inspector	His Majesty’s Inspector
Claire Bracchi	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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