

Inspection of De Lacy Primary School

Chequerfield Lane, Pontefract, West Yorkshire WF8 2TG

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 March 2024

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is James Parkinson. This school is part of Pontefract Academies 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), Julian Appleyard OBE, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Phil Jones OBE.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is an exceptional school, with happy pupils. Staff work together, supported by a strong trust network, to ensure that all pupils do well. There is a rich, well-considered, and ambitious curriculum. This leads to pupils developing a deep understanding and detailed knowledge of the subjects they study.

Pupils have access to a wide range of trips and experiences linked to the curriculum. The school develops pupils' character and understanding of the world. The school does this through opportunities such as 'Junior Dukes' and '50 Things Passports'. Pupils develop skills for the future through leadership roles. 'Future Fridays' are held monthly, where visitors explain different careers and pathways. The school is determined that every pupil will have a bright and positive future.

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are exemplary. They are polite, confident and articulate individuals. Staff encourage positive behaviour through praise, rewards and strong routines. Pupils want to learn and are keen to talk to visitors about their work.

The school has developed extremely strong links with the local community. Parents are regularly invited into school. The school's ethos of 'widening horizons' was summed up by one parent who said, 'My child now has high aspirations and comes home every day inspired and enthused by her learning.'

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

The school has designed an extremely ambitious curriculum that carefully identifies what pupils should learn over time. Leaders cleverly weave knowledge and skills throughout different subjects. Pupils build connections and a rich body of knowledge across the curriculum. For example, when learning about liquorice production in local history, pupils learn about the use of liquorice in medicine in science lessons. Pupils visit a liquorice factory to explore careers and the factory's impact on the local economy. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well. The school's published outcomes are above national averages at the end of key stage 2. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Teachers ensure that pupils with SEND receive high-quality support to enable them to learn. This includes support for pupils who have social and emotional needs. Parents value the support the school offers to enable pupils to achieve well.

Subject leaders are supported through trust networks and external organisations linked to their subject. This enables subject leaders to lead highly effective staff training. Teachers confidently deliver lessons. They use ongoing assessment well to identify and address gaps in pupils' knowledge. Leaders rigorously check assessment data. They ensure that any pupil falling behind, including in reading, is quickly supported through the use of appropriate intervention. This is particularly effective

for pupils with SEND. Pupils' needs are quickly identified and addressed so that they access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers.

Reading is of the utmost importance. Leaders build the curriculum around core texts. Staff deliver the phonics programme consistently well. Teachers are well-trained experts in teaching early reading. Pupils learn to read quickly. They enjoy reading. They are excited about the opportunity to win books from the school's reading vending machine. Pupils listen to stories from other cultures using software which enhances their learning about different cultures and places all over the world.

Staff in the early years know how important the development of vocabulary is. They model the correct use of language. They insist on the use of full sentences. As a result, children develop a wide vocabulary. Children in the early years learn to read, write and understand number as soon as they are able.

Leaders have developed a culture in which behaviour is exemplary. There is little disruption in lessons. Pupils are keen to learn and are attentive. Staff have high expectations and establish clear routines. They encourage pupils to persevere when they struggle. As a result, pupils develop high levels of independence and help each other. Pupils behave well at all times. They are polite and respectful towards each other and adults. They are role models for each other.

The school places as much importance on character development as it does on achievement. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is woven carefully throughout the curriculum. Pupils have access to an impressive range of high-calibre opportunities and activities. Pupils learn about British values. They apply these in the way they live. They have an in-depth knowledge of other faiths and cultures. They talk maturely about tolerance and respect. Pupils know how to contribute to life in modern Britain. They develop leadership skills through opportunities given to them at school. Pupils learn how to stay safe. They feel safe in school.

Leaders at all levels, including trust leaders, have a clear, shared vision for the school. They realise this vision through taking considered actions that support staff and enable constant improvement.

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	140023
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	10297394
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	327
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trustees	Phil Jones OBE
Headteacher	James Parkinson
Website	www.delacy.patrust.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	30 and 31 January 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- De Lacy Primary School is part of the Pontefract Academies Trust, which consists of nine schools in total. The school converted to become an academy in October 2013.
- There are no pupils attending alternative provision.
- The school runs its own breakfast club.

Information about this inspection

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

- 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.

- Inspectors spoke to the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, assistant headteachers, the special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders, teachers and support staff.
- The lead inspector held meetings with the CEO, a trustee, chair of the trust education and standards sub-committee and the director of school improvement in the trust. The lead inspector also spoke to members of the school governing body, including the chair.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, history, science and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also listened to pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- 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.
- To gather the views of pupils, inspectors spoke informally to pupils to gather their views on school life.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents from responses to Ofsted Parent View. They also spoke to parents at the end of the school day and at school events.
- To gather the views of staff, inspectors took account of responses to the staff survey and met with staff teams.

Inspection team

Helen Haunch, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Simon Swift

Ofsted Inspector

Frances Turner

Ofsted Inspector

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