

Hall Cliffe Primary School

7 Wrenthorpe Lane, Wrenthorpe, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF2 0QB

Inspection dates

31 January–2 February 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders and managers monitor all aspects of school performance exceptionally well. Any potential weaknesses are quickly identified and improvement is rapid.
- Leaders and managers have ensured that all of the independent school standards are consistently met and that safeguarding is rigorous.
- Pupils make good progress from low starting points. This progress has improved more recently as pupils become settled in their new school. Their personal development needs are met very well.
- Teachers know their pupils well and positive relationships give pupils the confidence to engage in learning following often lengthy absences from education.
- Sometimes teachers are not meeting the different ability needs in the class well enough and do not adapt their teaching accordingly.
- A carefully planned programme of therapeutic support means that pupils' personal development and welfare are outstanding.
- Pupils' rates of attendance have improved dramatically.
- Those responsible for governance are extremely well informed about all aspects of school life. They review and quality assure all aspects of the school, including the quality of teaching, on a regular basis.
- Leaders and managers have requested a change in the school's registered age range to include pupils aged up to 13 years. It is likely that standards will be met should the Department for Education (DfE) authorise this change.
- At times, learning activities do not engage pupils and this hinders their achievements.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and improving quickly.
- Parents and carers and placing local authorities are pleased with the work the school does.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is outstanding and it can maintain the improvements in pupils' outcomes, by ensuring that teachers:
 - plan and adapt teaching so that the different ability needs in each class are more closely met, particularly those of the most able pupils
 - engage pupils in learning by planning more relevant and stimulating activities more consistently.
- Maintain and further improve upon pupils' good behaviour by the continued consistent delivery of behaviour management strategies.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- A dynamic leadership team lead a team of staff who are dedicated to improving the lives of the young people in their school. They show a determination to ensure that pupils have the opportunity to exceed and excel. Staff are highly motivated and welcome the support and training they receive.
- Teachers benefit from a supportive, well-structured performance management system. They are encouraged to visit other schools to observe outstanding teachers so that they can themselves excel. Other teachers have received intensive support which has led to the quality of teaching rapidly moving towards outstanding.
- Senior leaders meet with teaching staff at 'internal team around the child' (ITAC) meetings and half-termly pupil progress review meetings. This enables staff to regularly evaluate the emotional and academic needs of pupils and review strategies that have been put in place accordingly.
- Leaders and managers at all levels have an exceptionally robust monitoring system which analyses the quality of every aspect of the school. Consequently, they have an excellent knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) works closely with all teaching staff, parents and local authorities to create measurable, appropriate targets for both behaviour and academic needs. These targets are regularly reviewed and an assessment made of the effectiveness of interventions that have been put in place.
- Pupils benefit from a curriculum that is organised to meet their needs. The timetable is enhanced by regular activities such as curriculum around the pupil (CAP). CAP allows pupils to select their own learning based around a range of skills.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. They have regular visits to places such as museums, farms, places of worship and fire stations. This not only supports their academic learning, but helps reinforce social skills learned in school so that they are better equipped for life outside school.
- Pupils take part in activity days, such as 'French Day', when they learn about and experience different cultures. Visitors such as the local community police help pupils learn how to keep themselves safe around fireworks as well as why we have laws, such as those relating to the sale of fireworks.

Governance

- Directors and senior managers in the company ensure that all the independent school standards are consistently well met through the firmly established quality assurance and monitoring processes. A highly rigorous and effective performance management system is applied to all staff, including the headteacher.

- Directors receive extensive reports from the headteacher, which they analyse prior to the monthly board meetings, enabling them to challenge appropriately. The company's quality assurance team also completes monthly quality assurance reviews of different aspects of school life, such as the quality of teaching or the monitoring of incidents.
- Senior managers record information on pupils' participation in lessons and behavioural incidents on a central database daily. This gives placing local authorities and directors of the company access to contemporary information on incidents occurring in the school. These numerous avenues of communication mean that directors have an extremely accurate picture of the school.
- Should the DfE authorise the requested change in registration requirements, the independent school standards are likely to be met. Teachers have access to schemes of work for all areas of the curriculum for pupils aged 12 and 13 years. It is planned that pupils aged 12 and 13 years would access physical education and associated facilities and careers advice alongside their peer group at the Hall Cliffe School. Professionals delivering therapy sessions work at both schools and would continue to work with pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. An informative child protection and safeguarding policy follows all relevant current government guidance and is available for parents and other stakeholders on the school website.
- The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) keeps detailed records, which are kept and stored appropriately. These records are shared with the appropriate people as and when necessary. The DSL has forged good links with local authorities to help keep pupils safe.
- The DSL also ensures that the central database, which is used to monitor any safeguarding issues, is always up to date so that both she and the directors can closely monitor pupils' welfare needs.
- Staff have regular training and updates to ensure that they are meeting the safeguarding needs for pupils in the school. Regular question and answer sessions are held to ensure that staff fully understand their responsibilities and the procedures they should follow.
- Health and safety checks on the building are thorough and well documented. Regular evacuations ensure that pupils are familiar with this scenario and respond appropriately. The site is secure and precise steps are taken to maintain this security. All staff have received appropriate safeguarding checks and all visitors are checked and given basic safety and child protection information.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching is good and improving rapidly.
- Teachers have good relationships with pupils as they manage behaviour well, with consistent reinforcement of expectations.
- Teachers are well prepared for lessons and have good subject knowledge.

- Teaching assistants are an extremely valuable resource in lessons. They are highly adaptable in their approach, which enables them to meet pupils' emotional and academic needs well.
- Pupils receive valuable feedback during lessons to help them learn from, and identify, their mistakes and how they can improve on their work.
- Pupils have lots of opportunities to read and pupils of all ages are taught phonics. This helps reinforce basic skills that may not have been learned due to previous time spent out of education.
- Some teachers are exceptionally good at using a range of exciting strategies over time to reinforce basic skills where pupils struggle to grasp concepts such as single-letter sounds.
- Teachers question pupils well to try and ascertain what they know and to help them consider what the answers may be.
- Teachers regularly assess pupils' learning, which gives them an accurate picture of their levels of attainment. However, in some classes, teachers do not always plan and adapt teaching in lessons to meet the different ability needs of pupils in the class.
- In some lessons, pupils struggle to participate in learning as the activity is not stimulating enough to engage their attention.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- All staff involved in a pupil's well-being attend the ITAC meetings, which are held at least every six weeks. This ensures that the personal development and welfare needs of pupils are known by all and appropriate steps are taken to meet these needs.
- Pupils feel safe and are educated well on how to keep themselves safe. For example, they were visited by members of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), who spoke to pupils about personal and internet safety.
- Pupils have their needs met through regular therapy sessions with professionals such as occupational health therapists, educational psychologists, mental healthcare practitioners and speech and language therapists. These therapy sessions are highly personalised. This has enabled pupils to make outstanding progress in their emotional well-being, which has supported them in being able to access education again.
- Pupils' individual risk assessments are thorough and involve all carers and pupils so that all opinions and information are considered. Staff then take appropriate steps to minimise risk, which have been proven highly effective.
- Pupils have a good understanding of what bullying is. Some pupils speak of how they experienced bullying in their previous educational establishments and say that bullying does not happen at Hall Cliffe.

- Pupils enthusiastically take part in a 'Heroes' scheme, which promotes respect for others and responsibilities. Pupils fill in application forms and are interviewed prior to being accepted as a 'Hero'. For some pupils, this demonstrated outstanding progress in their self-confidence, self-awareness and willingness to become successful.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good and has improved dramatically recently. The majority of pupils are new to the school and therefore this improvement has yet to be sustained.
- Most pupils had very low levels of attendance at their previous educational establishments. This has improved so that now attendance is in line with that of other primary schools nationally.
- Adults' consistent use of behaviour management strategies and high expectations of behaviour have helped improve behaviour over time.
- Pupils are also beginning to manage and moderate their own behaviour more effectively with the use of strategies such as 'time out'. This allows pupils short periods of time out of class; however, strict rules such as knocking on the door when they return are always enforced.
- Information on incidents and pupil participation in lessons is thorough. This information demonstrates that over time the number of incidents has reduced. Much more recently, improvement has been dramatic. However, there is not enough evidence to demonstrate that this improvement will be sustained.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils join the school with a range of different starting points at different ages and from different educational establishments. Most pupils have missed large periods of their education. From these generally low starting points, pupils make good progress across a range of subjects.
- Pupils initially struggle to make much progress when they first join the school as their emotional needs prevent them from being able to access the learning that is available to them. As these needs are well met, pupils quickly make much stronger progress. However, the majority of pupils are relatively new to the school and are only just beginning to make better progress.
- Pupils read widely and often. They are encouraged to read aloud in class and also have regular access to a well-stocked library. Some most-able pupils read with fluency and generally demonstrate good comprehension of the text. The less able pupils read slowly with little intonation. They also struggle at times due to poor phonetic knowledge. The introduction of structured phonic schemes for pupils of all ages is supporting better progress in this skill.
- In mathematics, younger pupils make accelerated progress as they are more actively and enthusiastically engaged in their learning. Older pupils, particularly the most able, do not make such good progress as learning for them is not always as interesting and their individual educational needs are not as well met.

- Pupils enjoy their art lessons and make good progress. They learn about different artists and cultures and explore a range of art materials with confidence.

School details

Unique reference number	142674
DfE registration number	384/6004
Inspection number	10025964

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	16
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Witherslack Group
Chair	Judith Jones
Headteacher	Claire Traynor
Annual fees (day pupils)	£55,793–£84,863
Telephone number	01924 614490
Website	www.witherslackgroup.co.uk/hall-cliffeprimary
Email address	hall-cliffe-primary@witherslackgroup.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Hall Cliffe Primary School is a school for up to 32 pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. It currently accepts both girls and boys aged between 5 and 11 years.
- There are currently 16 boys on roll, all of whom have a statement of special educational needs, including speech, language and communication difficulties, attention deficit disorder, social and emotional difficulties and autistic spectrum disorder.

- The school opened in March 2016 and this is its first full standard independent school inspection.
- The school employs therapeutic professionals, who also support pupils at Hall Cliffe Secondary School, which is approximately three miles away.
- The school aims to 'allow children to grow in confidence and increase their self-esteem through a therapeutic and nurturing approach so that they are ready to learn and can thrive as independent learners and in the wider community'.

Information about this inspection

- The school has requested a change to its current registration so that it can increase the age range of pupils it accepts from 11 years to 13 years. The DfE commissioned Ofsted to consider this application during the inspection.
- The inspection took place over two and a half days with one day's notice.
- The inspector considered the opinion of parents received via telephone conversations and through the school's confidential parent questionnaire. There were not enough responses on Parent View to generate a report.
- The inspector also took into account the opinions of placing local authorities, staff and pupils.
- The inspector spoke to pupils both formally and informally, to the senior leadership team and to company directors.
- A number of lessons were observed in a range of subjects, some with members of the senior leadership team. Pupils' work in books was studied while they were working in lessons and a sample was selected for consideration.
- The inspector examined a range of documents and toured all parts of the building to consider compliance with the independent school standards.

Inspection team

Jo Sharpe, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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