

Inspection of a good school: Appleton Primary School

Appleton Road, Hull HU5 4PG

Inspection dates:

24 and 25 November 2021

Outcome

Appleton Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils understand the school's behaviour steps. Pupils can give examples of unacceptable behaviour for each step and the related consequence. Pupils know what bullying means. They were clear it was something that happened, more than once, to hurt someone. They were confident that if they thought they were being bullied that teachers would help.

The school is still developing some aspects of its curriculum. Leaders have introduced knowledge organisers for each unit of work and have identified the key knowledge they want pupils to remember. They are currently making sure the content of lessons is sequenced so pupils can recall this essential knowledge.

Leaders offer a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Despite COVID-19 restrictions, leaders have quickly reinstated these opportunities for all pupils.

Leaders have introduced emotional literacy support assistants (ELSAs) to the team. Pupils spoke about how the ELSAs were available to talk to them about their worries. This has been especially useful for anxious pupils returning to school after the pandemic. Pupils contribute to the community. They make donations to local foodbanks and visit residents who live nearby.

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

Some areas of the curriculum, like science, religious education, mathematics and English, are well planned. This ensures that pupils learn the right things in the right order. Plans for other curriculum areas are at different stages of development. For example, all units in history have a sequence of lessons. However, these do not always match the essential knowledge that curriculum leaders have identified they want pupils to remember. The headteacher knows this and there are actions, within the plan to improve the school, to correct this. Curriculum leaders are sharpening the plans to ensure the lessons are

building on what the pupils already know and match the key knowledge they want them to learn.

There is a strong reading culture within the school. Leaders have prioritised adopting a scheme to ensure there is consistency in the teaching of phonics. The expectation, at Appleton, is that 'Every child is a reader'. Teachers and teaching assistants use the same language. For example, 'special friends' for two letters that make one sound. Pupils' reading books are generally matched to the sounds that they have learned. Pupils are assessed every half term to ensure the lessons meet their needs. Pupils who are struggling to remember their phonics have extra daily sessions. In phonic lessons, pupils are writing sounds, words and sentences. Letter formation is not secure. This is a result of pupils using laptops to write during remote learning. Leaders have identified this as an area for improvement and have introduced a daily handwriting session. However, pupils' letter formation needs checking every time they write.

Learning through play engages the early years and nursery children. Skilled adults support their learning and develop their vocabulary. Adults use every opportunity to practise phonics by wearing a phonics pinny. This pinny contains cards with the sounds on that children have already learned. They can show these to the children at any point during the day. Many boys were involved in retelling 'The Enormous Turnip' through pictures on a large piece of paper. The teacher encouraged storytelling language and there were high levels of cooperative behaviour. Children took turns and shared equipment fairly.

Leaders use a scheme to teach personal, social and health education (PSHE), British values, protected characteristics and relationship education. The concept of consent is taught across the school. For example, in early years they talk about saying no to friends, in Year 3 they discuss saying no in different situations and by Year 6 they explore control and assertiveness. Pupils are respectful about race, religion and disabilities.

The special educational needs and disabilities coordinator (SENDCo) has led training to ensure teachers are writing achievable targets for pupils identified as having special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The targets are clear and focus on the pupil's difficulty. However, the evidence in pupils' books that these targets are being regularly focused on, is limited. This is slowing the progress these pupils are making.

Staff are positive about leaders managing their workload and well-being. Representatives of the local advisory board are skilled. They have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development for the school. The chair of the local advisory board knows that the support of the trust has helped the school's improvement journey.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The checks on staff suitability to work at the school are done by the trust. Staff have safeguarding training every two years. This is followed by an assessment, so leaders are confident that staff have a secure understanding of the risks to children and the indicators of harm. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) provides monthly safeguarding updates to staff and the members of the local advisory board. These are linked to the challenges directly affecting the school at the time. Pupils say they feel safe everywhere in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have begun to develop a sequenced curriculum. However, they are evolving and refining the order in which they teach topics in some subjects. Leaders have an accurate understanding of the current areas that need developing. Leaders should ensure they have identified the essential knowledge and skills they want pupils to remember for each unit of the curriculum.
- Some pupils' letter formation is not accurate. Leaders say this is because pupils were using laptops to record their work, during the time they were learning remotely. Leaders have introduced a daily handwriting session. However, pupils' writing during phonics sessions showed that pupils need more support to form letters correctly. Leaders should ensure that letter formation is a focus in every lesson, so pupils are making rapid improvements to their handwriting.
- The SENDCo has trained staff to write targets for the SEND pupil's support plans. These targets are now clear and measurable. However, evidence in pupils' books of interventions to ensure the pupils achieve these targets within a timeframe was limited. Leaders should check that the actions on the support plans are being implemented, ensuring pupils are making swift progress.
- The school's curriculum is not yet sufficiently well-planned and sequenced in some subjects. However, leaders have already taken action to address this. For this reason, the transitional arrangements have been applied.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 2016.

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.

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	140229
Local authority	Kingston Upon Hull City Council
Inspection number	10200139
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	284
Appropriate authority	Local advisory board
Chair of the local advisory board	Tony Garner
Headteacher	Mary Langton
Website	www.appletonprimary.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	4 October 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is an average-sized primary school.
- The school is a member of The Constellation Trust.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation.
- I met with the headteacher and other leaders. Meetings were also held with representatives of the local advisory board and the multi-academy trust.
- I carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, I met with curriculum leaders, spoke to pupils and teachers, looked at their work and visited lessons. I heard pupils read.
- I examined safeguarding records, attendance figures, curriculum plans and policies.
- The views of parents were sought from the 21 responses to Ofsted's parent survey.

- The views of staff were considered from meeting with staff and from the responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.
- The views of pupils were considered from meeting with them and from the responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Alison Stephenson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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