

Inspection of a good school: Hambleton/Richmondshire Pupil Referral Service

East Road, Northallerton, North Yorkshire DL6 1SZ

Inspection dates:

7 and 8 June 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. Inspectors are recommending the next inspection to be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Hambleton/Richmondshire Pupil Referral Service is a warm and caring place. It is a small school with small class sizes. Staff support pupils to get back on track with their education. Staff are well trained to support pupils with their individual needs. Most pupils join the school because they have been permanently excluded from other schools. Some pupils are placed in the school for an assessment of special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Other pupils attend because they are at risk of repeated suspensions from their school.

The curriculum has been developed to equip pupils with the essential knowledge and skills to return to mainstream education. It matches the ambition of the national curriculum. Provision for reading is developing. The curriculum is generally well thought out. It is continually adapted to meet the specific needs of pupils. Despite leaders' curriculum ambitions, too many pupils do not attend school regularly and often. This limits their learning.

Around school, pupils generally behave well. Staff support pupils effectively to manage their behaviour. However, negative language is not always challenged. Pupils are happy in the school. They feel safe here. Pupils say bullying does not happen in the school. If it did, they know that staff would intervene to sort it out.

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

Leaders recognise the importance of reading. Pupils are swiftly assessed after a short settling-in period when they join the school. This ensures that staff understand pupils' reading needs well. The reading strategy has been recently developed. However, its

launch has been interrupted by staff absence. Pupils generally read well. They have one reading lesson each week. This means, however, that pupils may miss their only structured reading lesson if they are absent from school. Reading is promoted in other subjects as opportunities arise on an ad hoc basis. This prevents leaders from effectively checking the quality of reading support across the curriculum. All pupils are encouraged to read class texts in key stage groups. However, routines to promote reading are not currently consistently in place. In some subject areas, staff do not always include reading opportunities in lessons.

Across key stages, there is a contrasting picture in what pupils learn. Work follows the intended curriculum and there is evidence of older pupils revisiting learning. Some of their work demonstrates limited expectations while other learning is more demanding. In younger pupils' work, the picture is less coherent. The quality of education that pupils receive is too variable.

Too often in lessons, staff spend time encouraging pupils to engage in learning and to focus on the task in hand. Sometimes, pupils struggle to manage their behaviour. Staff support pupils effectively if they need to calm down. Despite this, some pupils regularly use negative language. This is not always corrected by staff. Staff model positive behaviour. They develop positive relationships with pupils to ensure they feel supported.

Pupils speak highly of the support they receive. They value rewards and how these motivate them to do well. This includes positive contact with home. However, too many pupils do not attend regularly and often. This is also impacted by part-time timetable use.

Pupils learn about protected characteristics. They are encouraged to debate challenging topics. Staff promote fundamental British values throughout the curriculum. Pupils learn about faiths and people who are different to them. Outside of school, pupils do not have opportunities to regularly engage with different people in the community. Leaders want to develop these opportunities to support pupils' wider development. Pupils are well supported in their next steps to college and employment. This includes those pupils with SEND. Leaders ensure that pupils pursue positive destinations when they leave school. Pupils participate in a range of activities to keep them healthy and engaged. They have taken boxing lessons that have inspired post-16 college placements in sports tuition, for example.

Leaders consider the workload of staff. Staff work to a shared school calendar that provides advance notice of important events. This includes assessment points. Leaders listen to staff. They feel able to approach leaders to make appropriate adjustments to their workload. Governors are ambitious for pupils. They are well informed about the work of the school. Governors understand the challenges that leaders face. These include an increase in permanent exclusions locally.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders' systems to track safeguarding concerns are thorough. Staff share any concerns in morning and afternoon meetings. This ensures that safeguarding leaders can follow up matters promptly. Records of monitoring and leaders' actions contain sufficient detail to spot important information. No piece of information is considered trivial. Records inform the larger picture of a pupils' safety and well-being effectively.

Staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities. All staff receive formal safeguarding training at calendared points. They are made aware of the risks that pupils face in the community. This includes the risks posed by organised criminals.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Not all pupils attend school regularly and often. Leaders' work to improve pupils' attendance demonstrates some impact but progress is limited. Attendance improvements are further impacted by part-time timetables. Leaders should strengthen their systems and processes of support for parents and carers to overcome any barriers, to ensure their children attend school regularly.
- Pupils have one reading lesson during the week. This means pupils may miss their reading lesson if they are absent or late to school. Leaders should increase the frequency of structured reading opportunities across the school to develop pupils' reading skills.
- The wider curriculum offer has been impacted since the COVID-19 pandemic. Pupils do not have opportunities to regularly engage with different people in the community that were previously available to them. Leaders should ensure the wider curriculum provides all pupils with a rich range of experiences.

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 an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 2013.

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	135850
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10255910
Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	17
Appropriate authority	Management Committee
Chair	Tom Kelly
Headteacher	Alison Keane
Website	www.hrprs.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	24 January 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Hambleton/Richmondshire Pupil Referral Service is a pupil referral unit for pupils aged between 11 and 16 years.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative education provision provider.
- The school measures itself against the Gatsby benchmarks to ensure that pupils receive high-quality careers advice.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, the special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders, teachers and support staff.

- The lead inspector met with the chair of the management committee. They also spoke by telephone with the local authority senior education adviser.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics and humanities. 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 closely scrutinised the provision for reading.
- The lead inspector met with the school's designated safeguarding lead. The inspector reviewed the school's safeguarding records, relevant policies and other safeguarding documentation. The inspector reviewed the processes leaders use to identify and help pupils who need support. In addition, the inspector scrutinised the school's records of checks carried out on adults who work at the school.
- The lead inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documents, including the school's self-evaluation and development plans.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys for pupils, staff and parents. This included any free-text responses.

Inspection team

David Mills, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

David Penny

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates:
<http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023