

# Inspection of Laithes Primary School

Laithes Lane, Smithies, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S71 3AF

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Inspection dates: 22 and 23 March 2022

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| <b>Overall effectiveness</b> | <b>Good</b>          |
| The quality of education     | <b>Good</b>          |
| Behaviour and attitudes      | <b>Good</b>          |
| Personal development         | <b>Good</b>          |
| Leadership and management    | <b>Good</b>          |
| Early years provision        | <b>Outstanding</b>   |
| Previous inspection grade    | Requires improvement |

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Care and respect are at the heart of Laithes Primary School. Pupils, staff and parents all say that school leaders make time to talk with them, and show they care. Pupils talk positively about the feelings group and the support they get from the pupil well-being ambassadors. Relationships between pupils and adults are positive. Bullying is not tolerated in school and rare instances of bullying are quickly resolved by staff.

Pupils behave well in lessons. This is because they are interested in their learning. They know they must listen carefully to their teachers and to each other. This helps them to build on each other's ideas and to learn successfully. Pupils play well together at break and lunchtimes. They are polite and considerate. Pupils learn how to support each other and be good friends.

Pupils enjoy the wider opportunities that are available to them. After-school clubs enable pupils to pursue interests, including sports, reading and booster clubs. Pupils undertake different roles and responsibilities, such as being a member of the school council and hearing younger pupils read.

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

The leadership of early years is very strong. Children get off to a superb start when they join the school. Learning is weaved through every activity. Nothing is left to chance. For example, during the inspection children were risk assessing and designing their own outdoor learning. Children directed others in how to take part in each activity and in the safety precautions they needed to think about. Children demonstrated high levels of independence through making their own toast at snack time and their own play dough. The development of vocabulary has a high priority in early years. Pupils use new vocabulary very effectively when talking about their learning to each other. Pupils in Reception talked about 'recapping' their sounds so they were confident with them before learning new ones. As a result, children make strong progress from their starting points and are well prepared for entering Year 1.

Curriculum leaders are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about their subjects. They receive training that helps them to lead their subjects effectively. Teachers have good subject knowledge because they receive regular training from the trust. They plan lessons that engage and interest pupils. Teachers help pupils to make links between subjects. For example, Year 5 pupils talked about their knowledge of tactics in physical education (PE) and how they apply different tactics in different sports. Teachers also introduce pupils to a wide range of subject-specific vocabulary and check their understanding regularly.

The teaching of reading is important in this school. Teachers and teaching assistants follow a well-sequenced reading curriculum. Younger pupils read books that enable them to practise the sounds they are learning. Reading across key stage 2 has been strengthened through the school's 'text drivers'. There is a greater focus on the

teaching of specific reading skills. Pupils who find reading difficult get extra help from well-trained staff. This helps pupils to become confident, fluent readers.

Mathematics is taught well. Teachers teach pupils to build their knowledge of mathematical concepts very securely. They provide high-quality resources that pupils use when solving problems. They teach pupils ways of doing calculations in a logical manner. Children in Reception enjoy exploring number through a range of practical activities. They show confidence in knowing and remembering number bonds to 10.

In religious education, leaders are refining the curriculum so that pupils make stronger links to prior learning. This work has been impacted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Some pupils do not have a secure understanding of what they have been taught previously. Pupils could talk about the religions they have studied but struggled to link this information to previous topics. This is because teachers have not followed the curriculum plan consistently. Leaders have already noticed this and have put strategies in place to enhance teachers' subject knowledge in religious education.

Staff are nurturing and accommodating of pupils' individual needs. Teachers make sure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) get the best possible opportunities to succeed. Staff produce detailed support plans, in partnership with parents and external organisations. They work skilfully in giving pupils clear steps to help them to learn. Pupils with SEND are highly motivated and well supported. They work hard to reach ambitious targets. They achieve well from their starting points.

Leaders, including governors and leaders from the trust, support and challenge the staff well. Governors visit school often to check on the impact of improvement actions. Staff report that leaders are considerate of their well-being and work-life balance.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have maintained a rigorous and meticulous approach to safeguarding. They reinforce and strengthen staff's knowledge of safeguarding through regular training and quizzes. This ensures that everybody knows what to look out for and knows what to do if they have concerns about a pupil's safety.

Leaders respond swiftly when pupils are identified as needing help. This includes working with other agencies to help to keep pupils safe from harm when necessary. Leaders are not afraid to challenge the decisions of other agencies.

Leaders have developed a curriculum that helps pupils to manage the risks they may encounter. Pupils retain this knowledge well. They know what to do and whom to tell if they have worries or get into difficulty.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have worked on the curriculum and made clear the knowledge that pupils need to know and remember in all subjects. However, in religious education, plans have not been followed consistently enough. This makes it hard for pupils to remember long term what they have been taught, and to make links to prior learning. Leaders should ensure that curriculum plans for religious education are followed consistently so that the pupils have a deeper understanding of the religions they study.

## 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

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| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 141974   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Barnsley   |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10200711   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Academy sponsor-led  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 3 to 11  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 346  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | Board of trustees  |
| <b>Chair of trust</b>                      | Ian William Ward   |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Georgina Fletcher  |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.laithesprimaryschool.co.uk">www.laithesprimaryschool.co.uk</a> |
| <b>Dates of previous inspection</b>        | 2 and 3 May 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005                        |

## Information about this school

- Laithes Primary School is part of the Every Child Matters Academy Trust. It joined the trust in April 2020.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During this inspection, the inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, who is also the special educational needs coordinator, the assistant headteacher and subject leaders.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with the chair and vice-chair of the interim executive board of governors and the chief executive officer of the trust.

- The inspectors did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science and PE. The inspectors met with curriculum leaders for these subjects, visited lessons, looked at a range of pupils' work and met with teachers and pupils. The lead inspector observed some pupils reading to staff and talked to pupils about their reading habits. The inspectors also checked the curriculum provision and pupils' learning in religious education, history and design and technology.
- The inspectors met with several groups of pupils to seek their views about the school. The inspectors also spoke to pupils informally in class and around the school at breaktimes.
- To check leaders' management of safeguarding, the lead inspector spoke with the deputy headteacher, who is also the designated safeguarding lead and the parent support adviser. The inspectors reviewed the single central record and records related to behaviour and safeguarding incidents. The inspectors considered the school's processes for reporting safeguarding concerns. All inspectors spoke with pupils, staff and governors to check their views on safeguarding.
- The inspectors scrutinised the school's website and a range of school documents, including the school's own improvement plans and minutes of governing body meetings.
- The inspectors considered the responses made by parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View.

### **Inspection team**

|                                 |                  |
|---------------------------------|------------------|
| Rebecca Clayton, lead inspector | Ofsted Inspector |
| Gillian Douglas                 | Ofsted Inspector |
| Annali Crawford                 | Ofsted Inspector |

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