

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Orchard Head Junior and Infant and Nursery School

Orchard Head Lane, Pontefract, West Yorkshire WF8 2NJ

Inspection dates:

11 and 12 March 2025

Outcome

Evidence gathered during this ungraded (section 8) inspection suggests that the school's work may have improved significantly across all areas since the previous inspection. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Richard Grogan. 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.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish at this school. The curriculum inspires pupils to learn. As one pupil reflecting the views of many said, 'I love to learn the detail in the subjects.' Pupils talk confidently about what they have learned. They connect ideas from different subjects. Pupils remember important knowledge extremely well over time. Pupils achieve exceptionally well across the curriculum, especially in reading and writing. They are thoroughly prepared for future learning.

Pupils are proud of their school. They show high levels of respect towards each other and the staff who look after them. For example, older pupils play games with younger pupils if they see that they have nobody to play with. Pupils care for their school and the resources that they use. Starting in the early years, children learn to tidy away and get ready for activities.

Around school, a culture of excellence supports pupils to show exemplary standards in behaviour. This means that lessons are calm and purposeful places to learn. Character development is exceptional. Pupils enjoy experiences such as caring for their local community by litter picking and planting trees. Some pupils are pen-pals for residents of a local care home. They learn to become active, respectful citizens.

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

The trust has designed a curriculum that enables pupils to build solid foundations for future learning. Highly ambitious curriculum content is skilfully introduced to pupils. The school has thoughtfully adapted the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils in the school. This means that pupils from Nursery to Year 6 receive the right support and opportunities that they need to grow and succeed.

The curriculum is taught consistently well. Familiar resources and routines in lessons help pupils to focus on their learning. For example, in mathematics, pupils start with 'retention' of prior learning. Pupils quickly learn to become fluent, for example, in place value and the four operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. This helps pupils to apply their knowledge to solve a range of problems.

Staff consistently check how well pupils are learning curriculum content. When pupils make errors or have misconceptions, staff are swift to provide precise feedback to enable pupils to correct their work. Starting in the early years, time is allowed for children to practise writing letters. Additional lessons are provided across the school for pupils who have gaps in their learning. This helps pupils to improve their knowledge across the curriculum and achieve very well.

The school maintains a sharp focus on every pupil learning to read and write fluently. This starts in Reception where children quickly acquire the phonics knowledge they need to begin to read. As pupils move into Year 1, they become more fluent readers. Pupils who need extra help are effectively supported to keep up with the programme. Pupils practise reading often from books matched to their knowledge of phonics. Pupils enjoy reading. They start each day by reading a book. Pupils develop a deep understanding of what they read.

The school knows individual pupils well, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff identify pupils' strengths and areas for support accurately. Resources and adaptations are used to great effect. This ensures that pupils make the best possible progression through the curriculum.

The school's work to develop pupils' character ensures that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Pupils benefit from a wide range of experiences that considerably enhance their learning. Pupils' understanding of fundamental British values is particularly strong. This is because there are meaningful connections in curriculum subjects. For example, pupils learn the importance of democracy when studying the Second World War. The school's programme of experiences ensures that pupils learn about religions and cultures different to their own. Pupils visit places of worship and meet faith leaders. Older pupils explained that these experiences help them to understand the importance of tolerance. The school thoughtfully arranges activities to cater for a range of interests. Therefore, all pupils participate in clubs as they progress through the school.

Leaders at all levels strive to continually improve learning for all. They check to ensure this happens. The trust provides a wide range of subject-specific training. Teachers are experts in teaching their subjects. Staff are proud to work in the school. They appreciate the support from leaders to reduce their workload and look after their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in November 2019.

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	139503
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	10346492
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	340
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Phil Jones
CEO of the trust	Julian Appleyard OBE
Headteacher	Richard Grogan
Website	www.orchardhead.patrust.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	7 and 8 November 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act

Information about this school

- The current headteacher took up their post in September 2023.
- The school is part of the Pontefract Academies Trust.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and other school leaders.
- The inspector met with the CEO and chair of the school performance review board. The inspector spoke to a member of the trust board online. The inspector also met with the

director of school improvement for primary schools and the director of inclusion and safeguarding.

- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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.
- The inspector considered the views of parents. She reviewed the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. She also spoke to parents at the end of the school day.
- The inspector considered the views of staff and pupils who responded to Ofsted's online surveys and through discussions with staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Kathryn McDonald, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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