



Overview

It was a privilege to visit Scarcroft Primary School, a school that demonstrates an unwavering commitment to inclusion and equity, ensuring all children access aspirational opportunities that enable them to thrive. The school is underpinned by a strong, clearly articulated vision and an ambitious, exemplary curriculum, carefully designed to inspire, empower and enable every child to achieve their full potential in the widest sense.

At the heart of the school's success is the inspiring Head of School, whose deeply held belief in the potential of every child drives its inclusive ethos. Their strategic vision, alongside a profound understanding of teaching, learning and child development, has created a nurturing, aspirational environment where children flourish and staff are empowered to continually develop their practice. Leaders should be commended for cultivating a culture of belonging in which families are welcomed not simply into a school, but into a community. The personalised support, adaptations and adjustments provided are clearly valued by parents, creating an environment of trust where every child is given the opportunity to succeed. From the very start of the day, it was evident that inclusion is not an aspiration at Scarcroft Primary School; it is a lived reality that permeates every aspect of school life.

The Scarcroft curriculum has been thoughtfully designed around the needs, interests and aspirations of every child. Leaders provided a comprehensive overview of the curriculum entitlement from the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) to Year 6, clearly demonstrating the breadth of opportunities available throughout each child's journey. These include curriculum-linked visits, visitors and workshops, a wide range of extra-curricular clubs, the '50 Things' programme and the wider Whole School enrichment offer. Together, these carefully planned experiences broaden horizons, raise aspirations and enrich learning beyond the classroom.

The impact of the 'Making School Unmissable Framework' is significant. This strategic document defines what is required for Scarcroft to feel unmissable for pupils, staff and families through five key elements: a sense of belonging, purpose, empowerment, success and adventure. Leaders and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) demonstrated a detailed understanding of how curriculum adaptations and wider provision ensure these principles are embedded through initiatives such as The Nest, THRIVE, Daily Circle, pastoral support, strong relationships, pupil leadership and recognition awards observed during assembly. Their strategic approach to enrichment reflects an unwavering commitment to developing the whole child by, in their words, "flooding the school with opportunities".

The assessor was fortunate to meet with a Committee Board Member during the visit. This provided valuable insight into governance as both a supportive and constructive critical friend, alongside first-hand examples of the school's sensitive and tireless work to ensure children requiring the greatest support receive it. Board Members demonstrated detailed knowledge of cohorts, interventions, Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and provision across the school. They spoke confidently about the inclusive culture, particularly in relation to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities



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(SEND), disadvantaged pupils, transition and the comprehensive support provided for in-year admissions, including triage systems and translation services.

Leaders have developed an extensive programme catering for a wide range of interests, talents and passions, ensuring every child can find opportunities to flourish. The breadth is remarkable, encompassing the arts, sport, languages, mindfulness and wellbeing. These experiences enrich learning while developing confidence, resilience, personal development and a strong sense of belonging. Alongside adult-led provision, children are encouraged to establish and lead their own clubs. Initiatives such as Crochet Club, Warhammer Club and Pokémon Club exemplify the school's commitment to pupil voice and meaningful leadership opportunities.

Leaders and staff welcome everyone into school warmly and by name. During assembly, children were recognised for demonstrating a range of positive qualities, with one described as "genuinely astounding". Caring relationships were evident as children celebrated one another's achievements in netball, TT Rock Stars, sentence writing, kindness and consistently "knowing the right thing to do". It was a pleasure to share this celebration alongside families. Parents spoke enthusiastically about the school's provision, particularly the arts and music, describing them as powerful drivers of engagement and success. Another parent highlighted the impact of personalised SEND adaptations on their child's sense of belonging and achievement. Parents also celebrated the leadership of the Head of School and the transformation in the school's culture and ethos under their direction.

The learning walk, led by the Head of School and two Year 6 pupils, provided further evidence of the school's values in action. The children articulated the vision confidently through displays celebrating the 35 nationalities represented within the school community, including the 'Pledge a Flag' initiative. They explained the impact of Refugee Action York (RAY) assemblies in challenging misconceptions and raising awareness of the valuable contribution refugees and asylum seekers make to society. Displays promoting the forthcoming family sports evening illustrated leaders' commitment to Physical Education, School Sport and Physical Activity (PESSPA), recognising its importance in promoting health, wellbeing and personal development.

The wealth of enrichment opportunities is celebrated through photographs displayed across the school, showcasing the talents, achievements and experiences of every child. The visit to Paris in 2026 was a particular highlight, with children excitedly talking about the created lifelong memories. Equally impressive was leaders' commitment to ensuring that children not attending the visit experienced parallel activities in York, reflecting the school's determination that no child misses out.

Adaptive teaching was particularly evident in the Early Years, through provision such as sand play and high-quality phonics teaching. 'My Provision' cards linked to Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), whole-staff Makaton training, consistent use of Communication in Print (Widgit), the ShREC approach (Share, Respond, Expand, Conversation), visual timetables, choice boards, personalised workstations and structured prompts all contributed to successful learning. In older year groups, lesson visits demonstrated high-quality teaching in mathematics, with adapted resources



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including differentiated worksheets, personalised behaviour charts, ear defenders, sensory resources and movement breaks enabling all children to succeed.

Interventions are delivered by highly skilled staff with specialist training, including phonics and Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) provision. During the observed ELSA session, the 'Blob Tree' and *Starving the Anxiety Gremlin* were used effectively to support children's emotional development, confidence and self-esteem, enabling them to engage more successfully with learning. Phonics interventions were equally impressive, including targeted support for pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL). Sessions revisited prior learning before introducing new concepts, while translation technology further enhanced vocabulary acquisition and understanding.

During the visit, the assessor also met with a group of pupils who spoke confidently and proudly about the school's impact on their lives. One child enthusiastically described opportunities including chess, philosophy, science, percussion, songwriting and Rock Steady, declaring them "so fun!". Another reflected positively on residential visits to Whitby and trips to Tropical World. Two pupils who had recently joined the school described the friendships they had formed, the impact of phonics, visual supports and Widgit on their learning, and their enjoyment of swimming and street dance. Their confidence, enthusiasm and genuine affection for their school were powerful evidence of Scarcroft's inclusive culture and the lasting impact of its provision.

I am firmly of the opinion that the school fully meets the standard required by the Inclusion Quality Mark to maintain its status as a Centre of Excellence. I recommend that the school retains its Centre of Excellence status and is reviewed again in 12 months. The next review will look closely at how the school has interacted with its Inclusion Cluster and promoted continuing outreach. Evidence of Cluster working will underpin the capacity for the school to maintain its Centre of Excellence status.

I would like to thank everyone at Scarcroft Primary School for making this visit such a memorable experience.

Assessor: Ms Nichola Russell

Findings confirmed by Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd:

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Director of Inclusion Quality Mark (UK) Ltd