

Inspection of West Pelton Primary School

Twizell Lane, West Pelton, Stanley, County Durham DH9 6SQ

Inspection dates: 6–7 November 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

The headteacher, staff and governors have created a caring and nurturing school. Pupils feel happy and safe. They are proud of their school and community. Older pupils were keen to tell me about the school's 50th anniversary celebrations last year.

Leaders and staff have clear expectations for all pupils. They want pupils to do their best. Pupils are achieving well in mathematics, reading and writing. Teaching in science and music is motivating pupils. Pupils could tell us about what they had learned and how it interested them. Teachers are reviewing subjects like history, geography and computing. They want to broaden pupils' horizons and help them know more in these subjects.

Pupils behave well in lessons. During playtimes and lunchtimes, pupils cooperate well together. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive. Staff demonstrate and explain the school's expectations clearly and consistently. Incidents of bullying are very rare. Pupils confirmed that they are confident that staff will help with their concerns.

Parents and carers told us that they like the improvements in the school. They like the range of learning opportunities for their children. Parents are positive about how the school keeps them informed. They find the headteacher and staff approachable and helpful.

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

There are well-organised plans for teaching reading, mathematics, science and music. In these subjects, pupils achieve well across the school. Staff adapt plans for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). I saw these plans for these pupils having a positive effect in lessons.

Leaders know there is more to do to further improve planning in some subjects. They are now turning their attention to history, geography and computing. Staff have recently developed their approach to assessments. They are developing ways to check that pupils remember the most important knowledge. Leaders are aware that this approach needs to be manageable for staff.

Leaders have focused on improving the teaching of reading and phonics. Staff teach phonics successfully across Reception and key stage 1. Leaders have introduced new reading books across the school. Younger pupils have books which are generally well matched to their phonics abilities. Yet some less able pupils are finding their reading books too difficult. They are not reading enough in school and at home. New books have encouraged older pupils to read far more often. Teachers teach reading regularly. Training for new staff is effective. It ensures that they know the school's approaches to teaching, including reading. All these improvements help pupils achieve well in national phonics and reading assessments.

Pupils' behaviour in school is good. Pupils are polite and well-mannered. A more focused approach is improving pupils' attendance. The attendance officer and the parent support adviser are helping improve attendance levels. Leaders use exclusions as a last resort. Leaders and staff use a wide range of approaches to help pupils with social and emotional needs. Bullying is very rare and dealt with promptly by staff.

Assemblies and lessons help pupils develop positive citizenship qualities. Teaching helps pupils' understanding of the diversity of people in society. Older pupils show mature views about equality and respect. Pupils develop their understanding of healthy life styles through sport and outdoor learning. Creating a sculpture for Durham Lumiere enhances pupils' environmental and cultural understanding. Visits to the theatre and university enrich pupils' experiences and raise their aspirations.

The headteacher and leaders have established a clear vision for improving the school. Well-focused plans for continued improvement are in place. Leaders make effective use of a range of expertise to develop staff skills. Communication with parents and engagement with their child's learning have developed. Parents have a positive view of what the school has to offer.

Some subject leaders are new to their roles. Training to help support their subject knowledge and monitoring skills is in place. Governors have audited their skills. They have acted to strengthen expertise across the governing body. They understand the school's priorities and the community the school serves. Leaders take careful account of staff workload and well-being.

The deputy headteacher provides strong leadership for the early years. She has set up a well-organised learning environment. The leader has reviewed the early years curriculum to sequence children's learning. Work with other subject leaders is starting to ensure continuity of learning into Year 1. Reception children settle well, and they understand the school's routines. Well-tailored teaching meets the needs of all children. Teaching of early mathematics and phonics is strong. Staff nurture children's personal development. Children cooperate well with one another. They engage well with learning.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Keeping pupils safe is a priority for everyone in school. Staff know what to do if they have any concerns. They receive regular safeguarding training to update their understanding. Procedures to identify pupils at risk are thorough. Safeguarding leaders diligently record incidents in the school's online system. The school seeks help for pupils and their families promptly. Leaders complete careful safeguarding checks for staff, governors and volunteers. This ensures that they are suitable to work with children. Leaders are vigilant to the risks to children from going missing from education. The curriculum helps pupils understand how to stay safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Planning for many curriculum areas is coherently sequenced and structured. We found this to be the case in mathematics, science and music. Yet, in some subjects, this needs further development. For example, planning for history, geography and computing needs some consideration. Work to develop these subjects is already well on the way.
- Overall, teachers plan and teach phonics and reading effectively. Leaders have improved the quality of reading books in the school. There has been an overall improvement in pupils' phonics and reading attainment. However, there is still more to do to accurately match less able pupils' books to their phonics skills. Leaders and staff need to ensure that these pupils read more regularly.
- Teachers carry leadership responsibilities for several subjects. Some subject leaders are new to the role. They are keen to develop their subjects further. It is important that subject leaders continue to develop their leadership skills. They need to have relevant subject knowledge and the skills to check for improvement. The headteacher has plans to draw on a range of support networks, including other local schools, to ensure the further development of subject leaders.
- Relevant training is in place to improve teachers' and teaching assistants' knowledge and skills. It is important that this training continues to ensure that improvements to the teaching of reading and mathematics remain in place.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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're 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	114004
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10110568
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	63
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Moira Pallent
Headteacher	Victoria Hewison
Website	www.westpelton.durham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	19–20 July 2017

Information about this school

- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and chair of the governing body have changed since the last inspection.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the subject leaders for science and music.
- We considered a range of safeguarding information and documentation provided by the school and available on the school's website. We met a range of staff to consider their understanding of the school's safeguarding procedures. Pupils told us how the school helps them to stay safe. I met with the headteacher, who is one of the school's designated safeguarding leads, to review safeguarding records. I also reviewed the single central record.
- We observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, at playtime, lunchtime and in assembly. I reviewed the responses to the staff survey and Ofsted's Parent View survey. The team inspector met with parents at the start of the day.
- We considered four subjects in detail: reading, mathematics, science and music.

These deep dives included discussions with the headteacher and subject leaders, lesson visits, review of pupils' books, listening to pupils read, discussions with pupils and discussion with teachers where we completed lesson visits.

Inspection team

Michael Reeves, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Olie Flitcroft

Ofsted Inspector

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