

Inspection of Middlestone Moor Primary School

Rock Road, Spennymoor, County Durham DL16 7DA

Inspection dates: 15–16 January 2020

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils told us how much they enjoy school. They say that teachers' high expectations mean that they learn more. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about the opportunities provided to broaden their experiences. They go on many educational trips to learn new things. They are given opportunities to help with the day-to-day running of the school. They say that there are many clubs, enough to meet everyone's interests.

Pupils feel well cared for and safe. They learn to keep themselves safe in a range of situations. This learning includes learning about road safety, managing their feelings and keeping themselves safe online. They are able to discuss their ideas. Pupils show respect for the views of others.

Through the curriculum, pupils develop an understanding of the importance of tolerance and fairness. As a result, pupils do not put up with any bullying. If any bullying occurs, adults make sure that it stops. This shows how well leaders put the school's values of 'Respect, Learning, Fun' into practice. Pupils are kind and supportive towards each other. Parents and carers are typically happy with the school and would recommend the school to other parents.

Teachers' subject knowledge sometimes does not help them plan learning to build on what pupils know and can do well enough.

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

The headteacher, staff and governors have high ambitions. They want pupils to achieve well across the curriculum. They have worked on improving curriculum plans in most subjects. Teachers know what to teach pupils and in which order ideas should be taught.

Staff promote a love of reading among pupils. Children get off to a strong start with early reading. Staff are well trained. They teach phonics effectively. Teachers check pupils' knowledge and understanding frequently. They make sure that pupils do not fall behind in their reading. If pupils need extra help, it is given straight away. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the books they have read. They show an interest when listening to their teachers read.

Pupils continue to improve their phonics knowledge as they move into key stage 1. The school's programme for teaching phonics is well structured. Teachers assess pupils regularly. They use this information to make sure that pupils get the right support at the right time.

In all classes, pupils are encouraged to read often. Classrooms are full of books for pupils to read at home. Any pupils who are not heard to read at home do so in school. Pupils enjoy listening to adults read aloud to them. They read books for

pleasure and appreciate the opportunities to select books from the library. Reading helps them learn new vocabulary and gain lots of knowledge.

All staff are determined to provide pupils with rich learning experiences. Leaders are ambitious for pupils. They have high expectations. Teachers carefully plan pupils' learning. In subjects such as reading, English and mathematics, teachers use assessment well to check pupils' knowledge and understanding and identify any misconceptions quickly.

Teachers' high-quality planning supports pupils' learning in mathematics. Right from the start in Reception, children learn to become fluent with numbers. They enter key stage 1 using mathematical apparatus with confidence. This helps them to have a deep understanding of basic concepts. Pupils understand a range of different calculation strategies. Teachers review pupils' learning skilfully. Teachers adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive good support. Teaching assistants and teachers know pupils' needs well. They help pupils to work independently. As a result, pupils with SEND achieve well.

In some subjects, such as science and geography, the knowledge and content that pupils should learn are not defined clearly enough. Senior leaders are already acting to address this. Teachers carefully consider the subject-specific vocabulary that pupils need to learn and remember in each subject.

Pupils' personal, social and emotional development is a strength of the school. Staff build strong partnerships with external agencies. They are quick to seek the right support for pupils and their families when needed. The needs of pupils and families who may be vulnerable are identified and managed well.

The headteacher and her leadership team are well respected by staff, pupils and parents. It is clear that leaders only want what is best for their pupils. Staff morale is high. Staff say that leaders are supportive and considerate of their workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff understand the crucial role they play in keeping pupils safe. Leaders train staff well. Staff know what to do if they have any concerns about pupils' well-being or safety. Parents trust staff to keep their children safe. Safeguarding records are clear. They show that appropriate actions are taken immediately when necessary. There is a strong culture of safeguarding throughout the school.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. They know who to go to if they are worried. Pupils say that they feel safe in school. The curriculum helps pupils understand how to stay safe when online and when outside school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders are making sure that all subjects have detailed, long-term plans in place. They have carefully selected the vocabulary that pupils need to know and remember from the early years through each year group and subject. However, the essential subject-specific knowledge that pupils need to know and remember in some subjects needs further consideration. Leaders should ensure that the essential knowledge that pupils must know and remember in each subject is comprehensive, stated clearly and carefully sequenced so that pupils' learning builds on what they have been taught previously.
- Leaders should further improve teachers' subject knowledge so that they are able to use this to help pupils to build on their prior learning and remember more. Stronger subject knowledge will help teachers to respond better to pupils' needs.

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 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

Unique reference number	131886
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10121705
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	289
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Neil Davies
Headteacher	Helen Wilson
Website	www.middlestonemoor.durham.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	18–19 October 2017

Information about this school

- Middlestone Moor Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The overwhelming majority of pupils are of White British heritage.

Information about this inspection

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

- We met with the headteacher and subject leaders. I spoke to a representative of the local authority, the chair of the governing body and four other governors.
- We considered reading, writing, mathematics, science and geography in depth. Activities included: discussions with curriculum leaders about how they plan the curriculum to ensure that pupils systematically learn and remember more; the guidance they give to teachers; and how they ensure that teachers gain strong subject-specific knowledge. We also visited lessons, spoke to pupils in those classes about their learning and scrutinised pupils' work. We had discussions with the teachers of the classes that we visited.

- Senior and curriculum leaders accompanied us on visits to lessons and examined pupils' work and planning documents alongside us.
- We considered the curriculum for pupils with SEND. We met with the special educational needs coordinator. We also looked at pupils' support plans and work, and spoke to a group of pupils with SEND. We also took the views of pupils' parents into account.
- We checked the school's safeguarding policies and records and spoke with the designated safeguarding leader for child protection. We also spoke to governors, pupils, staff and parents to check on the school's culture of safeguarding.
- We checked a range of other documentation relating to the school's work. We held formal meetings with staff and pupils and spoke with pupils during social times. We observed pupils arriving and leaving the school site.

Inspection team

Geoffrey Seagrove, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Gillian Nimer	Ofsted Inspector
Dawn Foster	Ofsted Inspector

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