

Inspection of a good school: Gosforth Park First School

Broadway East, Gosforth, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear NE3 5JQ

Inspection dates: 4–5 February 2020

Outcome

Gosforth Park First School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Gosforth Park First School has a real sense of family. This is a view shared by pupils, parents and staff. The new motto, 'together we make a difference', is felt as you walk through the door. This is a caring, nurturing school. Pupils feel safe and well looked after. They say behaviour is good and they have no worries about bullying.

Pupils like the changes that the new headteacher and her senior leaders have made in school. They say learning is fun and talk enthusiastically about new curriculum projects. The 'Gosforth is Great' topic was a real hit. Pupils enjoyed the practical fieldwork in geography. They could remember lots of interesting facts.

School life is built around the four Cs: confidence, challenge, creativity and community. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and they rise to the challenge. The quality of education is good. Pupils show a sense of pride in their workbooks.

The school is outward looking and works closely with the community. Recent fundraising has supported a number of local charities, including a hospice.

Pupils take part in a wide variety of after-school clubs. Activities range from computing to debating and dance.

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

A new school leadership team has taken a fresh look at the curriculum. There has been a sharp focus on pupils knowing more and remembering more. The curriculum is planned carefully to help pupils build knowledge on what they already know. Pupils are beginning to make links between subjects to deepen their understanding. For example, in Year 2, pupils have discussed environmental issues in English and they can apply this knowledge in geography.

A structured curriculum is securely in place for most subjects. Where subjects are less well developed, such as religious education (RE) and personal, social and health education (PSHE), school leaders have a successful model to follow.

Pupils quickly settle into Nursery and get off to a flying start in the early years. Many parents commented that this is a real strength of the school. They say communication is good. Parents like the new online app for sharing their children's achievements. Here, foundations are securely laid for future learning. For example, in Nursery, children can count up to 10 and use equipment to show 'one more' and 'one less'. These skills are further developed in Reception. Here, children can use balance scales to compare the weight of objects, by counting the number of cubes.

A similar approach is taken to the teaching of phonics and reading. From Nursery, children quickly learn their letters. They enjoy hearing stories and taking books home to share. From the beginning of Reception, no time is lost in helping children learn to read. Teachers are well trained in the teaching of phonics. They intervene quickly if a child is at risk of falling behind. However, some children struggle to read independently in key stage 1. This is because reading books are not always closely matched to the sounds children are learning.

Pupils achieve well in mathematics. Working closely with local schools, leaders have developed an ambitious curriculum. Pupils now have access to a wider range of resources to support their understanding. Pupils I spoke to said they love maths. They particularly enjoy problem-solving and mathematical challenges. When I visited lessons and looked at pupils' work, I could see that significant improvements have been made since the last inspection.

Staff effectively meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These pupils are supported well in the classroom to access the curriculum alongside their class mates. Recommendations from other professionals, such as the educational psychologist, are followed closely to support pupils with SEND.

The curriculum provides well for pupils' broader development. Children learn to respect different families, faiths and cultures through a story-based approach. This work is supported in RE when pupils visit the local church, a synagogue and a Hindu temple.

Pupils' behaviour is a strength of the school. I observed pupils moving sensibly along corridors. At playtime, pupils play well together. In the classrooms I visited, no learning time was lost as pupils listened carefully and followed instructions. Pupils were eager to learn.

Leaders take staff well-being and workload seriously. Teachers appreciate changes that have made to the school marking policy and planning arrangements. Staff are made to feel valued.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff are trained to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse. Clear procedures are in place for reporting concerns. There is a culture of 'it could happen here'. Leaders know how and when to make referrals for pupils. Records show that when a concern has been reported, appropriate action has been taken.

The curriculum helps pupils to stay safe. Pupils can explain why it is not appropriate to share personal details online or photographs which may identify where they live or which school they attend.

Rigorous recruitment checks are carried out to ensure that all adults are suitable to work in school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's curriculum is not yet sufficiently coherently planned and sequenced in some subjects. However, it is clear from the actions that leaders have already taken to plan next year's curriculum and train staff in how to deliver it that they are in the process of bringing this about.
- Not all reading books in key stage 1 are closely matched to pupils' level of understanding in phonics. Therefore, some pupils struggle to decode words and read independently. Leaders need to audit reading books and address gaps in provision to ensure all reading books are well matched to the sounds pupils are learning.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged Gosforth Park First School to be good on 19-20 January 2011.

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	108442
Local authority	Newcastle upon Tyne
Inspection number	10121868
Type of school	First
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	267
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Co-Chairs of governing body	Steve Collins Iain Duigan
Headteacher	Leanne Lamb
Website	www.gosforthpark.newcastle.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	12 July 2016

Information about this school

- Wraparound care is available on site, provided by the Gosforth out of school club. This provision is run separately to the school.

Information about this inspection

- During this inspection, I met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher and early years leader. I met with two local authority representatives and both co-chairs of the governing body. I also spoke with a number of teachers and support staff.
- The quality of education was inspected by visiting lessons, meeting with a range of pupils and staff, looking at pupils' work and examining documentation. I looked closely at reading, mathematics and geography.
- Throughout the inspection, I considered how well the school's curriculum supports pupils with SEND. I observed teaching, talked to pupils with SEND and looked carefully at workbooks. I also met the SEND leader to discuss provision.

- I considered the views of parents through face-to-face discussions, a letter which I received and via the 78 responses to Ofsted's Parent View survey.
- I listened to four pupils read. I observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms, moving around school and on the playground. I met with pupils formally to gather their opinions and held informal discussions across both days of the inspection.

Inspection team

Andy Jones, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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