

Inspection of Seascape Primary School

Ellison Road, Peterlee, County Durham SR8 5NJ

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 September 2021

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 say they love school. They report missing their teachers and their friends during the pandemic. As one parent commented, 'They laugh on the way in and laugh on the way out'. Pupils speak highly of the care teachers have for them. They know they are well looked after. They say bullying very rarely occurs. If it does, they trust teachers to sort things out fairly. Adults respect pupils, and this is reflected back. Adults have high expectations of pupils and take great care of them. The school is a vital part of the local community. Leaders made sure food was distributed when needed during lockdowns.

Pupils behave very well. They know what the school expects of them. They can explain how the behaviour policy works and how it is the same for everyone. This helps them learn in lessons. Pupils love the outside space and all the equipment, which they mostly share well. They talk about how much they love reading. Pupils explain which authors are 'trending' and which books they love on the 'Dalek' shelves. One pupil stated that the school was special 'because of the people in it'.

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

Leaders have worked hard to successfully address weaknesses identified at the last inspection. The whole school team has risen to this challenge with enthusiasm. There is a tangible sense of family amongst all adults in school. This is rubbing off on pupils, who clearly love being part of Seascape. The direction given by leaders and the ongoing optimism and excitement shown by all staff are pivotal to the school's continuing improvement.

Leaders have made reading a high priority. The introduction of a systematic approach to teaching phonics is bearing fruit. Younger children are quickly developing the skills of decoding words using their knowledge of sounds. They take home books they can read. These books match the sounds they know. Staff receive training in the teaching of reading a number of times each year. Strategies are in place to help those at risk of falling behind to catch up quickly. All pupils love being read a story at the end of the day. Children in early years are taught new and exciting vocabulary.

There are similar strengths in mathematics. The curriculum is well planned and sequenced. Teachers often recap learning so that what pupils have learned before is reinforced. Teachers check on what pupils have learned and use this to plan next steps. Pupils can use and apply their mathematical skills in different situations. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported very well in lessons. If necessary, learning tasks are adapted to meet their needs. The subject leader has made sure staff receive regular training that supports and challenges teachers' subject knowledge. Design technology and history are not as well planned and sequenced. Leaders have not accurately determined the essential knowledge and skills pupils need. This holds pupils back from building on previous learning and

making links between what they know and can remember. Leaders have already begun to tackle this issue in these subjects.

Pupils behave very well in lessons. They apply themselves and concentrate as much as they can. Pupils respond well to the consistent routines and high expectations of teachers. The atmosphere in lessons is calm and productive.

In the early years children listen well, line up sensibly and sit attentively on the carpet. The early years setting encourages children's curiosity, independence and cooperation. They enjoy explorative activities such as bread making, which was enjoyed enormously – even at the cost of some very floury uniforms. Currently, planned learning in early years is separate from learning in Year 1 in some subjects. Leaders must ensure that there is a smooth transition between learning in Reception and Year 1. This will help children build on what they know in the wider curriculum that they will meet in key stage 1.

The school has ensured that there is a wide range of opportunities to promote positive personal development for pupils. Key messages around issues such as mental health, online safety and managing risk are reinforced. Pupils have a strong sense of justice. They speak about how all people are equal, regardless of race, gender or religion. They know not to judge others. Pupils appreciate the chance to talk to the school counsellor if they need to. The nurturing early years space provides for children who like quiet or have sensory needs. Children are taught about positive relationships. They know right from wrong.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff have a thorough understanding of the role they play in keeping children safe. They keep a beady eye on all incidents, worries or concerns. Regular training means they are up to date with current issues. This includes those specific to the school's immediate context. Record-keeping systems are meticulous and thorough. Leaders are tenacious in following up referrals to secure appropriate actions for every pupil who needs extra support. The school's ethos is one of care. It places huge importance on the well-being and mental health of the whole school community.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Curriculum planning in some subjects currently begins for pupils in Year 1. As a result, it is sometimes unclear what skills and knowledge children in the early years need to prepare them for learning in Year 1. Leaders must make sure that curriculum planning for all subjects starts in the early years so children can build on what they already know when they start the Year 1 curriculum.

- Some subjects in the curriculum are not yet well planned and sequenced. This prevents pupils building on what they already have learned or remembering in the long term what they have been taught. Further work must be completed to ensure that the curriculum in all subjects is of an equally high standard as seen in mathematics and English. It is clear from the actions leaders have already taken to plan next year's curriculum and train staff that they are well underway with this work. For this reason, the transition arrangement has been applied.

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.

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	133701
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10200644
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	261
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Diane Howarth
Headteacher	Emma Rowntree
Website	www.seascapeprimaryschool.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	21 and 22 November 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have both been appointed since the previous inspection.
- The school has provision for two-year-olds.
- The school does not access any alternative provision for its pupils.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders from the school, four members of the local governing body and the school's development partner.
- Deep dives were carried out in these subjects: reading, mathematics, design technology and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders,

looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and teaching assistants, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspectors also listened to some pupils read.

- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lesson visits and at break time. They spoke to pupils about their views on behaviour and a group of pupils gave an inspector a guided tour of the school.
- Safeguarding records, including the single central record, were reviewed. The inspectors talked to pupils and staff about their views of safeguarding.
- There were too few responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for parents, Parent View, for it to be considered. The inspectors viewed the 128 responses to the school's own questionnaire from July 2021.
- The inspectors met with staff to discuss their well-being and workload. Inspectors considered the 25 responses from Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

Phil Scott, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Stephen Fallon	Ofsted Inspector
Kathryn McDonald	Ofsted Inspector

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