

Inspection of Corbridge Middle School

Cow Lane, Corbridge, Northumberland NE45 5HX

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 October 2021

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Corbridge Middle School is a school that puts inclusivity at its very heart. It is a caring community where every member of staff shares a determination that all pupils will benefit from exceptional opportunities.

Pupils study a well-planned curriculum that is taught with great skill. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive highly effective support. At the end of Year 8, pupils achieve very well across all subjects and are exceptionally well prepared for the transition to high school.

Corbridge is a calm school where pupils respect each other and adults. Pupils work hard, behave well in lessons and act with maturity around school. They enjoy school and feel safe. Bullying is very rare, but when it occurs, pupils say that staff deal with it effectively.

The school's planned enrichment programme of learning adds considerable depth and breadth to the curriculum. Pupils value the wide range of activities on offer, including representing the school at sport, learning British Sign Language and cookery with a professional chef.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. A comment from one summed up the views of most: 'A brilliant school with a great team of staff'.

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

School leaders, including governors, are not complacent. They are relentless in their desire to continually improve the school. Leaders welcome visitors to school and reflect carefully on feedback they receive. All staff in school share leaders' vision and determination that every pupil should have a successful school experience. They are immensely proud to work in the school.

Subject leaders have thought carefully about what is taught, when and how. They know the importance of what pupils learn 'joining up' as pupils move between schools. Subject leaders work closely with other schools in the Hexham Partnership to make this happen. In mathematics, common approaches to teaching important mathematical methods have been agreed. This continuity in curriculum thinking, seen across all subjects, helps pupils to achieve exceptionally highly.

Teachers use precise questioning to check whether pupils are ready to move on to new learning. They make appropriate adjustments to lessons based on this information. When assessment shows that a pupil requires additional support, teachers arrange prompt intervention that is precisely targeted to address the difficulty.

Pupils who are at the earlier stages of learning to read are taught effectively. All pupils are encouraged to read a range of texts in lessons and during daily form time.

The purpose of this daily half-hour of form time is not as clearly defined as other parts of the school day. This leads to some inconsistency in how form time is used and its impact.

There is an impressive range of enrichment opportunities for pupils. Leaders are committed to not only supporting existing talents and interests, but also expanding their range. They arrange for a wide range of adults from outside school to support the breadth of the programme. This range of opportunities enthuses pupils. Almost all attend extra-curricular groups. Staff work effectively with families to encourage those who do not attend to do so.

Careers information and guidance are highly effective. Pupils are ambitious for their future and know that they will need to work hard to achieve their goals. They are clear about what teachers expect of them in lessons. Pupils focus on their work, and behaviour that slows learning is very rare.

Pupils with SEND benefit greatly from adults' determination that all pupils should have a successful school experience. Teachers, supported by a highly skilled team of teaching assistants, make subtle adaptations to their teaching to ensure that all pupils can access the curriculum. For example, in a physical education (PE) lesson, where pupils were learning to take a penalty corner, some pupils used slightly adapted physical resources to make controlling the ball easier. Parents of pupils with SEND greatly value the work that staff do in school to support their children to achieve well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils learn about keeping safe, including online. Pupils know whom they can talk to in school if they have a concern about their safety.

All staff in school have regular safeguarding training and are aware of potential signs that a pupil may be at risk. They know the importance of reporting concerns. Leaders have ensured that systems in school allow staff to pass on information promptly. The school's designated safeguarding lead takes appropriate action, where necessary, to protect pupils.

Leaders ensure that all required checks are carried out on adults in school.

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	122326
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10200730
Type of school	Middle deemed secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	9 to 13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	358
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Roy Bearpark
Headteacher	Jane Kennedy
Website	http://corbridgemiddle.weebly.com
Date of previous inspection	29 November 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Corbridge Middle School is an average-sized middle school.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well below the national average.
- The schools makes no use of alternative provision.

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 had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, curriculum and pastoral leaders, a representative of the local authority and a group of governors.

- Inspectors analysed 71 responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View, and spoke to parents at the end of the school day.
- Inspectors spoke to teachers, teaching assistants and support staff over the course of the inspection and considered 30 staff responses to the staff survey.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils and spoke to others informally during the inspection, including at breakfast club, and reviewed 55 responses to the pupil survey.
- Inspectors took account of a wide range of documentary information, including school policies, school self-evaluation, records of behaviour, minutes from governing body meetings and documentation regarding safeguarding.
- Inspectors visited lessons across the school and looked at pupils’ work with curriculum leaders. Inspectors carried out deep dives in mathematics, physical education, English and geography. In addition, inspectors explored reading across the school.

Inspection team

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