

Inspection of a good school: Prudhoe West Academy

West Road, Prudhoe, Northumberland NE42 6HR

Inspection dates:

17 and 18 November 2021

Outcome

Prudhoe West Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

It is obvious pupils are proud of their school and love being there. Their self-assurance and confidence speak volumes about how happy they are and how safe they feel. Pupils are thrilled with displays around school and the spray-painted mural on the building walls. Pupils explain this historical timeline with glee – starting in the Stone Age and ending by celebrating the National Health Service during Covid.

Expectations of pupils are high. Displays celebrate talents and interests. Most pupils show a genuine desire to make the world a better place. They know the 'sustainable development goals' for the planet, and have furthered this understanding by learning about COP-26. They strive to receive awards for friendship, behaviour and teamwork. In assembly, there is fierce competition to be awarded the bear for behaviour, narwhal for attendance or sausage dog for tidiness.

Pupils are shocked to even be asked if bullying takes place. They explain why bullying might happen. They know to be tolerant and respectful of different races, religions and different kinds of relationships. Behaviour is good and pupils know the 'brilliant behaviour guide'. Pupils speak with maturity about the importance of good mental health and how to stay safe.

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

Leaders have worked hard to design and plan a curriculum that builds knowledge sequentially. In most subjects, key ideas are carefully threaded through the essential knowledge that pupils are taught. In mathematics, basic skills in number are developed progressively. Learning is sequenced well, building on what pupils already know. Mathematics starts early. Children in the two-year-old room learn about capacity using gloop. They can join in with number rhymes, like 'Five little monkeys'. Nursery children count nuts for a squirrel. Reception children recognise numbers by pattern and shape, learning number bonds to ten. Staff are well trained to deliver good quality lessons.

Teachers' assessments help them plan next steps in mathematics. Pupils revisit previous learning, so they can remember key knowledge.

In geography, pupils have a sound recollection of what they have learned. In lessons, they work with enthusiasm and endeavour. There is no evidence of poor behaviour or attitudes. This helps pupils achieve well. Pupils from early years learn key geographical vocabulary. Lessons are sequenced into smaller blocks of learning. This helps pupils understand more complex ideas at the end of a unit of work. Key ideas like human and physical geography are threaded through learning. Year 4 pupils can describe the physical aspects of the River Nile and the impact of mankind through the Aswan High Dam. Key ideas in art and history are less clear. Pupils find it hard to make connections or make comparisons in learning.

Reading is a key priority for leaders. Displays about reading are everywhere. Children in the two-year-old room enjoy listening to stories. Good questioning helps with their speaking and listening. Systematic and daily teaching of phonics starts in Reception. Children quickly learn sounds and how to blend them into words. There is a clear link between phonics, writing and spelling. Books to practise reading are matched closely to pupils' phonics ability. All can decode unknown words. They are quickly becoming fluent and confident readers. Staff are trained to make sure they can be the best teachers of reading they can be.

This is a school passionate to see the best for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Those falling behind are quickly identified. Support is accessed and implemented in quick time. The school's curriculum and wider opportunities are adapted to become accessible for all. Strong links with parents exist.

Pupils access a myriad of opportunities to broaden their personal development. During the inspection, staff from Kielder Observatory made a return visit. Plans are in place for the traditional visit to the theatre for the seasonal pantomime. Pupils aim to achieve '90 experiences' by the age of nine. These include visiting another country, being part of a performance, making mud pies and jumping in puddles. The wider curriculum is based on British values, and links to theme weeks, such as Pride or mental health. Pupils' all-round development is enhanced by inspirational events and many after-school opportunities.

The staff, without exception, are extremely positive about working in school. They know leaders have their best interests at heart. No one is critical about the work expected of them. They feel well informed, valued and respected. They say leaders listen carefully to any issue raised. Staff benefit from the strong and effective partnership between the Trust and the local governing body.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school is meticulous in its attention to detail in keeping children safe. The governing body knows safeguarding is its most important role. Training for staff is up to date and revisited over the year in bite-sized training modules. Issues are swiftly identified. Staff

know local safeguarding risks and take positive steps to address them. Outside agencies work well with the school. Leaders benefit from a biannual safeguarding audit from external consultants. The pupils' online safety council considers issues raised by classmates, so leaders know what needs to be addressed. This school cares about pupils' well-being.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In history and art, key ideas that thread through curriculum planning lack clarity. This makes it more difficult for pupils to link learning and build on what they already know. In these subjects, leaders need to identify the key ideas and essential knowledge that will help pupils to remember in the long term what they have been taught and how it connects with knowledge they can recall.

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 or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Prudhoe West First School to be good on 18-19 March 2015.

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	144180
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10200614
Type of school	First
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	270
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Richard Whinney
Headteacher	Carrie Hodgson
Website	https://prudhoe.wiseacademies.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The academy is part of WISE Academies Trust

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders from the school, four members of the local governing body and trustee board, and the Trust's Chief Executive Officer.
- Deep dives were carried out in these subjects: reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector 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 inspector also listened to some pupils read.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour during lesson visits and at break time. He spoke to pupils about their views on behaviour and a group of pupils gave the inspector a guided tour of the school.

- Safeguarding records, including the single central record, were reviewed. The inspector talked to pupils and staff about their views of safeguarding.
- The views of 19 parents who responded to Ofsted's questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, were considered.
- The inspector met with staff to discuss their well-being and workload. The inspector considered the 34 responses from Ofsted's staff survey and the 158 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.

Inspection team

Phil Scott, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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