

# Inspection of King Street Primary School

High Grange Road, Spennymoor, County Durham DL16 6RA

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Inspection dates: 19 and 20 October 2021

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Early years provision

**Requires improvement**

Previous inspection grade

Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils have respectful relationships with their teachers. They say that teachers listen to their concerns and make things better. Pupils describe their teachers as 'lovely', and say that they are happy and feel safe in school.

The quality of education is not good enough. Leaders have not fully considered pupils, from Reception to Year 6, when designing their curriculum. In wider curriculum subjects, such as design and technology (DT), plans do not clearly identify what leaders want pupils to learn. This means that pupils do not develop their knowledge or skills well enough.

Pupils' behaviour is a strength of the school. Incidents of bullying are very rare. Pupils treat one another with respect. They are very accepting of difference. Pupils told inspectors, 'Everyone is the same but with different thoughts and opinions.' Leaders encourage pupils to be kind and responsible through the whole-school use of 'gem powers'. Pupils who work hard and show these character traits are celebrated each week. Pupils enjoy the rewards they receive. Pupils demonstrate tolerance and kindness in the way they behave.

Leaders have recently added philosophy lessons to the curriculum. Pupils consider the opinions of others and debate challenging ideas through the use of 'sticky questions'.

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

Leaders have an ambitious vision for their curriculum. They want pupils to be able to use and apply their knowledge and skills across all subjects. While this vision is shared by all staff, not all curriculum leaders have received the training and support they need to lead their subject. As a result, this vision is not being realised in all areas of the curriculum.

Leaders have continued to prioritise reading. The library is in the heart of the school and offers a welcoming place where pupils can read and change books. Leaders' chosen phonics programme has very recently been implemented. Staff in the early years, Year 1 and Year 2 have received the initial training they need. However, class teachers of older pupils have not been trained. They do not have the phonics knowledge they need to support pupils who are still in the early stages of learning to read. The assessment of pupils' phonic knowledge is not sharp enough. The books that pupils read to help them practise their phonics are too challenging. They do not match the sounds that pupils already know with enough accuracy. Teachers share a variety of texts with pupils. Children in the early years regularly visit the local library. This is helping pupils to fall in love with reading.

In mathematics, the curriculum is well sequenced. Staff have the skills and knowledge they need to teach the curriculum. As a result, pupils remember what they learn and become confident mathematicians. Teachers use assessments to

identify pupils who require extra help. Children in the early years receive daily mathematics teaching. During these times, teachers help pupils to understand number and counting. However, in the early years, adults do not challenge pupils enough when they are learning through play. Opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of number are missed.

In subjects such as DT and history, leaders' curriculum plans are not well developed. Curriculum plans do not set out clearly the knowledge and skills that pupils should learn or the order in which they should learn them. Pupils' knowledge in these subjects varies enormously because the curriculum plans are not clearly sequenced. In science, the curriculum is more coherently planned but what pupils can remember varies. Pupils remember more of their science work when science is the focus for their topic. When science is not the focus for the topic, the scientific knowledge they remember is weaker.

The early years environment has undergone a transformation in recent years. Children learn in an environment rich in resources. 'Welly Wednesdays' gets children outdoors, where they can enjoy a book and explore the forest area. However, leaders have yet to develop their curriculum plans. Learning in the early years does not connect well enough to the learning pupils encounter as they move through the school. Leaders do not have clear plans in place to set out what children should learn throughout their time in Nursery and Reception.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) get the help and support they need to work alongside their peers. Learning is matched to their needs and teaching assistants help pupils with SEND to be fully included in lessons. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) works with outside agencies to get specialist help and advice when it is needed.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, pupils attended a wide range of clubs. At the time of the inspection, leaders had chosen not to restart these due to the COVID-19 restrictions they had in place. Pupils have a clear understanding of what makes a healthy relationship. Leaders are promoting healthy lifestyles by monitoring pupils' activity every day. Leaders reward classes who are most active each week. Pupils enjoy the competition this brings.

Governors monitor and challenge the work of leaders. Regular visits to the school help them to see the impact of leaders' actions and make informed decisions.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that the required checks on staff who work with children are complete. Staff training is up to date. Regular updates through staff meetings keep safeguarding as a high priority in school. All staff are clear on the steps they need to take to report concerns about pupils. Systems for recording concerns are clear. Leaders act in a timely way to get the help that pupils need.

Online safety features within the school curriculum. This gives pupils the knowledge they need to stay safe online.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The curriculum is not well organised. In some subjects, plans do not clearly identify what important knowledge pupils need to learn and when, from the early years to Year 6. As a result, pupils' learning in subjects such as DT is weak. Leaders should make sure that the curriculum is planned carefully in each subject, so that pupils' knowledge and skills build over time from the early years through to Year 6.
- The assessment of pupils' phonics knowledge is not sharp enough. As a result, phonics teaching is not always targeted at the sounds that pupils need to learn. The books that pupils read do not help them to develop fluency. Leaders should ensure that phonics assessment is precise so that books match the sounds that pupils know already and that teaching focuses on the sounds that pupils need to learn before moving on.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	130946
<b>Local authority</b>	Durham
<b>Inspection number</b>	10200718
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	201
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Christine Parkinson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Joanne Bromley
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.kingstreet.durham.sch.uk">www.kingstreet.durham.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	14 June 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average primary school.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is almost double the national average.
- The number of pupils in receipt of the pupil premium grant is higher than national averages.

## 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 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, curriculum leaders, the SENCo, the early years leader and a sample of teaching staff.
- The lead inspector spoke with representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors, and the leadership adviser for the local authority.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science, DT and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons and spoke to pupils and teachers. Inspectors also looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors heard pupils in Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3 read an unseen text to a familiar adult and visited phonics lessons in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2.
- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead and deputy designated safeguarding lead. Safeguarding training records were scrutinised. The school's single central record was checked.
- Inspectors looked at a range of school documentation, including leaders' school development plan, self-evaluation and records relating to attendance and pupils' behaviour.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in class and during breaktimes.
- Inspectors met with a sample of parents at the start of the school day to capture their views.
- Inspectors considered the 40 responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire and 30 free-text responses. They considered the 17 responses received through Ofsted's staff questionnaire.

### **Inspection team**

Chris Pearce, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ann Muxworthy

Ofsted Inspector

Steve McLean

Ofsted Inspector

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