

Inspection of Dinnington First School

Sycamore Avenue, Dinnington Village, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear NE13 7JY

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 November 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 Good

What is it like to attend this school?

This school has a true community spirit. Mutual respect permeates everything that happens here. Pupils are kind and helpful. Staff are caring and nurturing. Pupils feel happy and safe.

Leaders, staff and governors set high expectations. They want pupils to thrive. Pupils' personal development is of a high priority. At the same time, leaders want pupils to achieve well academically. Leaders ensure that the fundamentals in reading, writing and mathematics are well taught. They have improved how the school teaches other subjects. This has strengthened the quality of the curriculum. Opportunities for pupils to gain new experiences are growing.

From the moment children start school, staff sensitively teach them the school's routines. Children settle quickly into Nursery and Reception. Pupils understand the school's values. They behave very well in lessons. Pupils listen attentively to teachers and work hard. During playtimes and lunchtimes, pupils are active and friendly. Most pupils and parents believe that bullying does not happen. Should bullying occur leaders and staff take swift action to address this.

Leaders, including governors, have been determined to secure a high-quality learning environment. Staff make good use of the school's resources during school time and when delivering the wide range of after-school clubs.

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

Leaders have created a well-designed curriculum to meet the needs of all pupils. The school's efforts to improve the quality of teaching mathematics and reading have paid dividends. Pupils achieve well in these subjects. In foundation subjects, such as geography and physical education (PE), the key knowledge that pupils need to know is well sequenced. Similarly, in art what pupils need to know by the end of the unit of teaching is clear. This is ensuring that pupils are gaining and securely retaining key knowledge in the foundation subjects.

Leaders have plans for further improving the planning of aspects of the foundation subjects. In geography, the subject leader is reviewing opportunities for improving fieldwork. In art, the subject leader is guiding staff on the key skills which need to be taught to achieve the planned learning at the end of a unit.

Teachers use a range of assessments to check pupils' knowledge. They do this throughout lessons, adapting their teaching to make sure pupils achieve well. Teachers check that pupils have gained the important knowledge at the end of a teaching unit. Leaders are refining approaches to assessment in the foundation subjects. They are aware that assessment approaches need to be manageable for staff.

The teaching of reading is a high priority for all in the school. Children get off to a flying start with phonics and early reading. This continues as pupils progress through school. Regular assessments identify where pupils need extra support. Staff respond quickly to this to ensure that pupils keep up. Pupils develop a love of reading. They talk articulately about book choices and authors. Regular story times, use of quality texts, and external links, such as with Seven Stories (The National Centre for Children's Books), all generate pupils' love of literature.

The school meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) effectively. Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is suitably adapted to meet the needs of these pupils. Suitable plans are in place where pupils with SEND have more specific needs. Staff implement these plans well in lessons and at social times. Pupils with SEND achieve well academically and socially. A small number of parents raised concerns about identification of the needs of pupils with SEND. Leaders are aware of these concerns. They are reviewing how to communicate with these parents more effectively.

Staff in early years show children how to make the most of the planned learning activities. They model language and vocabulary well. Children's speaking and listening develops well, and they sustain their interest in the tasks available. Pupils listen responsively in lessons. They cooperate well with their peers. Pupils work with determination and focus. They are polite and demonstrate good manners. Pupils are confident that staff will support them with any concerns, including if bullying should happen.

Pupils' personal development is a strength of the school. Pupils are taught how to adopt healthy lifestyles. There are a wide range of clubs and activities outside of the school day. Leaders have planned these so that there is something of interest for all pupils. Staff plan visits and visitors to enrich pupils' learning. The school's values and curriculum help pupils understand diversity and equality. The school teaches fundamental British values. For example, the school council shows pupils how democracy works in practice.

Since her appointment, the headteacher has established a clear vision for the school's improvement. Leaders and staff fully understand this. Work on improving the curriculum and pupils' personal development is making a real difference. Established subject leaders are knowledgeable. They know how to improve the curriculum and teaching of their subjects. Staff have trust in leaders and morale is high. Leaders take account of staff well-being and workload. Governors fulfil their statutory roles. How they hold leaders to account for the quality of education has recently improved. Some subject leaders and governors are new to their roles. There are clear plans in place to develop the skills of these leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Regular staff training ensures that staff know what action to take if they have a safeguarding concern. Pupils and families who may need help are identified promptly. The school works well with safeguarding partners and other agencies to secure help for pupils where necessary. Leaders manage allegations or safeguarding concerns about staff appropriately. At the beginning of the inspection, the school had not completed some of the required safeguarding checks for governors. Leaders acted promptly to address this by the start of day two. The school's personal, social and health education curriculum covers a wide range of aspects of pupils' safety.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The teaching of pupils' skills or disciplinary knowledge in some foundation subjects needs refining. Opportunities for pupils to apply their growing knowledge are not fully developed in these subjects. Leaders need to continue their review of this aspect of planning in some foundation subjects.
- The school's approaches to assessing pupils' learning in some foundation subjects are developing. Sometimes, this limits the opportunity to fully check what pupils have learned. Leaders need to continue their refinement of assessment approaches. Leaders know that these changes need to be manageable for staff.
- Some school leaders, including governors, are new to their roles. They are enthusiastic about these roles. However, at present they have not fully developed their leadership skills. Senior leaders need to implement the school's plans for developing new subject leaders and governors.

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	108437
Local authority	Newcastle-upon-Tyne
Inspection number	10200723
Type of school	First
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	206
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Caroline Cogdon
Headteacher	Caroline Ash
Website	www.dinnington.newcastle.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	3 October 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher has been in post since September 2019.
- Since the last inspection, there has been an increased number of pupils. There has been an associated increase in staff numbers.
- The school is part of Gosforth Schools' Trust.

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.

- The lead inspector met with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. He held a meeting with governors, including the chair of the governing body. He met with a representative of the local authority.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography and PE. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with the subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about some other subjects.
- Inspectors evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding through discussions with a range of leaders, staff and pupils. The lead inspector scrutinised a range of safeguarding documentation alongside school leaders.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents and staff. They reviewed their responses to Ofsted's parents' and staff's questionnaires. An inspector spoke to parents at the start of the day.

Inspection team

Michael Reeves, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Amy Keith

Ofsted Inspector

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