

# Inspection of a good school: Cullercoats Primary School

Marden Avenue, Cullercoats, North Shields, Tyne and Wear NE30 4PB

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Inspection dates:

15 and 16 February 2022

## Outcome

Cullercoats Primary School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils say that they love being in school. They say that other pupils are 'friendly, kind, understanding and helpful'. They know how to keep themselves safe. They understand the systems in place during the pandemic, like using sanitisers and being in class 'bubbles'. Pupils are delighted these safety precautions are ending. One group is especially pleased they can use the cloakrooms again. Pupils maintain that behaviour is good and there is no bullying. Teachers sort out arguments quickly but expect pupils to 'sort out "silly arguments" themselves'.

Pupils run off excess energy at breaktimes. They like the equipment they have, set out by sports leaders. Year 2 enjoy 'Wonky Wednesday' break, when they pair up with a classmate they do not usually play with. New friendships are made. Pupils are fulsome in their praise for school dinners, which always include the option of a vegetarian meal or a baked potato. Teachers expect great things from pupils, but pupils also aspire to great things themselves. Year 4 pupils set goals for the year. These include writing a book of poems and swimming in the sea every day. Class points are valued. The Year 6 winner receives a cushion to sit on for the next week. Pupils enjoy the clubs on offer at lunchtime but also after school. 'Chill Zone Friday' is a firm favourite.

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

Leaders are working to identify the key knowledge pupils need across the curriculum. Some curriculum subjects, such as design technology and art, are well planned so that pupils' knowledge builds progressively. In these subjects pupils connect learning and apply knowledge in different contexts. In design technology pupils gain knowledge progressively, such as in their use of different hand tools. Learning is sequenced well. Pupils' understanding of fastenings in work on textiles builds on what they know. Year 1 pupils learn simple sewing techniques, preparing them for more-complex stitches when making an 'ugly doll' toy in key stage 2. The key knowledge pupils need to complete a unit using computer aided design with a 3-D modelling tool is clearly identified. Learning builds sequentially as pupils apply and develop their skills. 'Class experts' help others with

their design of a landmark, bridge or hotel. However, the essential knowledge pupils need has not been identified in all curriculum subjects, for example in history.

The love of reading starts in the Nursery. Children choose to listen to a story whether inside or outside. Children start to learn the sounds of letters and how to blend them in the early years. Daily phonics lessons continue into Year 1 and Year 2. Teachers make regular checks to make sure no one is falling behind. Extra help is given to help pupils catch up. Children and pupils take books home to practise their reading. These books match closely to their phonic knowledge, so they build confidence and fluency. They also take a book home to share with an adult. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 read aloud with expression. All pupils enjoy a story being read to them at the end of the day.

Pupils are achieving well in mathematics. Leaders clearly identify the knowledge that pupils must remember at the end of a unit of work. Teachers then plan work to build on what pupils know. Pupils learn a range of mathematical vocabulary and use it accurately. Mathematics lessons are fun. Children in Nursery were learning words to compare size when making small bubbles and a large bubble with a hula hoop. Pupils in Year 6 challenged each other to find the new prices of sale items by working out the percentage reduction if there was a discount of 16% or 55%. Assessments track pupils' progress. This information is used to find misconceptions or gaps in learning. It also helps teachers know if individuals or groups of pupils are not ready to move on to the next topic of learning.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive effective support. Teachers set work that gives them access to the whole curriculum. Staff spot any issues quickly and give extra help. No pupil misses out on any aspect of school life. Pupils take part in planned opportunities to extend their learning and well-being. These include celebration days or religious and cultural festivals. There are visits around the local area – to the local car factory, or residential trips for older pupils. Pupils are proud of their competition success in problem-solving robotic design.

The governing body has been strengthened by new governors with a range of professional skills. Governors know the strengths of the school. They hold leaders to account for tackling the areas that need improvement. Teachers appreciate the ways leaders try to ease their workload. They appreciate the revised timetable for meetings, so they have more time to attend to planning and assessment. The whole staff team is pleased with the return of pre-pandemic school routines as pupils mix freely and share breaktimes.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff receive regular training related to safeguarding. This alerts them to even the smallest sign that a pupil could be at risk. They know how to raise concerns. Leaders' meticulous record-keeping links concerns together to enable them to take appropriate action. Leaders make appropriate safety checks on staff, which are recorded on the single central register. The school business manager maintains the register with attention to detail. The link safeguarding governor makes regular checks on how well this is working.

New staff receive safeguarding training as part of their induction. Leaders liaise with external agencies when needed. Leaders are aware of the increase in anxiety in some pupils as a result of the pandemic. They are seeking to maintain pupils' good mental health.

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

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

- The quality of the planning and sequencing in some foundation subjects varies. Essential knowledge that pupils need is not specified in all curriculum subjects. Pupils are then unable to apply this knowledge to more-complex concepts within that subject. Leaders should ensure that all subjects include defined knowledge content. It is clear from leaders' actions that they are in the process of bringing this about. For this reason, the transitional arrangements have been applied.

## **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 second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in April 2012.

## **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

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| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 108569   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | North Tyneside   |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10211371   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community  |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 3 to 11  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 427  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body   |
| <b>Chair of governing body</b>             | Mrs Kristy Regan & Mrs Suzanne Caveney<br>(Co-Chairs)  |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Mr Gavin Storey  |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.cullercoatsprimaryschool.org.uk">www.cullercoatsprimaryschool.org.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | 7 February 2017, under section 8 of the<br>Education Act 2005                                |

## Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## 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 the headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteachers, SEND coordinator, teachers and school business manager. The inspector also met two members of the local governing body and a meeting was held with the school development partner from the local authority.
- Deep dives were carried out in reading, mathematics and design technology. For each deep dive, the inspector met with 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 listened to a range of pupils read from different year groups.

- The inspector also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about other curriculum subjects.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour during lesson visits and at break and lunchtime. He spoke to pupils about their views on behaviour, and a group of pupils gave the inspector a tour of the school.
- The inspector looked at the single central register of recruitment and vetting checks and spoke to leaders, teachers and pupils about safeguarding.
- The views of 104 parents who responded to Ofsted's questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, were considered. This included taking into account the 78 written comments.
- The inspector met with staff to discuss their well-being and workload. There were no responses to Ofsted's staff survey or to Ofsted's pupil survey.

### **Inspection team**

Phil Scott, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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