

Inspection of a good school: Cragside CofE Controlled Primary School

Westloch Road, Cramlington, Northumberland NE23 6LW

Inspection dates:

7 and 8 June 2022

Outcome

Cragside CofE Controlled Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Cragside is a caring and welcoming school. Pupils and parents are greeted by leaders at the school gate every day. This helps build the excellent relationships between staff, pupils and their families.

Leaders create a calm and purposeful learning environment. Pupils are respectful of one another and well behaved. They have positive attitudes to learning, inspired by their teachers to do their best. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are well supported in lessons. One pupil commented, 'Nobody ever gives up in a school like this.'

Older pupils thrive in the responsibilities they undertake. They love being role models to younger pupils, doing jobs such as 'opal playleader', 'lunch hall monitor' and 'reading buddy' with Reception children.

Pupils appreciate the range of activities to do outside during breaktimes. Bullying does not happen very often. If it does, pupils are confident that an adult will help them sort it out and make it stop. Pupils say they feel safe at school.

Leaders have high ambitions for pupils. They want pupils to achieve well personally and academically. There is a wide range of after-school clubs to promote healthy lifestyles and personal interests.

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

Leaders ensure that pupils learn to read as quickly as possible. The phonics programme is well embedded from Reception class onwards. The subject leader ensures staff follow the programme closely. All staff receive specific training on developing early reading. Teachers systematically check that pupils remember new sounds. Pupils who find it hard to remember new sounds have extra support to keep up. Pupils enjoy reading the wealth of books in school. Reading challenges and rewards motivate the pupils to read even more

at home. This establishes the habit of reading for pleasure. Leaders identify any gaps in learning resulting from the COVID-19 disruption and ensure these are addressed. This is true of both English and mathematics.

The mathematics subject leader supports staff through monitoring and training. There is a sharp focus on learning key skills so that pupils become fluent in their number and calculation knowledge. Older pupils complete challenging problem-solving questions independently, however this is not consistent throughout school. Some pupils do repeated practice without independently applying their knowledge to a real-life context. This limits their understanding of the variety of ways mathematical problems could be presented and the strategies they could adopt to solve them. Changes are underway to make the mathematics curriculum even more ambitious.

While the curriculum planning is in place in all subjects, in some subjects leaders recognise there is more to do to ensure the curriculum is well connected. In science, teachers are confident in choosing the approach and detailed content for their year group. This, however, leads to inconsistencies in the way science is taught and potential gaps in learning. In some year groups pupils have limited access to practical science investigations. This may undermine pupil confidence when doing practical work. The subject leader uses his in-depth scientific knowledge to arrange whole-school science weeks, which pupils love. This draws on partnerships with local industries and the secondary school.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils with SEND. They are identified quickly and teachers adapt their teaching to make sure that these pupils access the same curriculum as their peers. Pupils with SEND are included in all aspects of school life.

The strategic move to provide a Nursery class in school is a recent development. Leaders have a clear vision to give children the best possible start in education. The early years curriculum includes clear identification of the small steps children take in phonics and number knowledge. Children in Nursery are happy and confident, learning through play and more structured activities.

Pupils are well behaved; however, they report the use of some inappropriate language at lunchtimes by older pupils. Bullying is rare, and leaders follow this up using a 'restorative' approach. Records detail any reported incidents and subsequent actions. However, the categories used to label behaviours in the database, such as 'negative behaviour' rather than bullying are too generic to be useful in any analysis. This means governors are not presented with the most accurate overview of trends over time.

Pupils are well supported in their personal development. They have a good understanding of the diversity of modern Britain. Pupils are introduced to a range of potential career options. Pupils have a well-developed understanding of relationships. This includes actions that contribute to a caring and respectful relationship as well as those which can make for a more toxic relationship.

Governors have a clear understanding of their various roles. They are supportive of the changes being brought in by senior leaders. These include a focus on staff and pupil well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a culture of vigilance. Safer recruitment processes are followed when appointing new staff members. This includes rigorous interviews and pre-employment checks.

Regular training is in place for all members of staff which updates and refreshes their knowledge. Potential scenarios based on real-life examples from other schools promote the message 'it could happen here', to avoid any complacency.

Leaders know pupils and families well and are alert to any changes that may flag up concerns. They are tenacious in ensuring that services beyond the school control provide the right support to those in need.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not fully identified the precise steps to be taken for pupils to learn key concepts, themes and skills in the science curriculum. This results in an inconsistent approach and an assumption that pupils have accrued sufficient knowledge over time. Some pupils have limited opportunities for practical, work which may disadvantage them when transitioning to secondary school. Leaders need to ensure there are clear identification of themes, concepts and opportunities for practical work in the science curriculum to allow pupils to learn more and remember more.
- Leaders have recognised the mathematics curriculum should be even more ambitious so that all pupils have the appropriate level of challenge. Some pupils have limited opportunities to independently apply their reasoning skills to a range of contexts. Leaders should continue with the curriculum transition in mathematics to ensure that there is consistency of approach and pupils have access to reasoning and problem-solving across all year groups.
- Leaders are not clear enough in their categorisation of behaviour incidents that are bullying, homophobic, racist or sexualised. This means that they are not on top of spotting patterns, should they occur, and potentially taking preventative actions. Follow-up actions to dealing with incidents are not recorded consistently. This means that some pupils may continue with bullying behaviour or using inappropriate language. Leaders should review their system for recording incidents and ensure categories are clear. Governors should ask for this information to hold leaders fully to account.

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 May 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

Unique reference number	134473
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10227129
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	364
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Carly Harbottle
Headteacher	Joanne Parker
Website	www.cragside.northumberland.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	23 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There has been a recent change in senior leadership with the promotion of both the deputy and assistant headteacher to the posts of headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Leaders have recently extended the provision to provide nursery education.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Newcastle.
- The school uses one alternative provider for specialist pupil support.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The lead inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken it into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, deputy and assistant headteachers and special educational needs coordinator and early career teacher.
- Deep dives were carried out in three subjects: reading, mathematics and science. To do this the inspector met with curriculum leaders, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work,

listened to pupils read and met with teachers and pupils. Curriculum documentation for early years and personal, health and social education was also reviewed.

- The lead inspector met representatives of the local governing body, including the chair. She also met with the local authority education adviser who supports the school and a diocesan representative.
- The lead inspector spoke with the senior leader of the alternative provision.
- Responses to the pupil, parent and staff surveys were taken into consideration.

Inspection team

Mary Cook, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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