

Inspection of East Boldon Infants' School

Front Street, East Boldon, Tyne and Wear NE36 0SW

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 June 2022

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	Outstanding

This school was last inspected 14 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at East Boldon Infants' School enjoy coming to school. This is a friendly school with kindness at its heart. Adults show pupils how to build and maintain relationships based on respect. This helps pupils form strong relationships with trusted adults and each other. Pupils feel safe. Most parents and carers are positive about the school. This includes parents who have children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Pupils study a broad range of subjects. Leaders are ambitious in their expectations of what pupils can achieve, including those with SEND. Pupils respond well to this. Most pupils work hard and enjoy talking about what they have learned.

Pupils' behaviour is good. From the start in early years, children are polite and display good manners. Pupils say bullying does not happen. They know that adults will deal with incidents of poor behaviour. Pupils trust adults to help them with any concerns or worries that they may have.

Pupils enjoy taking part in the range of activities on offer, such as gymnastics, dance and drama. They like the opportunities that are available. Pupils take on extra responsibilities as playground buddies and by being part of the school council.

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

Children make a strong start in the early years. Teachers respond well to children's needs. They plan interesting learning opportunities to ensure children explore, play and ask questions. Many children in the early years gain independence quickly. Planned activities interest, as well as educate, them. For example, children use toothbrushes and foam to 'clean' pictures of teeth.

Leaders make clear the knowledge, skills and vocabulary they want pupils to learn. They have ordered the curriculum content from Reception to Year 2. The curriculum builds on what pupils know. It is ambitious. It gives pupils the knowledge they need to achieve well. Leaders ensure that curriculum subjects link together where relevant. In history, pupils explain how Captain Scott was not successful in his expedition. They know, from geography, that the South Pole is very cold.

In physical education (PE) teachers work with specialist coaches. This improves their subject knowledge. Leaders visit lessons to check how well pupils remember what they have learned. They have discussions with pupils to find out what they know. This helps teachers to adapt the curriculum. As a result, most pupils keep up with their learning. In some subjects, including mathematics, teachers do not use assessment sharply enough to inform them of what pupils already know. These pupils have 'keep up' sessions after the lesson. In these sessions, pupils do gain the knowledge they need.

Recent changes to the mathematics curriculum make sure pupils develop their understanding of number. There are opportunities to do this through problem-solving activities. Leaders adjust the mathematics curriculum after checking what pupils have learned. They make sure that children in Reception are ready to use symbols and written mathematics in Year 1. However, leaders' checks on how well the new reading curriculum is being implemented for older children are not as effective. On occasions, the reading activities set for pupils are not sufficiently demanding.

In early years there is a focus on ensuring children learn to read right from the start. Children enjoy familiar stories and rhymes. Children say they love books. Pupils enjoy reading stories to 'Book Bunny' at home. The well-chosen books in the school's mobile library help to broaden pupils' reading. The new approach to teaching phonics is having a positive impact. Staff make sure pupils practise saying the sounds as well as writing them. Pupils receive support to catch up if they need it. The effective teaching of phonics supports all pupils to learn to read.

Pupils are polite and respectful of others. They are keen to do their best. Pupils respond well to the high expectations that staff have of them. At times, a small number of pupils struggle to meet these expectations. Most staff support these pupils well.

Leaders ensure staff know how to identify pupils with SEND. Teachers make adaptations to learning so all pupils can take part in the full curriculum. Adults support pupils well. They help pupils revisit their prior learning to ensure they have understood the content. Leaders work well with specialists to ensure every pupil achieves as well as they can.

The curriculum ensures pupils understand what it means to be responsible citizens. Pupils learn about Rosa Parks and civil rights in history. They know what is fair. Pupils learn about important British Values. For example, they learn about democracy by voting for the school council. This is helping to prepare them for life in modern Britain. Pupils celebrate difference. They understand about disabilities and religious beliefs different to their own.

Governors know the school well. They make regular visits to school. However, the checks they make do not always give them clear information about how well changes to the curriculum are being implemented. Most staff are proud to work at the school. They feel supported by leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that all staff know how to keep pupils safe. Staff are vigilant. They know the pupils and their families well. Training ensures staff know the safeguarding risks that pupils may face.

Clear systems are in place for reporting concerns. Leaders make sure pupils and families get the support they need when they need it. Governors understand their safeguarding responsibilities. Leaders follow safer recruitment procedures. They make the right checks on adults who work at school.

Pupils learn about risks and dangers, such as those they may experience online, in age-appropriate ways. Leaders ensure pupils know what to do and who to talk to if they have concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders, including governors, have made some recent changes to the curriculum and to the policy for behaviour. The checks leaders carry out on the impact of these changes are not consistently effective and do not inform the training needs for staff. Leaders should ensure that they use checks on new initiatives in more focused ways to secure further improvement
- On occasion, teachers do not check what pupils have learned before teaching new subject content. When this happens, gaps in pupils' knowledge are not clearly identified. Leaders should ensure that teachers check pupils' understanding of key knowledge more consistently so that misunderstandings are promptly addressed.

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	108688
Local authority	South Tyneside
Inspection number	10211890
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	179
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mike Hamilton
Headteacher	L Holt
Website	www.eastboldoninfants.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	11 January 2008, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has undergone significant changes in staffing since the previous inspection.
- The school uses one alternative provider at Hedworthfield Primary School language unit.
- The school runs after-school clubs for pupils who attend the school.

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team and governors, including the chair of governors. Inspectors also met with a range of teaching and support staff.

- The lead inspector had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke with parents and carers to gather their views of the school.
- Inspectors spoke to staff to discuss workload, well-being and safeguarding.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, history and PE. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to leaders, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector observed pupils read to trusted adults.
- The inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and pupils' work in other subjects.
- Inspectors spoke with different groups of pupils about safety and behaviour.
- A range of documentation relating to safeguarding was scrutinised by inspectors.
- Inspectors took account of responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. Inspectors also reviewed the staff survey responses.

Inspection team

Kathryn McDonald, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Ian Dawson	Ofsted Inspector

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