

Inspection of a good school: Pegswood Primary School

Longhirst Road, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 6XG

Inspection dates:

21 to 22 June 2022

Outcome

Pegswood Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love coming to Pegswood Primary School. They are very enthusiastic in lessons and particularly enjoy practical hands-on experiences in subjects, such as history. Lessons are interesting and interactive, meeting the needs of all pupils. They eagerly join in with rap songs in mathematics, pupils spoken to say these are enjoyable and help them remember their multiplication tables. Pupils delight in visiting the refurbished library and choosing from the wide range of new books.

Pupils have excellent behaviour and attitudes towards their learning and respond to the high expectations set by staff. Bullying rarely happens but pupils are confident that staff would sort it out if it did. Pupils show sincere respect for one another. They listen well to each other and are polite in discussion even when they disagree. Pupils relax at lunchtime, choosing from the many activities available.

Pupils take part in school clubs and educational visits to places, such as Brinkburn Priory and Beamish. Leaders arrange curriculum and careers theme days to raise pupils' awareness of the world of work.

Families regard Pegswood Primary as the 'heart of the community'. Many parents attended the school as a child and relish the continuity of bringing their own children here. The comments from one parent reflect the views of many 'My child loves coming to school and enjoys his day here. All staff are approachable and understanding.'

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

Subject leaders are knowledgeable and passionate about the curriculum area they lead. Many do personal research to further develop the curriculum to ensure both breadth and depth in learning. The curriculum is carefully sequenced from Reception class onwards. Curriculum areas have been reviewed and more ambitious plans are being implemented.

Leaders have introduced a new phonics programme. This highly structured approach is leading to greater consistency in phonics teaching. Teachers regularly check pupils' knowledge and provide additional support to those who need it. Despite this, there are significant differences in individual pupil's phonics knowledge within year groups. Some pupils are much more fluent and confident in reading than others. Leaders attribute this to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. To address this, leaders have recently re-organised the phonics lessons into ability groupings. It is too early to see if this has made a difference.

In history, pupils develop and retain an excellent understanding of historical concepts. Pupils develop enquiry skills from a young age and revel in 'digging deeper' to answer historical questions. Pupils are very enthusiastic about the subject and enjoy the variety of learning activities, such as the Greek or Roman theme days. The use of artefacts and practical hands-on work stimulates pupils into asking more questions and making connections in their learning. The 'nurse's cape,' part of a nurse's uniform from World War 2, and the badges pinned on it from wounded soldiers evokes empathy and reflection. It is a powerful reminder that history is about real-life people.

Curriculum planning in nursery does not show the same level of ambition as the curriculum for older pupils. The end goals for nursery children are not clearly defined. This means there can be variation in the curriculum from year to year, which can lead to gaps in the children's knowledge. It also leads to staff in nursery prioritising areas of learning which are not essential for the children instead of focusing on key skills. As a result, a few children who have been in nursery for five terms are yet to identify the letters in their name.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported in school and learn alongside their peers. Many pupils with SEND confidently join in discussions and offer answers to questions. Leaders work tirelessly with external partners to ensure any additional support required is provided.

Projects with local industries enhance the curriculum. Pupils learn about the changes at Lynemouth power plant to focus more on renewable energy. 'STEM days', including ambassadors from industry, highlight the range of jobs available. These inspire pupils to develop their own in-school businesses making and selling 'Beebombs' and 'Packs of Positivity'. Pupils learn how to be collaborative team members and demonstrate the school values they know so well, confidence, determination, resilience and respect.

Governors have a clear understanding of their various roles. They are aware of the changes being brought in by senior leaders, such as the new phonics programme, and fully support these. They have monitoring procedures in place to check the impact of decisions made.

Staff appreciate the support they receive from senior leaders particularly during the tumult of the COVID-19 pandemic. Work/life balance is well considered, and time given for subject leadership.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are robust in their approach to safeguarding. They know pupils and families well and are alert to any changes that may flag up concerns. Leaders are approachable and families call on them for support. They know leaders are tenacious in ensuring that services beyond the school control provide the right support to those in need.

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. This includes the latest guidance from local and national bodies.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Expectations of what children can achieve by the end of nursery have not yet been fully agreed by all leaders. This means there are some gaps in nursery provision and a few pupils are not well prepared for Reception class. Leaders need to ensure that the most important knowledge and skills to be learned in nursery are identified. This is so staff prioritise acquisition of basic skills for all nursery children, so that they are prepared for Reception class.
- In subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics, leaders assessment systems to track how well pupils understand their learning are not fully developed. This means that leaders do not have a complete picture of how well pupils know and remember the taught curriculum in all subjects. Leaders should ensure assessment information is used accurately to inform future planning, so that any gaps in learning can be addressed.

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 on 28 February 2017.

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	122216
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10211500
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	157
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Peter Cuthbertson
Headteacher	Andrew Waterfield
Website	http://www.pegswood.northumberland.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school changed from a first to a primary school in 2016.

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 headteacher, Special Educational Needs Coordinator and early career teacher.
- Deep dives were carried out in three subjects: reading, mathematics and history. 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.
- 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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