

Inspection of a good school: Dunston Hill Community Primary School

Market Lane, Dunston, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear NE11 9NX

Inspection dates:

17 and 18 November 2022

Outcome

Dunston Hill Community Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are treasured by the staff at Dunston Hill Community Primary School. The school's 'three simple rules' are 'ready (to learn), respect (everyone) and kind (in our behaviour)'. The rules are modelled extremely well by all staff, so that pupils learn to make the right choices. Pupils understand the 'three simple rules' as values for life. This helps pupils to learn without disruption.

Staff are highly motivated to do their best for pupils. This is because they are effectively supported by leaders. Staff encourage and support pupils to do well in their lessons. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Most pupils work with enthusiasm. Regular reminders of previous learning help pupils remember well.

Pupils say bullying is rare. They know to tell staff in school if they are worried. Staff are quick to sort out problems, and they make sure pupils resolve differences with friends. Pupils spoken with say that they feel safe in school. There are high levels of respect between staff and pupils. Pupils look after each other by being playground leaders.

Pupils' welfare is a priority. Their mental well-being and behaviour are well supported by staff. Pupils enjoy the 'over and above' rewards, such as hot chocolate with the headteacher and eating at the 'Golden Table'. These incentives motivate pupils to show exemplary behaviour and manners.

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

Leaders recently made improvements to the mathematics curriculum and some foundation subject curriculums. The revised curriculums show the subject knowledge leaders want pupils to know and the order in which pupils will learn it. In mathematics lessons, teachers make regular checks on pupils' understanding. They adapt their teaching to address gaps in learning and misconceptions. However, in some subjects, such as art and design, checks on pupils' understanding do not happen often enough. This means that some pupils do not get the help they need to achieve well.

The teaching of reading is a strength in the school. All staff who teach pupils to read have expert knowledge. Leaders make sure pupils learn to read right from the start in Reception. Teachers use assessment effectively. They make sure the books that pupils read are well matched to the letters and sounds they know. Pupils learn to become confident and fluent readers as a result. Pupils who need extra support are quickly identified by staff and supported. This helps pupils catch up. In Nursery, children enjoy stories and rhymes. Teachers make sure books are interesting and connect well to the curriculum. Books are regularly refreshed to ensure pupils hear and read a range of texts. Many pupils said they enjoy 'non-fiction November' and the choice of biographies available to them. Teachers focus on ensuring that children develop language and communication skills right from Nursery to Year 6. Pupils practise these skills often.

However, some younger pupils do not have accurate or clear handwriting. This means that these pupils are not learning to present information clearly in written form. Some pupils are not able to write fluently.

The systems for identifying pupils with SEND ensure that effective support is in place right from the start. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) works well with parents, carers and healthcare professionals to ensure that pupils are supported in school. The small steps and support pupils need to be successful in their learning are in place for pupils. This is because pupils' SEND support plans link closely to assessment information about their needs. As a result, pupils with SEND learn well.

Pupils have lots of meaningful opportunities to develop their health and well-being. They enjoy using the 'Dunston Den', where they are supported by staff to understand and deal with their emotions. Pupils appreciate the opportunities to become leaders. Pupils elect school council members and play leaders. These pupils make decisions, for example, about the choice of equipment for the playground. Pupils enjoy an increasing range of extra-curricular clubs and activities. These include reading club, mathematics competition, netball and singing at the Sage theatre in Gateshead. Pupils have a strong sense of the local community they are part of.

Governors have a thorough knowledge of the school. They understand the strengths and areas for development of the school. Governors make sure funding is spent appropriately, so that every pupil benefits. Staff feel well supported by leaders. Leaders are considerate of their workload. They appreciate being part of a team where 'everyone cares for each other'.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that all staff are trained to keep pupils safe. Staff know the pupils well. Relationships are strong. This helps to ensure that staff have the knowledge they need to identify pupils who could be at risk of harm. Leaders are quick to act on safeguarding concerns. They work with external agencies well. Record-keeping is thorough. This means that leaders can take appropriate further action when necessary.

Safer recruitment procedures ensure that checks are made on new staff to make sure they are suitable to work with children.

Pupils are taught about the risks they may face as they grow older, including when using the internet.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few foundation subjects, such as art and design, some teachers in some lessons do not regularly check pupils' understanding or provide clear feedback so that pupils can improve their work. As a result, some pupils who need additional support or further practice do not always receive this. Some pupils find it harder to build on their learning within the lesson and over time. Leaders should ensure that all teachers are making regular checks on pupils' understanding in lessons and use these checks to target support for the pupils who most need it.
- Some younger pupils do not write letters and numbers correctly. This means that these pupils do not write fluently. The speed of their writing is slowed. Leaders are aware of this. Leaders should work to ensure sufficient time and practice for pupils to improve. They should ensure the expectations for the correct formation of letters and digits are followed consistently by all staff so that pupils write clearly and fluently.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2013.

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.

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	108338
Local authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	10242026
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	408
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Gillian McTeer
Headteacher	Mr Carl Sutherland
Website	www.dunstonhillcps.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	17 October 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher took up post in September 2018.
- The school does not currently use 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 leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, the SENCo and other senior and curriculum leaders.
- The inspector met with five members of the governing body, including the chair.
- The inspector met with the local authority school improvement partner for the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading and phonics, mathematics and art and design. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The

inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult. Additional discussions were held with leaders for writing.

- The inspector viewed documentation relating to safeguarding. This included talking to staff about their safeguarding knowledge and understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities. The inspector met with the designated safeguarding leads and checked the school's single central record.
- Pupils' behaviour and safety were evaluated on arrival at school, at lunchtime and breaktimes.
- The inspector spoke to parents and carers during the inspection. The inspector also reviewed Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and survey responses from staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Kathryn McDonald, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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