

# Inspection of a good school: Southlands School

Beach Road, Tynemouth, North Shields, Tyne and Wear NE30 2QR

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Inspection dates:

15 and 16 November 2022

## Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a graded inspection.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Most pupils enjoy coming to school. Leaders know their pupils well and tailor pastoral care to the needs of individuals. This helps with pupil attendance and forms trusting relationships between pupils and adults in school.

Leaders support pupils who find it hard to engage in learning or interact in positive ways. They know when to step in and provide support if they sense that a pupil is becoming anxious or frustrated. Most pupils behave well and display positive attitudes towards their learning. At lunch and breaktimes, most pupils get on well together or enjoy relaxing in their own company. There are a small number of pupils who struggle to adhere to the school's boundaries and routines. Staff are working to try to support these pupils more effectively.

Bullying rarely happens. Pupils are confident that staff will act quickly should there be any concerns.

Leaders have high expectations of all pupils and are working with staff to ensure that these high expectations are realised. Most parents and carers are positive about the school. In particular, they value events, such as the recent fashion show, which was described as 'out of this world'. Some parents have concerns about the behaviour of a small number of pupils in school and the impact this behaviour has on other pupils' experiences in school.

Leaders have introduced positive changes across the school to improve the quality of education. However, more work is required to support staff so that the curriculum is delivered to a consistently high standard. Leaders also need to improve the teaching of reading. This will help pupils to be more successful across the curriculum.

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

Leaders have thought carefully about the structure and content of the curriculum. The curriculum maps out the knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn over time. It tells them what pupils have learned in the past, what they now need to teach, and what pupils will be learning in the future. Some teachers use the curriculum well. As a result, in these lessons, pupils achieve well. However, in some lessons, this is not the case. Consequently, lessons do not always build on what pupils have learned before. In these lessons, pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

Pupils with additional communication and language needs are supported to communicate their needs and emotions in a variety of ways. Younger pupils follow the national curriculum, with older pupils studying a variety of accreditation routes.

Some older pupils attend alternative provision to access courses which would not be available at this school. These include hair and beauty, bike maintenance and welding and building skills. For many pupils, this is appropriate for their future aspirations. However, leaders do not, as yet, evaluate the effective use of the alternative provision for all pupils. As a result, some pupils spend too much time away from school and therefore have limited time to access courses in school.

Leaders know that reading is essential to unlock pupils' learning in other subjects. Phonics teaching is taught to a small number of pupils who are working at the early stages of reading. Other pupils do not always receive appropriate support to improve their reading. Leaders have introduced training but some staff are not confident when delivering aspects of the reading curriculum. As a result, pupils who struggle with reading do not achieve as well as they should.

Teachers and teaching assistants understand the individual needs of pupils. Some teachers adapt their teaching to meet the learning needs of individual pupils. Where teachers have secure subject knowledge, they explain new learning clearly in a logical, structured manner. Teachers select appropriate resources to support pupils' learning. Staff regularly check pupils' understanding in lessons and adapt their teaching, or revisit learning, when required. However, in some subjects, the curriculum is not always successfully adapted to meet the learning needs of the pupils.

Pupils value friendship and being with peers in school. Leaders organise a range of events to enrich the curriculum, such as trips and visits to local beaches, clubs and cookery sessions. Pupils know that talking about issues helps them to 'unbottle' their emotions when they feel anxious or worried. Older pupils speak knowledgeably about how to stay safe online, healthy food choices and healthy relationships, including the topics of consent and contraception.

Leaders have put in place an effective transition process to support students when they leave the school. Nearly all students move on to a placement at a further education college or an appropriate further educational placement.

School leaders, supported by governors, are continuing to make changes to improve the school. Staff value the range of training they have received. However, some staff feel they would benefit from further support around specific subject knowledge and how to use the new school curriculum plans.

Staff work together and support each other. Staff commented that subject leaders have an open door policy and have been very helpful to teachers who are in the early stages of their careers.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. Leaders ensure that all required checks are carried out when recruiting new staff. Training and induction records are carefully maintained and managed. All staff have regular and relevant training on how to keep pupils safe. Staff know what to do if they have any concerns about a pupil. Leaders know pupils, families and the community well. Staff engage appropriately with outside agencies to provide help and support for pupils when needed. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. Pupils learn how to stay safe when online, when in a relationship and when out in the community. Pupils know how to respond to any concerns around bullying or name-calling.

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

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

- In some lessons, the curriculum is not adapted to meet the needs of the pupils. In these lessons, knowledge does not build on what pupils have studied previously. As a result, pupils do not secure the knowledge they require over time. Leaders need to ensure that assessment is carefully used so adaptations to the curriculum help pupils build a solid foundation of knowledge.
- Leaders do not monitor the impact of alternative provision. Consequently, staff have concerns that there is insufficient time for some pupils to complete courses in school. Leaders need to consider the appropriate routes for all pupils so that they can achieve the aspirational accreditation goals set for them.
- The early reading curriculum is not successfully implemented. As a result, pupils fall behind with their reading due to ineffective support. Leaders need to make sure that staff are reading experts and can deliver the curriculum effectively.
- A small number of pupils do not behave well enough. This results in pupils and staff feeling anxious and worried. Additionally, some pupils do not feel they can focus on their learning due to the poor behaviour of a minority of pupils. Leaders need to ensure that behaviour management systems are consistently implemented by all staff.

## 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 November 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	108653
<b>Local authority</b>	North Tyneside
<b>Inspection number</b>	10228353
<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Foundation special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Boys
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	169
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	3
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Joint chairs of governing body</b>	Lynn Averill and David Young
<b>Headteacher</b>	Angela Noble
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.southlandsnt.org.uk">www.southlandsnt.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	4 April 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is based across two sites.
- The school has had a number of changes in leadership since the last inspection.
- The school uses five alternative education providers.

## Information about this inspection

- 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.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteachers, assistant headteachers, governors and also the school's development officer.

- Inspectors held meetings with a range of leaders to discuss safeguarding, provision for pupils with SEND, behaviour and personal development.
- As part of the inspection, inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics and science. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to children, pupils and students about their learning and looked at samples of work.
- An inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult and also listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils and students formally and informally about their learning and experiences at school.
- Safeguarding documents were checked, including the checks that leaders make on staff's suitability to work with children. The inspectors checked that staff implement safeguarding policies and procedures effectively across the school.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, and the free-text comments received during the inspection.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey and met with staff in school.
- Inspectors discussed a range of documentation written by the school. This included the school's self-evaluation, school improvement priorities, school policies, curriculum documents, SEND records, behaviour records and meetings with the governing body.
- At the time of inspection, the school had students on roll outside of its registered age range. Inspectors considered these students as part of the inspection.

### **Inspection team**

Catherine Beard, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Gill Booth

Ofsted Inspector

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