

Inspection of a good school: Seghill First School

Seghill, Cramlington, Northumberland NE23 7SB

Inspection date: 24 January 2023

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?

Staff know pupils and their families well. Parents and carers comment positively about this village school with a family atmosphere. Pupils feel happy and safe.

Leaders and staff ensure that pupils are taught the basics in reading and mathematics effectively. Pupils are achieving well in these areas. However, in some other subjects, leaders' planning is not clear enough. Sometimes, teachers choose activities that do not help pupils to learn effectively. Where this is the case, pupils do not build their knowledge in a structured manner.

In lessons, older pupils are attentive and well focused on their learning. Occasionally, younger pupils become restless and a little distracted. The routines for their learning are not well embedded. On the playground, pupils are friendly and well behaved. Pupils demonstrate good manners and are polite. Incidents of bullying are rare. Pupils are confident that staff will support them if they have concerns.

Parents find the school's leaders and staff welcoming, supportive and helpful. They appreciate the school's coffee mornings where they can find out more about their children's learning. Pupils and parents like the range of after-school activities available. Leaders and staff help pupils to develop self-confidence and provide opportunities to enrich their experience.

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

Leaders have designed a suitably sequenced curriculum for mathematics and reading. In these subjects, teachers are adapting their teaching to meet the needs of all pupils well, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Leaders have established a well-sequenced mathematics curriculum. Teachers have a secure grasp of this curriculum and how to teach it effectively. This ensures that from Nursery, children build their early mathematical understanding. Pupils' knowledge builds well as they progress through school to Year 4. Teachers select suitable learning activities and resources that help pupils gain and retain their mathematical knowledge effectively.

Leaders have prioritised the teaching of reading. All staff have received appropriate training in the teaching of phonics. This improves their expertise and establishes a consistent quality of phonics teaching across the school. Pupils gain a good understanding of phonics, which they use well when reading. Staff provide additional support to help pupils catch up quickly if they have gaps in their phonic knowledge. Older pupils are developing their love of different books and authors. Opportunities, such as attending the Hexham Book Festival, enrich pupils' reading experiences.

The school curriculum in some foundation subjects does not build pupils' knowledge in a coherent and structured way. Sometimes, teaching activities do little to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. As a result, pupils' recall and retention of key knowledge in these subjects are variable.

In phonics, reading and mathematics, staff use assessment astutely to check that pupils are gaining the intended knowledge. In some foundation subjects, the checks on what pupils know are too broad and are not well linked to the intended knowledge that pupils need to gain and retain.

Where teachers have suitably matched the learning activity to pupils' needs, pupils behave well. Occasionally, younger pupils become restless and distracted where the teaching does not hold their attention. Pupils are polite and demonstrate good manners. Staff use a range of rewards to encourage pupils to attend school regularly. Leaders provide guidance to parents on the importance of good attendance. Despite these efforts, the attendance of some pupils is too low.

The school provides a range of after-school clubs to meet pupils' interests. Leaders recently surveyed pupils to ask them what clubs they would like after school. All pupils visit the theatre to enrich their cultural experience. Older pupils are provided with the opportunity to attend a residential trip. They also receive guidance on educational and career pathways, which aims to widen their horizons and aspirations. Older pupils can learn to play a musical instrument. A week of well-planned activities is in place to support Year 4 pupils' transition to the middle school.

Leaders ensure that the needs of pupils with SEND are identified and met.

Senior leaders and governors have not kept some of the key statutory information up to date. This includes policies and the required information on the school's website. Governors have recently created a plan to address this matter. Some subject leaders do not monitor curriculum implementation and the impact on pupils' learning effectively. This limits their understanding of where strengths and weakness are in relation to their subject.

Staff believe that leaders suitably consider their workload and well-being. They are motivated and pleased to work at the school. Staff, including teachers who are at the early stages of their career, agree that they receive helpful training.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff identify pupils who are vulnerable to safeguarding risks promptly. They have a determined approach when working with other agencies to support pupils. Leaders work well with families and other agencies to secure the help that pupils need. Some of the school's safeguarding information and policies were not well maintained at the start of the inspection. Leaders were able to address this across the day. Suitable approaches are adopted to deal with allegations or safeguarding concerns about staff.

The school teaches pupils how to stay safe. For example, pupils are taught about online safety, the risks of railways and bike safety.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's curriculum in some foundation subjects is not well sequenced or coherent. Pupils do not build their knowledge and skills effectively. Leaders need to review the curriculum in foundation subjects and the associated systems for checking on pupils' knowledge.
- Some pupils do not attend school regularly. This limits the time they have in which to gain the knowledge taught by the school. Leaders and staff need to continue to implement strategies to improve pupils' attendance.
- Some subject leaders do not check the implementation of the curriculum effectively. This limits the information that they have on how to develop teachers' skills further. Leaders should ensure that they develop a manageable approach to checking the effect of curriculum improvement actions.
- The headteacher and governors have not ensured that some of the required information and school policies, including information on the school's website, are kept up to date. Information available to parents is not as current as it should be. The headteacher and governors should ensure that all policies are up to date and that, where required, they make these policies available on the school's website.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 2018.

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	122225
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10255866
Type of school	First school
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	104
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Stephanie Hall
Headteacher	Tracey Chappell
Website	www.seghill.northumberland.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	16 and 17 January 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, there have been several changes to staffing. The deputy headteacher is new to the role.
- The school uses no alternative provision.

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 lead inspector met with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. He met with three governors.
- The lead inspector completed a telephone call with the school improvement partner from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and religious education. For each deep dive, they 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.

- Inspectors discussed the school's safeguarding procedures with a range of staff. They reviewed the school's documentation regarding safeguarding. Inspectors discussed how safe pupils feel in school and how staff teach them to stay safe, including when online.
- The lead inspector analysed the responses to Ofsted's pupil, staff and parent surveys. An inspector also met with parents at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

Michael Reeves, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Marcus Newby

His Majesty's Inspector

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