

Inspection of a good school: Green Lane Church of England Controlled Primary School

Green Lane, Barnard Castle, County Durham DL12 8LG

Inspection dates:

7 and 8 February 2023

Outcome

Green Lane Church of England Controlled Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Green Lane are confident and articulate. They feel happy and safe in school. They know that they can talk to an adult if they have worries, or they can share their worries with the school's 'worry monster'. Leaders have formed positive relationships with many families. Parents say they appreciate the support on offer to them from the school.

Many pupils behave exceptionally well. They are polite and respectful of both each other and adults. Pupils know that bullying will not be tolerated and say that it rarely happens. When it does happen, pupils are confident that adults will deal with it quickly.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils. For the most part, these expectations are realised, and pupils achieve well. There is an inclusive culture in the school. Leaders consider pupils' academic achievements and their wider development. Character education underpins the curriculum. Pupils are taught, for example, how to be resilient, persistent and tolerant. The school's core Christian values are at the heart of everything that happens in the school. Pupils have opportunities to take part in community and charity work, such as making 'happy hedgehogs' for patients in the local hospital.

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

Leaders have made some significant changes to the curriculum since the previous inspection. They have rightly prioritised the teaching of phonics and reading. All staff are trained in how to teach the new phonics programme. As a result, phonics is taught consistently. A governor is also fully trained to help ensure phonics is understood and prioritised by the governing body. Pupils who are struggling with learning to read or who

are at risk of falling behind are supported effectively to catch up quickly. Most pupils have reading books that are matched to the sounds they know. However, sometimes, pupils are given books that are too hard for them to read because they contain sounds yet to be taught. Leaders have implemented a teaching approach to develop pupils' fluency and comprehension skills once they complete the phonics programme.

A love of reading is fostered as soon as children start in Reception. They have a reading den in their classroom, where they can choose to read a story to a 'book buddy'. Staff from the local library visit to read stories, and children make their own library cards to use in the school library. A range of well-chosen books is available to children within the setting.

Leaders have developed an ambitious curriculum that is based on the context of the school. Curriculum plans are coherently sequenced and identify key knowledge that pupils must acquire. However, the curriculum is not consistently implemented in line with leaders' intent. In some year groups, the key knowledge that is outlined on curriculum plans is not taught. This means that pupils cannot build on prior knowledge and will have gaps in their knowledge in the future. It also means that the systems in place for checking what pupils know are not consistently effective.

In the early years, leaders have a clear vision for what they want children to achieve by the end of Reception. Learning is broken down into small steps. Adults check that children have achieved these steps. This means that children are prepared well for Year 1. Children access purposeful activities that are sharply focused on the development of skills and knowledge. There are lots of opportunities for discussion. For example, children look at 'thinking tubs' at the start of a theme. The teaching of early mathematics is prioritised by leaders. During the inspection, children were keen to demonstrate their counting skills and used mathematical vocabulary such as 'pictogram'.

Staff have recently been trained on how to improve their practice for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Most pupils with SEND access the curriculum in line with their peers. In a small number of instances, some pupils' needs are not met. They are expected to participate in lessons where either the subject matter is too complex or they do not have the prerequisite skills and knowledge to be successful. This can lead to some low-level disruption.

There is a range of opportunities for pupils to develop their talents and interests. Pupils speak enthusiastically about after-school clubs such as the 'go-getters' club. They enjoy competing against other schools in sporting events. Pupils have opportunities to learn to play musical instruments such as the violin or the cello. The school's 'caring council' gives pupils a voice and helps them to take care of their mental well-being.

Staff are proud to work at the school. Leaders and governors are considerate of workload. Governors are actively involved in the life of the school. They fulfil their statutory duties effectively. Leaders are proactive in seeking support from external providers, where necessary, to bring about improvements.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding procedures in the school are robust. Leaders ensure that staff training is kept up to date. This means that staff are alert to any signs and symptoms of abuse. They know how to report and record concerns. Leaders make timely referrals to external agencies where appropriate.

The single central record is maintained well. Appropriate checks are made on staff prior to their recruitment. Leaders and governors are safer recruitment trained.

The curriculum teaches pupils how to stay safe online and offline. Leaders have identified contextual risks that pupils need to be aware of. They work with external partners, such as the police, to educate pupils about these risks.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The implementation of the curriculum does not always match leaders' intent. Some key knowledge that leaders have identified is not taught. There are some instances of teachers deviating from agreed practice. This means pupils' knowledge will not build cumulatively as they move through the school, and they may acquire some misconceptions. Leaders should ensure that robust systems are in place to check that the curriculum is being implemented as they intend it to be.

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 May 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	114219
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10255812
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	212
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Reverend Alec Harding
Headteacher	Robert Goffee
Website	www.greenlane.durham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	31 October 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has undergone a leadership restructure since the last inspection.
- A consultation process is currently taking place in relation to the school becoming an academy.
- The school makes use of two registered alternative providers.
- The most recent section 48 inspection of the school's religious character took place in July 2019. Following the resumption of Statutory Inspections of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) in September 2021, the next inspection will take place within eight years of the previous inspection.

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 their evaluation of the school.

- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. The inspector also met with subject leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, the chair and other members of the governing body, a representative from the local authority and a representative from the diocese.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. 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 familiar adults.
- The inspector observed the behaviour of pupils in lessons.
- The inspector examined the single central record and looked at how safeguarding incidents are reported. She spoke to leaders, teachers, support staff, governors and pupils about the culture of safeguarding in the school.
- The responses made by parents to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, were considered. This included all free-text responses. The responses to the staff questionnaire were also considered.

Inspection team

Philippa Kermotschuk, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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