

# Inspection of a good school: Seahouses Primary School

James Street, Seahouses, Northumberland NE68 7YF

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Inspection date: 14 March 2023

## Outcome

Seahouses Primary School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Staff expect great things of pupils who attend Seahouses Primary School. This ambition is simply explained in the school's motto: 'Aspiring to be the best we can be'. Pupils understand the importance of aspiration. They enjoy coming to school. They are delighted when they are nominated for rewards if they do something that links to the school's values, such as demonstrating perseverance or respect.

Pupils' behaviour is well managed by adults. Routines to keep behaviour calm around school are embedded. For example, when pupils move from their tables to the carpet, all pupils put their chairs under their desks without being asked. Pupils are attentive in lessons and they are keen to learn new things.

Pupils feel safe in school because they trust that adults will help them if they are worried about something. Staff talk to pupils honestly about bullying. Pupils know that if they notice anyone being unkind to someone else, then it is important to 'be an upstander, not a bystander' and challenge this behaviour. This work helps to ensure that bullying is rare, and swiftly tackled if it does occur.

Parents and carers hold the school in high regard. Over half of parents of pupils on the school roll responded to the Ofsted Parent View survey. All would recommend the school.

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

The headteacher has fostered a culture of collaborative leadership among the staff. The headteacher, teachers and teaching assistants are all involved in developing the curriculum. Together, they have designed an ambitious curriculum for all pupils. The aims of the curriculum are well understood by all staff. They have considered the barriers that may be faced by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The curriculum is adapted for pupils with SEND so that they can achieve well. For example, in mathematics, physical resources help pupils with cognition and learning needs to successfully develop their understanding of fractions. Over time, lessons build pupils'

knowledge of important concepts. In the strongest subjects, the curriculum is giving pupils an impressive body of knowledge. For example, in history, the curriculum helps pupils to develop their understanding of the concept of society. Pupils are expected to 'talk like a historian' when talking about the past. The curriculum helps pupils to connect their learning between subjects. For example, pupils can link what they have learned in history about the Great Fire of London to what they have learned in geography about the River Thames.

Staff have recently strengthened the curriculum in subjects such as art and design. Pupils are taught about influential artists. Pupils learn how to use different pencils to create darker and lighter tones when drawing. Their work from this year is impressive. However, older pupils still have gaps in their knowledge of art because the previous curriculum was not as well structured. Staff are working at pace to ensure that pupils in upper key stage 2 will have the knowledge needed to successfully continue the study of art in secondary school.

In the early years, the curriculum is structured to ensure that children are fully prepared for the subjects that they will begin to study in Year 1. For example, children gain a secure knowledge of chronology so that they are ready to start learning history. Adults help children to practise their new mathematical learning when they are playing in the well-resourced indoor and outdoor provision. As a result, children make a strong start to the key stage 1 curriculum.

Reading is taught very well. Younger pupils are supported well to learn to read. Pupils' confidence in reading grows because they get ample time to practise the new sounds that they learn. Staff are experts in the teaching of reading. Adults check pupils' knowledge frequently. They spot which pupils are ready to move on and which pupils need extra help. Very few pupils fall behind when learning to read. Those who do read daily to trained adults and get the extra support that they need to catch up quickly.

Pupils behave very well. They are taught to take responsibility for their own actions. On the rare occasions where pupils do misbehave, staff talk to pupils to discuss how they can learn from their mistakes.

Staff prioritise pupils' personal development. Leaders ensure that pupils learn about different spiritual beliefs and cultures. Pupils across the school talk confidently about what they know about Judaism and Islam. They were excited about the upcoming trip to a theatre in a nearby city to watch a production of 'The Lion King'. All Year 6 pupils get the opportunity to visit London. This work helps to raise pupils' own goals and aspirations.

The headteacher has the full trust of staff and parents. This is because she engages effectively with stakeholders. All staff strongly agree that they are proud to work at the school. Governors equally hold the headteacher in high regard. They visit school frequently to check on the work of the school. They give close attention to how additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is spent and how effective the previous spending has been. However, governors have not had sufficient training to have complete oversight of the wider curriculum subjects. Recent appointments to the governing body have strengthened governors' ability to scrutinise the whole curriculum. However, other

governors do not have the same level of expertise to hold leaders fully to account for the quality of education in all subjects.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are acutely aware of the potential risks that pupils may face in the local area. For example, the school's proximity to the coast increases the vulnerability of pupils to incidents relating to water safety. Leaders ensure that there are regular visits by the Royal National Lifeboat Institution to give pupils the knowledge that they need to stay safe in the sea.

Safeguarding record-keeping is detailed. Any concerns about pupils are appropriately logged and, where relevant, external agencies are contacted to seek further advice on how to keep pupils safe from harm.

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

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

- Until recently, pupils have not benefited from a strong enough curriculum in art and design or design and technology. This has resulted in older pupils having gaps in their knowledge of these subjects. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum continues to address any gaps in pupils' knowledge so that all pupils develop sufficient knowledge in these subjects to be prepared for their next step in education.
- Governors have not accessed sufficient training on the curriculum. As a result, governors do not have a strong enough understanding of some curriculum areas to hold leaders fully to account for the quality of education. Governors' knowledge of the curriculum, and in particular the foundation subjects, should be strengthened so that they can better scrutinise the quality of education that the school provides for pupils.

## **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 September 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.

## 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>	122214
<b>Local authority</b>	Northumberland
<b>Inspection number</b>	10240898
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	81
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Peter Johnson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Vickie Allen
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.seahousesprimary.com">www.seahousesprimary.com</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	19 and 20 September 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school does not make use of 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.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher throughout the inspection. The lead inspector also met with a representative from the local authority and members of the governing body, including the vice-chair.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to staff, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. An inspector also listened to some pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and subject leaders about art and design and design and technology, reviewed curriculum documentation and looked at samples of

pupils' work in these subjects. Inspectors also visited lessons in music and personal, social and health education.

- To inspect the arrangements for safeguarding, inspectors met with the headteacher. They reviewed a range of safeguarding records, including the school's single central record. Inspectors spoke to staff and pupils about their safeguarding knowledge.
- Inspectors looked at lunchtime arrangements and spoke with pupils informally throughout the inspection. An inspector also spoke to some parents at the start of the school day.
- A range of school documents were considered, including the school improvement plan and reports of the external evaluation of the school undertaken by the local authority.
- The views of staff, parents and pupils that were received from Ofsted's surveys were considered by inspectors.

### **Inspection team**

Graham Findlay, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jill Bowe

Ofsted Inspector

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