

Inspection of a good school: Moorbridge

Earsdon Road, Shiremoor, Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE27 0HJ

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 April 2023

Outcome

Moorbridge continues to be a good school. There is enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding if we were to carry out a graded (section 5) inspection now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Moorbridge provides a lifeline for pupils. It gives them hope and the chance for a better future. Pupils who attend Moorbridge have previously had difficult educational experiences. The academic and pastoral support they receive here makes a positive difference to their lives. Without it, many pupils would not achieve and succeed as well as they do.

Leaders carefully select which of the three provisions will offer the most appropriate pathway for pupils. Each provision provides a dedicated pastoral and academic pathway. As a result, pupils feel safe and enjoy school. There are times when pupils struggle with their emotions and tempers flare. However, staff manage these situations well. In general, behaviour in classes and around school is calm, peaceful and orderly.

Bullying is not an issue at Moorbridge. Pupils are tolerant and respectful of each other. They understand that there are reasons why pupils attend this school. They are aware that many pupils have a diagnosis of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, autistic spectrum disorder and high-level anxiety problems. Pupils are polite and kind.

Pupils are valued at Moorbridge. They are met at the door every morning by smiling, welcoming members of staff. Staff see every pupil as an individual. They have high expectations for everyone, and this helps pupils to value themselves.

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

Leaders are determined that pupils will be given every opportunity to succeed. They understand the significant challenges many pupils' face, but this never becomes an excuse for mediocracy.

Leaders have designed a curriculum that is flexible and adapted to pupils' needs. Staff assess pupils' knowledge when they start school. Leaders then decide where to place a pupil and what will be the most appropriate curriculum. Small class sizes mean that teachers can skilfully personalise the curriculum when pupils are being taught the same overall content. For example, pupils in key stage 3 studying 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' receive personalised resources and additional adult support to help them analyse the text. At key stage 4, pupils receive small-group and one-to-one support to help with the pathways they are following. As a result, many pupils follow formal accreditations, including GCSE and functional skills.

Leaders acknowledge that pupils need to develop vital English and mathematics knowledge. Reading lies at the heart of the curriculum. Pupils who struggle with reading, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), receive additional small-group and one-to-one intervention in addition to their usual English lessons. As a result, pupils can read accurately and fluently. Pupils also receive a 15-minute reading session each day, where they get the chance to listen to high-quality texts. Pupils listen attentively and are developing their own ability to read for pleasure.

Leaders' actions have significantly improved attendance for many pupils. The introduction of positive points systems, rewards and raising the profile of attendance through assemblies and individual pupil attendance targets have all had a positive impact. Leaders have also reduced fixed-term suspensions dramatically.

Pupils' personal development is a golden thread that runs throughout the school. The curriculum develops pupils' confidence, independence and resilience. Staff explicitly teach pupils vital life skills. Leaders provide a comprehensive personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. This is enhanced with 'drop down days' to help pupils develop their understanding of diversity, inclusion and different faiths and beliefs. Pupils take part in a range of opportunities, such as playing in sporting fixtures against other schools, attending a young person's conference, and visiting Lego architecture and the People's Theatre in Newcastle. The PSHE curriculum has a tiered approach. All pupils access the full curriculum. Pupils who are experiencing particular difficulties, for example with relationships, violence or drugs, receive additional intervention. Leaders engage well with other agencies, such as the violence reduction unit, which has worked for eight weeks in school in response to knife crime and anti-social behaviour.

Leaders provide a full careers offer, so pupils make informed decisions about their next steps, including further education, employment and training. This improved offer has resulted in more post-16 pupils with SEND accessing additional education when they leave school.

The management committee consists of skilled, knowledgeable members. They hold school leaders to account and provide highly effective support. They provide strategic direction and evaluate the performance of all aspects of the school. Leaders have created a culture and school environment where staff feel valued, listened to and part of a team.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have expanded the safeguarding team to manage the high number of incidents reported. The identification, reporting and record-keeping of incidents is exemplary. Meticulous tracking and effective sharing of information with all relevant agencies means that pupils receive the support they require. There is a collective responsibility and open culture between staff and pupils, so concerns, worries and problems are discussed and acted upon. Pupils appreciate the support they are given. They know there are trusted adults to speak to and know they will get the support and advice they need. The management and coordination of safeguarding led by the designated safeguarding lead is worthy of sharing with others.

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 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

Unique reference number	108565
Local authority	North Tyneside
Inspection number	10242224
Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Joyce McCarty
Headteacher	Karen Croskery
Website	www.maeps.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 September 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school operates across three sites. This includes a pupil referral unit, alternative provision and personalised learning service.
- The school offers outreach work for schools in the local community.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- Many of the pupils on roll have been permanently excluded from other schools or are at risk of permanent exclusion. They may also have long-term non-attendance and high-level mental health problems.
- The school is a partner of the North Tyneside Learning Trust.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this ungraded inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leader and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: English, mathematics and health and well-being. Inspectors spoke to leaders about the curriculum and met with teachers from the lessons visited. Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work and spoke to pupils about the curriculum, behaviour and what it is like to attend this school.
- Inspectors looked at curriculum documents from a range of subjects.
- Inspectors listened to a range of pupils read from different year groups.
- Inspectors met with the special educational needs coordinator, members of the management committee and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at the single central record and spoke to leaders, teachers, governors and pupils about safeguarding.
- Inspectors observed pupils at breaktime and lunchtime.
- Inspectors considered the responses made by parents via the free-text provision to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil questionnaires.
- Inspectors visited all three sites.

Inspection team

David Milligan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

David Penny

Ofsted Inspector

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