

Inspection of a good school: East Rainton Primary School

School Road, East Rainton, Houghton le Spring, Tyne and Wear DH5 9RA

Inspection date: 14 June 2023

Outcome

East Rainton Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This school is at the heart of the local community. This was illustrated recently when the village joined together to celebrate the school's 90th birthday. Pupils proudly undertake charity work to support local causes. They eagerly describe the importance of their actions to fund the installation of a defibrillator in the village shop.

Leaders have developed a broad curriculum that is well taught. Experienced staff help pupils to achieve well. The curriculum is rich in opportunities for pupils to develop art, sporting and musical knowledge and skills. More than half of pupils learn to play a musical instrument. An extensive programme of after-school activities is taken up by many pupils.

Most pupils behave well. They enjoy school and attend regularly. They are confident that on the rare occasion when bullying occurs, staff will deal with it effectively. Pupils are tolerant of others. They recognise, for example, that racism has no place in modern Britain.

Families appreciate that their children are well known to adults in the school. Leaders provide the right support for pupils when they need it. This is particularly the case for pupils with medical needs or special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Parents who completed Ofsted's online survey were overwhelmingly positive about the work of leaders and staff.

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

Leaders have strengthened the curriculum. They have clearly set out what pupils are expected to learn. Staff are supported with resources and training. They make good use of these to help them to plan appropriate sequences of lessons for pupils. Teachers use assessment well. They quickly identify gaps in pupils' learning and take steps to address misconceptions. This helps pupils to learn the curriculum well. Pupils can talk confidently about the knowledge they are developing. This includes in mathematics, where pupils can identify where previous learning is helping them to tackle tricky problem-solving.

Significant work has taken place to develop pupils' love of reading. Leaders have invested in new books, online apps and rewards to encourage pupils to read. This is paying dividends. Pupils are proud of their reading achievements. Older pupils confidently discuss favourite books and authors.

Staff have received training to help them to teach phonics well. Reading books are well matched to pupils' phonic knowledge. Pupils get regular reading practice with adults in school. Where pupils fall behind with their reading, they get more practice and are supported to catch up. In some cases, this extra support is well focused and pupils catch up rapidly. However, at times, staff do not place enough emphasis on pupils learning to recall their letters and sounds speedily. This makes it harder for pupils to learn to read quickly with fluency.

Leaders have a strong focus on meeting the needs of pupils with SEND from the very beginning of their school journey. Carefully considered transition work ensures that staff are aware of children's needs before they join the Nursery. Clear plans are in place to support pupils with SEND as soon as they start school. Staff review these plans often. They set out the help that pupils will receive to help them to achieve their specific targets.

This year, leaders have taken successful action to improve the indoor and outdoor environments in the early years. Leaders have set out the knowledge that they want children to acquire in the early years. At times, some of the activities planned for children in the Reception Year do not enable them to learn the curriculum as well as they could. Leaders have already started work to develop this aspect of the early years.

Pupils generally behave well in class. A few pupils identified that, very occasionally, some pupils can distract them from their learning. Leaders are aware of this. They have recently developed and introduced a new behaviour policy. This encourages pupils to consider 'ways of being' so that they develop the right habits. Pupils are enthusiastic about the reward points they gain. They enjoy the recognition in assemblies when they meet staff's expectations.

Pupils benefit from a well-planned curriculum that supports their personal development. Pupils speak passionately about the importance of helping others, for example through their charity work or by acting as a reading buddy.

Leaders and governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and what needs to develop further. Governors keep a keen eye on the well-being of the leaders and staff. School leaders have the full confidence of the staff. Much consideration is given to managing workload, and this is fully appreciated by the staff team.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders conduct appropriate checks to assess adults' suitability to work in school. Staff are trained to recognise the signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. Leaders have a

thorough understanding of specific safeguarding risks in their locality. They have shaped a curriculum that helps pupils to take steps to keep themselves safe, including online. Leaders work well with other agencies to get pupils and families the help and support they need. While actions to safeguard pupils are recorded routinely by leaders and staff, the school currently operates a mix of paper and electronic records. This increases the risk of information being lost or overlooked between the two systems.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- At times, some staff do not place sufficient emphasis on helping pupils to recognise letters and sounds speedily. As a result, some pupils who struggle with reading need to think very hard about the sounds when they are reading new words. This makes reading more difficult for them. Leaders should ensure that all staff plan the right activities to support pupils to learn their phonics to automaticity so that they can read with fluency and confidence.
- Some of the provision planned for children in the Reception Year is not enabling children to learn the newly developed curriculum as well as they could. This means that some children are not fully prepared for the expectations in Year 1. Leaders should continue with their planned work to ensure that the provision in early years supports all pupils to learn the intended curriculum effectively.

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 October 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	108794
Local authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	10255897
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	118
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Janet Meek
Headteacher	Sara Toole
Website	www.eastrainton.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 February 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average.
- The school provides a breakfast club for pupils.
- The school uses one registered 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 and other leaders. Inspectors held discussions with a number of governors, including the vice-chair of the governing body, and had a telephone discussion with the school improvement partner.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and art. Inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with pupils and

teachers and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also reviewed some support plans for pupils with SEND.

- Inspectors reviewed the safeguarding checks on adults working at the school and met with leaders, staff and pupils to discuss the safeguarding arrangements in place. Inspectors reviewed examples of safeguarding files and behaviour information to check on the school's work to support pupils and families.
- Inspectors met with teaching and non-teaching staff and with groups of pupils to consider their views on the school. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's online inspection questionnaires from pupils, parents and staff.

Inspection team

Claire Brown, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Deborah Ashcroft

Ofsted Inspector

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