

Inspection of a good school: Bamburgh School

Norham Avenue, South Shields, Tyne and Wear NE34 7TD

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 June 2023

Outcome

Bamburgh School 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?

Pupils flourish at Bamburgh School. Staff develop strong, caring professional relationships with pupils. Pupils rise to the high expectations that adults have for them. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. Many expressed their appreciation when praising the school and staff. As one parent commented, 'I can't recommend it enough. They have supported my child in every area possible.'

Pupil's behaviour is exemplary. They move around school calmly and with great respect. Inspectors saw consistently positive interaction between pupils in all areas of the school. Pupils understand that they are all individuals and support one another.

It was evident throughout the inspection that pupils' safety is a high priority for all adults in the school. Pupils feel safe in school. They trust the adults who work with them. Pupils feel that they can always go to an adult if they need support with any concerns. Pupils are aware of the exceptionally high expectations for their behaviour and they meet these. They say that staff will deal with any rare occasions of poor behaviour promptly. Some pupils talked about how the staff in school have helped them to manage and regulate their own behaviour more effectively. Pupils say that bullying does not happen, but if it ever did, they are confident that staff would act to stop it.

All pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The adults are highly skilled at adapting the curriculum to meet the individual needs of these pupils.

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

Leaders and staff know their pupils extremely well. They are acutely aware that pupils have a wide range of needs. Some pupils require a highly specialised curriculum. Leaders have ensured that pupils are supported by a range of external professionals. These

include health professionals, therapists and specialist support workers. The work of these experienced staff is seamlessly woven into pupils' individual timetables.

The school's curriculum is highly ambitious for its pupils. Leaders have thought carefully about the important skills and knowledge that they want pupils to learn. The curriculum is delivered in a way that helps pupils to build their knowledge and skills over time. Meaningful experiences are integrated into the curriculum to support pupils' greater understanding. Leaders have considered how the curriculum can be made more accessible to pupils who may have difficulties in accessing a mainstream curriculum. Leaders carefully monitor how effectively the curriculum is being implemented. Adults know their pupils well and design lessons that are well matched to pupils' individual needs. There are many opportunities for pupils to receive specific interventions. These might be to support a particular area of learning or develop social interaction and emotional resilience. Leaders continue to develop this area.

Adults help pupils to prepare for their next steps. Work experience and careers guidance are strong features. Pupils benefit from a robust transition to post-16 provision. Pupils are supported in their bespoke pathways by visiting colleges and attending workshops.

The pastoral and support teams are integral to the exemplary well-being systems. The forest school is used well to support pupils' well-being and mindfulness as well as to develop their skills in social interaction and safety. There are specific clubs that are designed to support pupils' well-being. These include a Lego club, which helps to develop pupils' social and emotional skills.

Pupils benefit from a highly effective personal development offer. They access many trips and visits, including the annual residential trip to Thurston. Activities include cookery, sports and gardening. Pupils shared their experiences of the wide range of clubs that they can attend during the school day such as art and football.

Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the support that they receive from leaders. Staff talked about a number of ways in which leaders have supported them to reduce their workload, including by sharing good practice with colleagues. Teachers who are new to teaching talked warmly about the support that they receive from school leaders and the whole staff team. Governors are actively involved in the life of the school. They support the school well and provide effective challenge to leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff have undertaken extensive training to ensure that they identify and respond to any concerns that they might have. Staff are vigilant and report any concerns promptly. Leaders work with a wide range of external agencies to provide support for pupils and their families.

Governors make regular visits to the school to assure themselves of the school's safeguarding procedures. Leaders makes robust checks to ensure that adults are safe to work with pupils.

Pupils learn about keeping themselves healthy and safe. Adults plan activities that help pupils to understand the dangers that they could face as they become increasingly independent.

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 December 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	108738
Local authority	South Tyneside
Inspection number	10255909
Type of school	Special
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	212
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jill Osborne
Headteacher	Peter Nord
Website	https://bamburghschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	25 January 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school admits pupils from three to 16 years with a wide range of SEND.

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 inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteachers and other senior leaders. The inspectors also met with a number of the governors, the local authority representative and the school improvement partner.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, physical education and personal, social and health education, including relationships, sex and health education. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors met with the school's designated safeguarding leads to discuss their work. The inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including the school's single central record that includes recruitment checks made on staff.
- The views of staff were considered in meetings alongside the views of those who responded to Ofsted's survey for staff. The responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, were taken into account. There were no responses to Ofsted's survey for pupils.

Inspection team

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