

Inspection of Horton Grange Primary School

Cowpen Road, Blyth, Northumberland NE24 4RE

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 June 2023

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are exceptionally proud to attend Horton Grange Primary School. Leaders have high expectations for all pupils. Ambitious expectations set by leaders flow through all aspects of school life. These expectations are shared unequivocally by staff and other stakeholders, such as governors. Leaders have created a vibrant and caring school where everyone is valued. The Horton values, which includes 'On a journey to be the best we can be,' are at the centre of the school's curriculum and ethos.

The curriculum and other wider opportunities are carefully mapped out for all pupils. Teachers' strong subject knowledge is helping pupils to know and remember more over time. A rich set of additional experiences and activities prepares pupils very well for their next stages in life. This includes working with the Port of Blyth, which is linked to the curriculum and career opportunities, and annual residential visits for all pupils in key stage 2.

Pupils feel very safe in school. They have trusted adults who help them. Behaviour is exemplary in classrooms and around school. When discussing their school, pupils talk with excitement and clarity about all the different ways in which they develop, learn and grow. Bullying is rare but, when it happens, leaders use robust systems to support those involved. Pupils understand and explain this clearly. They say that adults always help to sort things out.

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

Leaders have a clear vision for pupils at Horton Grange. With governors, they are determined that pupils fulfil their potential. Staff bring this vision to life through the high-quality curriculum and care provided. The school ethos is grounded in nurturing values and clear structures of support. This is helping pupils from all backgrounds to thrive. Pupils celebrate the many ways in which all staff support them in their learning and development.

Leaders at all levels make sure that the curriculum is bespoke to the needs of pupils. Based on research and planning, what pupils need to be able to know and remember over time is clearly set out in the curriculum. The progression of learning starts with pupils who attend the provision for two-year olds. The curriculum also ensures that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), get the same quality learning opportunities. Staff adapt their teaching for the individual needs of pupils with SEND in the classroom. Teachers make regular checks on what all pupils know and remember. The highly effective curriculum helps pupils to connect learning over time. For example, pupils spoke with confidence about how skills previously developed in physical education (PE) lessons were helping them to play tennis. Pupils' work is of a consistently high quality.

Leaders have ensured there is high-quality phonics teaching for all. Pupils benefit from clearly structured phonic lessons. Pupils recall sounds they have learned with confidence and enthusiasm. Books are well matched to pupils' phonic knowledge. Pupils read widely and talk about the wide range of authors they enjoy. Children in early years get off to a flying start in their learning journey. Leaders have expertly planned a curriculum linked to key texts. Children in Reception Year talk excitedly about their readiness for Year 1. Language and vocabulary is a high priority across the early years curriculum. Children accurately use subject-specific vocabulary related to their learning.

The nurturing values of the school underpin the exceptional curriculum for personal, social and health education. Leaders ensure that content is preparing pupils exceptionally well for life in modern Britain. Pupils have a detailed and empathetic view about equality and discrimination. They are clear that discrimination is not tolerated. Pupils are confident in taking action should it occur. Their knowledge of protected characteristics is exemplary. Pupils show great empathy towards their differences. Leaders' focus on the emotional development of pupils shines through across the school day. Pupils talk openly about their improved ability to regulate their emotions when they find times challenging. Opportunities for leadership and character development are extensive. Pupils are, rightly, proud to be first aiders, on the school council or part of the 'thrive squad'. Learning is rarely disrupted by poor behaviour. Pupils know how consequences are used. Leaders analyse incidents of poor behaviour thoughtfully. To improve behaviour, pupils are supported with a range of high-quality nurture opportunities. Pupils are respectful and courteous to each other, staff and visitors.

Like pupils, staff are proud to be part of Horton Grange. Leaders carefully plan training for staff. It is focused on ensuring that the curriculum is the best it can be. Teachers show strong subject knowledge, which benefits pupils throughout the school. Staff reflect that leaders are mindful of their workload when developing the school further.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding leaders have a robust approach to keeping pupils safe. They know their pupils and families well. Policies and procedures are clear. Training for leaders, staff and stakeholders is timely. Staff know the local risks pupils and families might face. Record-keeping is detailed. Leaders are rigorous in ensuring that the right support is given to families. This includes support from staff in school through the nurture systems and through referrals to external agencies. Checks made to ensure that adults are suitable to work with pupils are clear.

Pupils feel safe in school and have trusted adults to help them. Pupils have extensive knowledge about how to keep safe in school, in the community and online.

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	122254
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10255702
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	515
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Janet Dyson
Headteacher	Nichola Irving
Website	www.blythhortongrange.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 February 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average primary school.
- There is an on-site nursery, which also includes places for two-year olds.
- There is a breakfast club for pupils who attend the school.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.
- The school has a nurture offer and a dedicated space called 'The Place' to deliver this offer.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a graded (section 5) inspection under the same Act.

- 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.
- Prior to the inspection, the lead inspector reviewed documents on the school's website, as well as published information about the school's performance and previous Ofsted inspections.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, PE, design and technology and history. Inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons and spoke to teachers and teaching assistants. They spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also looked at pupils' work in geography and science.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors spoke to staff, pupils and a range of stakeholders, including governors. Safeguarding documentation was scrutinised, including safeguarding policies and the single central record of recruitment checks. Inspectors spoke to pupils and observed relationships between pupils and adults. Inspectors also met with the designated safeguarding lead and members of the safeguarding team.
- Inspectors gathered views of parents, informally, in person and formally, through responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including free-text responses. The views of staff were considered through the staff survey and through meetings with them. Pupils' views were considered through a pupil survey and through meetings.
- Inspectors spoke with representatives from the governing body and the local authority.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in classes, at breakfast club, in The Place and during breaks and at lunchtime.

Inspection team

Emily Stevens, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Kate Longstaff	His Majesty's Inspector
Emma Robins	Ofsted Inspector
Deborah Ashcroft	Ofsted Inspector

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