

Inspection of Tweedmouth Prior Park First School

Dean Drive, Tweedmouth, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Northumberland TD15 2DB

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 June 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders have worked hard to create an inclusive school where expectations are high for all pupils. As a result, pupils achieve well, particularly in phonics.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They feel safe and are safe in school. This is partly due to the school's counselling service, which supports pupils and their families effectively with many aspects of school life, such as the transition to middle school. Leaders understand the importance of fostering positive relationships with families. They are keen for parents and carers to play an active role in their child's education. A wide range of opportunities for parents to visit school are on offer, including phonics and science workshops.

Pupils behave well, both in lessons and at breaktimes. While bullying is not a problem in the school, pupils say that there is some name-calling. They are keen to point out, however, that adults sort this out quickly when it happens.

Leaders focus on developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of their local area. There are many opportunities for pupils to engage with local projects, such as the Union Chain Bridge Project, and to visit local landmarks, such as the Holy Island of Lindisfarne. Pupils develop knowledge of the wider world through visits to places such as Edinburgh and Newcastle.

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

Since the last inspection, leaders have rightly prioritised the teaching of reading. All staff have been trained in how to teach the phonics programme. As a result, this is taught consistently across all classes. Adults quickly spot any pupils who are not keeping up with the programme and put support in place to help them catch up. The books that pupils read closely match the sounds they know. Many pupils speak positively about reading. However, leaders are still working on promoting a love of reading, particularly among older pupils.

Leaders have developed a curriculum which reflects their high expectations of pupils. Most pupils try to live up to these expectations and display positive attitudes to learning. Leaders have provided a wide range of training to staff to enable them to teach the curriculum effectively.

Leaders have thought carefully about the transition from early years to Year 1. Children in Reception are prepared well for the next stage of their education. They benefit from purposeful activities and positive relationships with adults. This means that they get off to a strong start. Opportunities to develop early scientific knowledge and explore the natural world are particular strengths of the early years provision.

Vocabulary development is a priority from early years through to Year 4. Pupils can use subject-specific language when they talk about their learning. For example, when discussing their learning in science, older pupils talked about sedimentary, metamorphic and igneous rocks. Adults who work with children in the early years model correct sentence structures and the use of ambitious words.

In many subjects, such as mathematics, teachers plan coherent sequences of learning. They use lesson activities to enable pupils to learn the key knowledge that has been identified in curriculum plans, and information from assessments is used well to plan pupils' next steps in learning. However, in some subjects, such as geography and religious education (RE), pupils cannot talk confidently about what they have learned. While teachers regularly check what pupils know and remember in these subjects, they do not consistently use this information to inform their teaching. As such, some of what pupils learn does not become embedded in their long-term memories.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported effectively to access learning alongside their peers. Staff are trained well in how to adapt their teaching to meet the individual needs of pupils. Support plans show that targets for pupils with SEND are precise and are regularly reviewed in collaboration with parents.

Leaders are keen for pupils to be aspirational. They have thought about how to broaden pupils' experiences and ignite their interests. Leaders have put a character curriculum in place, which focuses on developing a different aspect of pupils' character each week. There is a range of after-school clubs on offer. These are open to all pupils. Where necessary, leaders use additional staff so that pupils with SEND can attend. Several links have been made with external organisations, such as Newcastle United Football Club. There are lots of opportunities for pupils to be involved in events outside of school, such as the 'Big Sing' at Christmas and the 'Tweedmouth Feast'. Leaders work closely with the local church to deliver spiritual and moral messages to pupils.

Governors and the local authority support the school well. The school is currently going through a period of turbulence as it reduces the number of classes it has. However, governors are supporting leaders and staff to the best of their abilities. Governors are knowledgeable and experienced and play an active role in the life of the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know pupils and their families well. They are alert to subtle signs that there may be concerns about a pupil. Staff have been trained in several aspects of safeguarding. They are clear about how to report and record concerns.

Safer recruitment procedures are in place to ensure that the right staff are recruited to the school. Some leaders and governors have undertaken safer recruitment training.

Leaders are very aware of contextual risks, such as the school's proximity to the river and the coast, and address these through the curriculum. Pupils have additional swimming lessons throughout key stage 2 to ensure that they are competent swimmers and understand water safety.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- RE has not been taught frequently enough. As a result, pupils' knowledge of different faiths is underdeveloped. Leaders should ensure that the new syllabus for RE is taught consistently so that pupils develop a secure knowledge and understanding of different faiths. This will enable pupils to fully embody the school rule of being respectful.
- Teachers do not consistently use the information from assessments to inform their teaching, particularly in the foundation subjects. As a result, pupils' ability to articulate their learning varies. Leaders should ensure that teachers use information from assessments to plan sequences of learning that are sharply focused on what pupils need to know and remember.

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	122187
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10255751
Type of school	First
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	126
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Isobel Hunter
Headteacher	Deborah Currans
Website	www.tweedmouthpriorpark.northumberland.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	24 September 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has recently undertaken a staffing restructure.
- From September 2023, the school will have four classes rather than six.
- The school has a nursery, which takes children from the week after their third birthday.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- A breakfast club operates daily. This is managed by the governing body.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other senior leaders, the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator, subject leaders, the chair and other members of the governing body and the school improvement partner from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- An inspector met with the headteacher to review the school's curriculum for RE.
- The personal, social, health and education curriculum was reviewed, as was the school's approach to pupils' personal development.
- Pupils were observed reading to familiar adults.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and during breaktimes was observed.
- Inspectors examined the single central record and looked at how safeguarding incidents are reported. Inspectors spoke to leaders, teachers, support staff, governors and pupils about the culture of safeguarding in the school.
- There were insufficient responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Parent View. The small number of free-text comments submitted were considered as part of the inspection. Inspectors also considered the responses to the staff and pupil questionnaires.

Inspection team

Philippa Kermotschuk, lead inspector His Majesty's Inspector

Georgina Chinaka His Majesty's Inspector

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