

Inspection of Easington Colliery Primary School

Whickham Street, Easington Colliery, Peterlee, County Durham SR8 3DJ

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 September 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 Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Everyone is welcome at Easington Colliery Primary School. Each person is appreciated for their individuality. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), benefit from positive relationships with other pupils and the adults in school. Many pupils and parents and carers value the strong sense of community built by the school. As one parent said, 'Staff always have children's best interests at heart. They really go above and beyond to support children at Easington Colliery School.'

The school has high expectation of what pupils can achieve. Pupils respond well to their leaders' aspirations for them. They work hard in lessons and show an interest in their learning. Pupils achieve well.

Pupils feel safe and are happy in school because they know that staff care about them and will help if they have a worry or concern. Pupils show kindness and consideration towards one another. They conduct themselves well throughout the school day. Bullying is rare. Pupils know that if there is any unkindness or bullying, the school will act very quickly and resolve such incidents.

A range of clubs and visits enriches pupils' wider experiences. Clubs, such as those for cookery, board games and crochet, help to develop pupils' interests.

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

The school's curriculum is continually reviewed to make sure that it is relevant for all pupils in school. Leaders ensure that the learning offer reflects pupils' individual needs, including for pupils with SEND. In the curriculum, pupils have many opportunities for first-hand experiences to support their learning.

In most subjects, the school has identified the important knowledge and vocabulary that they want pupils to learn by the time they leave Year 6. For example, in Year 2 history, teachers use the well-sequenced curriculum to help pupils understand the importance of the first locomotive, and how it brought new opportunities to the local area and the impact this had on the community. However, in science, the curriculum does not clearly identify what pupils should learn step by step. This means that some teachers are unsure exactly what pupils need to know and remember to make the best progress.

The teaching of phonics and early reading is a priority for the school. A love of reading builds from the moment children join early years. Phonics teaching is highly effective. Staff are skilled and support pupils to become fluent readers. Rigorous and ongoing assessment of reading helps staff to identify gaps in pupils' phonic knowledge quickly. Pupils receive tailored and effective support to keep up. Pupils read books that are matched to the sounds that they know. Pupils enjoy reading. They have many opportunities to read across the school.

The school has high expectations for the behaviour and conduct of pupils. This begins in early years, where clear routines and a focus on developing positive relationships ensure that children learn how to behave appropriately. Across the rest of the school, pupils behave well. Pupils have a positive attitude towards their education.

Pupils with SEND make good progress because the school knows their individual needs very well. The school adapts the delivery of the curriculum purposefully so that pupils with SEND can access the same ambitious curriculum as their classmates.

Pupils can access many wider opportunities beyond the classroom. Many pupils, including pupils with SEND, attend clubs and enthusiastically take part in different events. Pupils learn how to stay safe, including when online. Pupils have the opportunity to be active in their community through, for example, a pen-pal project with the residents of a local care home. Pupils embrace difference. It matters to them that everyone feels included in their community.

The school is relentless in the work it does to help pupils attend school regularly and on time. Many parents who shared their views with inspectors appreciate the support that the school gives them.

Governors are passionate about supporting pupils and the community. They accurately understand the school's strength and priorities for improvement. Staff value the school's commitment to their well-being and workload. They benefit from the collaborative opportunities they are given to develop their expertise. As a result, staff are proud to be part of Easington Colliery Primary School.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, the curriculum is not broken down into small enough steps. This means that the content of what pupils should learn and the order in which this is taught vary from class to class. The school should ensure that all foundation subjects clearly state what pupils should know and in what order they should learn it so that adults can check that pupils acquire the knowledge and skills they need to be prepared well for their secondary education.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	114210
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10290026
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	546
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	John Emerson
Headteacher	Rachel Francis
Website	www.ecps.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	27 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above national averages.
- The school runs a breakfast club and after-school club for pupils.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- A new headteacher has been appointed since the previous inspection.

Information about this inspection

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

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

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

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher and the school's special educational needs coordinator.
- In addition, the lead inspector met members of the school's governing body, including the chair of governors, and also the school's local authority development partner.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, history, science and mathematics. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate safeguarding, a range of information was scrutinised, including the school's single central record. An inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead and safeguarding team to discuss safeguarding systems and records.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms, around the school and at playtime and lunchtime. They visited the breakfast club. Inspectors spoke to pupils about their views of the school and their learning, behaviour and safety.
- Inspectors spoke to leaders for personal development, attendance and behaviour.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. The inspectors also reviewed the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaires for staff and for pupils.

Inspection team

Anne Vernon, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Gemma Jeynes	Ofsted Inspector
Louise Mallin	Ofsted Inspector

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