

# Inspection of a good school: Bedlington Station Primary School

School Road, Bedlington, Northumberland NE22 7JQ

Inspection dates:

10 and 11 October 2023

## **Outcome**

Bedlington Station Primary School continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils benefit from a school environment that is an oasis of calm. They are well cared for and they feel happy and safe. Children in the early years settle in quickly and enjoy learning. Staff take time to get to know each pupil and their families. One parent, typifying the views of many, told the inspector that their child 'had thrived' since going to school and can't wait to get there each day. Pupils flourish academically, socially and emotionally.

The school promotes learning as the key to opening the world to pupils. It encourages pupils to be ambitious. The school has high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour. Pupils live up to these. Pupils try their best in lessons, listening carefully and working hard. They play cooperatively with their friends at social times. They enjoy it when everyone recognises them with 'Station Stars' for their good behaviour and attitudes. Typically, pupils achieve well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Staff provide pupils with a wealth of experiences to deepen their learning. Classrooms across the school are filled with a purposeful buzz. This positivity spills out into breaktimes, where pupils enjoy being with their friends. Academic, musical and sporting talents are all valued and celebrated.

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

The school has designed a carefully thought-out and ambitious curriculum. The curriculum centres around the use of key characters and 'the guardians' and projects that help children link key learning purposefully together. For example, pupils use the knowledge they have gained in a range of subjects to help them develop enterprise projects. This helps to make learning relevant for pupils and enables them to achieve well.

In most subjects, the school has set out the important knowledge that pupils should learn. These curriculums are organised so that pupils' learning builds on what they know

already in well-ordered steps as they move through the school. Staff are clear about what they want pupils to know and remember. Pupils have regular opportunities to revisit prior learning. Consequently, pupils can remember more over time.

In a small number of subjects, the school has not considered fully the essential knowledge that pupils should learn. This means that staff are less certain about the knowledge that should be taught and checked. Over time, gaps emerge in some pupils' learning in these subjects.

Leaders develop staff expertise through effective training and support. This means that staff have the knowledge and confidence to deliver the curriculum effectively. Staff explain new knowledge clearly and check that pupils can recall learning. This helps them to identify which pupils need more help or guidance.

The school ensures that staff get to know pupils well. This means that staff are quick to identify the additional needs of those pupils with SEND. Staff deploy a range of effective approaches to enable these pupils to access a full curriculum and to achieve well.

The school has a relentless focus on teaching pupils to read. It encourages all pupils to read regularly for pleasure. Pupils enjoy choosing inspiring and interesting texts from their class reading areas. A focus on reading is evident in every corner of the school. Staff plan progressive early reading lessons using the school's new programme. They receive regular training and have the expertise they need to teach early reading well. Staff check that pupils are on track with their reading. If pupils fall behind, they receive effective support to help them catch up.

Pupils' behaviour is exceptional. This means that lessons are focused solely on learning. Pupils work hard and persevere when they find things challenging. They are very motivated to learn and be the best that they can be.

The provision to promote pupils' personal development is a strength of the school. The school uses the 'guardians' to introduce values such as kindness, fairness, curiosity, braveness and creativity. These help pupils to understand how to stay physically and emotionally safe. Pupils take on many leadership roles, such as friendship, lunchtime and playground buddies. These help pupils to become responsible citizens. Pupils speak proudly about the positive contributions they make to the school and the wider community.

The school is well led. Governors work collectively with other leaders to ensure that ongoing school development is focused and purposeful.

There is a strong culture of mutual support and teamwork among the staff. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the support and consideration they receive from school leaders. All staff are proud to work at the 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 subjects, the school has not finalised the knowledge that it wants pupils to learn. As a result, staff are not clear enough about the most important knowledge that should be taught and checked. This leads to gaps in pupils' knowledge over time. The school should finalise its curriculum thinking in these subjects so that staff are clear about: what pupils should be learning, when this content should be taught and what learning they should be checking.

## 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 June 2014.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	122177
<b>Local authority</b>	Northumberland
<b>Inspection number</b>	10297327
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	198
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	John Batey
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mark Burgess
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.bedlingtonstationprimaryschool.co.uk">www.bedlingtonstationprimaryschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	25 September 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Leaders do not currently make use of alternative provision for any pupils.
- The governing body is responsible for before-school provision at the school.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection that the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders and members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. He also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. This involved visiting lessons with subject leaders, discussing subject curriculums, talking to pupils and teachers and looking at pupils' work. He also observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.

- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes, lunchtime and during lessons. He also talked to pupils about their views of the school.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. He also considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys for pupils and for staff.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

### **Inspection team**

James Blackwell, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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