

# Inspection of a good school: Easington Lane Primary School

High Street, Easington Lane, Houghton le Spring, Tyne and Wear DH5 0JT

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Inspection dates:

31 October and 1 November 2023

## Outcome

Easington Lane Primary School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this welcoming school. They say that teachers make learning fun. This is because activities in lessons help pupils to gain the knowledge they need for future learning. Leaders have high expectations for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils achieve well.

Pupils benefit personally from the well-designed religious education (RE) curriculum. Teachers plan activities and discussions that help pupils to understand viewpoints different to their own. This helps pupils to show high levels of respect towards each other.

Pupils enjoy earning badges for each of the 'RESPECT' values. Staff listen carefully to any concerns that pupils may have. They help them to resolve any problems. This makes pupils feel safe and secure. The recently introduced policy for positive behaviour is followed by most pupils. This helps pupils to concentrate in lessons and behave well at breaktimes.

Pupils enjoy their roles as 'Mini Police,' school councillors and buddies. Activities are planned carefully to develop and stretch pupils' talents. They include, participating in an annual residential visit to Derwent Hill, visits to Edinburgh and London and winning the Durham Choir of the Year in 2023. These experiences help pupils to gain confidence.

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

Leaders have designed a curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils, including pupils with SEND. Each subject curriculum is well sequenced to ensure that pupils build knowledge from 'Little Legs' Nursery to Year 6.

The ambitious curriculum for RE enables pupils to study different religions in depth. Teachers skilfully support pupils to understand religion and different world views. This also

helps pupils to develop empathy and an understanding of their place in the world. For example, in Year 5, pupils think of examples of 'when more forgiveness would be good in the world today'. They learn about the bombing of Coventry Cathedral during the Second World War and how members of the congregation forgave those responsible. Pupils then discuss forgiveness in relation to current affairs using subject-specific vocabulary to help explain their learning. Pupils achieve well in RE.

The school uses assessment effectively to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge. Leaders have redesigned the curriculum for mathematics to ensure that pupils have a secure understanding of important number facts. Teachers make sure that pupils revisit prior teaching daily. 'Memory joggers' help pupils to gain fluency in facts and methods. This prepares pupils for new learning. For example, in Year 2, pupils use pictorial representation to see how a whole number can be partitioned into three parts. This prepares pupils for future learning about number patterns. However, pupils do not have sufficient opportunity in lessons to practise problem-solving in a range of contexts.

Reading is prioritised in the school. When children start in Reception, they have daily phonics lessons. The school makes sure that all staff have expert knowledge to teach the phonics programme. As a result, pupils achieve well in phonics. Pupils enjoy listening to daily class story time. Teachers choose from a wide range of quality texts, including Kensuke's Kingdom by Michael Morpurgo. Pupils practise reading often. Despite this, some pupils at the earliest stage of reading read books that contain sounds and words that they do not know.

Pupils with SEND are supported effectively to access the full curriculum. External agencies, such as health care, work with staff to ensure accurate assessment of pupils' needs. Some pupils benefit from interventions that focus on developing social skills, such as sharing and helping other pupils.

Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils respect staff who help them to follow the recently implemented positive behaviour policy. In early years, staff help children to settle into daily routines. This helps pupils to concentrate on their learning. Pupils enjoy socialising at breaktimes. Staff and school 'buddies' are on hand to help pupils play well together.

Leaders have planned an extensive range of activities to provide for pupils' broader development. Pupils enjoy 'WOW' experiences that include educational visits. For example, pupils enjoyed a workshop about mining to learn about Monkwearmouth Mine. This helps pupils to develop a sense of pride and respect for their local community. The development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. The school's termly community café provides access to key local services for parents and carers. Such events provide support for mental health and pupils' behaviour.

Staff are proud to work in the school. They appreciate that leaders 'go the extra mile' to support their professional development and look after their well-being. A few pupils benefit from different approaches to help them learn.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A small number of pupils read books that are not accurately matched to their phonics knowledge. This means that these pupils do not get sufficient practise in reading and re-reading books that match the sounds and words they have learned. These pupils find reading tricky. The school should ensure that pupils practise reading from books that are accurately matched to the sounds and words they know.
- Pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to practise problem-solving in mathematics. As a result, some older pupils do not have detailed knowledge and skills to be able to independently tackle problems. The school needs to provide a structured approach to develop pupils' skills in problem-solving.

## 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 February 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 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>	108795
<b>Local authority</b>	Sunderland
<b>Inspection number</b>	10289987
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	298
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Ian Trevitt
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sarah Nordstrom
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.easingtonlaneprimary.org.uk">www.easingtonlaneprimary.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	9 May 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school runs a breakfast club and after-school club for pupils who attend the school.
- The school has nursery provision for children from age two.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider, The Link School, located at Springwell Dene.

## 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 the school 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 her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteacher, subject leaders and the school's special educational needs coordinator. The inspector also met with representatives of the governing body, including the vice-chair. The chair of governors joined the meeting online.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and RE. For each deep dive, the inspector 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. The inspector also observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- The inspector spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The inspector observed the behaviour of pupils in lessons and at breaktimes.
- 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.
- The inspector spoke to some parents during the inspection and considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View. The inspector also considered the results of the Ofsted staff questionnaire.

### **Inspection team**

Kathryn McDonald, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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