

Inspection of Central Primary School

Milburn Road, Ashington, Northumberland NE63 0AX

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 October 2023

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Central Primary School is a haven for its pupils and families. Leaders have ensured that pupils' needs and safety are at the heart of the school's curriculum. They want pupils to achieve their best. The school is vigilant to the external pressures that the community can face at times. It responds to the barriers that families encounter and endeavours to remove these. Positive relationships with families allow this school to flourish.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They are kind, courteous and accepting. They listen carefully in lessons and pay attention to each other's feelings. The pupil senior leadership team ensures that all pupils at the school have a voice and are included in decisions that leaders make. Pupils and leaders strive for inclusion.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and are keen to share their achievements. They have a positive attitude towards learning. The school successfully ensures that all children in early years get off to the best start. The curriculum is tailored around the needs of every child as they enter the setting. This helps them to learn and play well together, as well as being ready to move to more formal learning in Year 1.

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

Leaders have designed a curriculum to ensure that pupils are ready for their next stage of education. They have threaded assessment through each area of the curriculum. Teachers use this assessment information well to identify gaps in key knowledge, which they then revisit at appropriate times. Curriculum leaders have identified essential learning to ensure that pupils build a strong foundation in all subjects. This helps teachers to support pupils to keep up with their class if pupils have been absent from school.

Teachers follow a bespoke and highly effective professional development programme. This is linked to key development areas across the school. In some subjects, such as reading, leaders have successfully created a programme of training for teachers to develop their subject knowledge, skills and confidence. In other subjects, this training is new. Some teachers lack confidence in the delivery of subjects they are less familiar with. This means that, in some lessons, activities are less engaging, and pupils are waiting for their learning to start.

The school rightly prioritises reading. The teaching of phonics starts at the earliest opportunity in early years. Staff teach phonics consistently well throughout the school. Pupils delight in the activities that staff use to help them remember what they have learned. Pupils can blend sounds on their own and read with fluency and expression. Teachers use in-the-moment assessment to identify pupils who fall behind. These pupils are given individual support to help them keep up with their classmates. Every school day ends with pupils in a cosy setting, listening to their teacher read an engaging story.

The school quickly and accurately identifies pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The extended SEND provisions in the school provide pupils with bespoke learning opportunities. Staff use support plans to adapt their lessons to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. This allows some pupils from the provision to have lessons in the main school. Leaders review and adapt these plans regularly to meet pupils' needs accurately and allow them to thrive.

The school is safe and calm. Children in early years develop routines and patterns of behaviour quickly. This helps them to socialise and communicate effectively. The calmness throughout the school helps the most vulnerable pupils to regulate their behaviour and to feel safe and cared for. Routines support learning and help develop confidence. Adults model positive and polite interactions. Pupils respond without hesitation and with enthusiasm.

The school puts no limits on children's development and achievement in early years. Their curriculum is built around their individual needs. Children learn through play and by working with adults who focus on their development needs. Children play well together. They keep trying hard when they meet difficulties. They delight in working things out for themselves and are eager to share these achievements.

The school is preparing pupils for life beyond Central Primary. Pupils understand and respect differences. Staff support them to challenge intolerance. There are opportunities for pupils to take on leadership roles in the school. Pupils value these chances. They apply for the posts and are interviewed by local business leaders. The pupil senior leadership team organises the selection and running of the school's clubs. Pupils debate and vote for which clubs will run. However, opportunities for wider cultural and spiritual experiences are infrequent and are not yet part of the curriculum.

The governing body is determined that current improvement strategies are in the best interests of the pupils and the community. Governors are aware that transforming the school is demanding on teachers. Staff welcome the range and frequency of well-being activities. They consistently report high levels of support to manage their mental health and well-being. They value the care that leaders have for them and the individual support they receive.

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 lessons, teachers lack confidence in delivering content and using pedagogical techniques that are unfamiliar to them. As a result, there is sometimes a lack of challenge and purposeful learning that does not match the ambitious intent of the school curriculum. The school should continue its staff

development programme to help teachers develop the subject knowledge and confidence they need to deliver the curriculum more effectively.

- There are infrequent opportunities for pupils to experience the wider cultural and spiritual world beyond their community. This means that they are not directly interacting with people and places that are unfamiliar to them. The school should develop a strategic programme of opportunities for all pupils to enrich and develop their cultural perspectives.

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 | 131021 |
| Local authority | Northumberland |
| Inspection number | 10290121 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Foundation |
| Age range of pupils | 2 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 667 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Gemma Craik |
| Headteacher | Louise Hall |
| Website | www.centralprimary.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 18 May 2021, under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school is in a charitable trust and is federated with Bothal Primary School. The headteacher, senior leaders and subject leaders work across both schools. Both schools have the same governing body.
- The school is split across two sites. Early years children and key stage 1 pupils are at the main site. Key stage 2 pupils are at the second site 0.3 miles away. There are two special educational needs provisions at the main site.
- The school provides places for children who are two years old.
- The school has two specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND. One provision supports pupils with social and emotional needs and has five pupils. The second provision supports pupils' communication and global development until the age of seven. There are six pupils in this provision.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provider in Cramlington.
- The new headteacher was appointed in 2021.
- The school runs breakfast and after-school clubs.

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.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team. Inspectors had meetings with the special educational needs coordinator, the family liaison lead, the school improvement partner, the local authority director of education, and the chair and members of the governing body.
- Inspectors visited the external alternative provision and the extended special education provisions on site. During those visits, they spoke to pupils and the adults who look after them.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, computing, and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to leaders, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.
- An inspector listened to pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in other subjects. They visited lessons and looked at work from a range of subjects and year groups.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: 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.
- Inspectors reviewed the responses that were received through Ofsted Parent View, which included free-text comments. Inspectors considered the responses that were received to Ofsted's staff questionnaire and its pupil survey.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour and interaction throughout the day, including arriving and leaving school, in lessons and at break- and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors spoke to parents and carers at the end of the school day.
- Inspectors had discussions with a range of staff at school, including early career teachers and their mentors and non-teaching staff.
- Inspectors had discussions with a range of pupils at the school, including members of the pupil senior leadership team.

Inspection team

Christine Durand, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Lianne Dixon

Ofsted Inspector

Zoe Westley

Ofsted Inspector

Vic Good-Bruce

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023