

Inspection of a good school: Ludworth Primary School

Moor Crescent, Ludworth, Durham DH6 1LZ

Inspection date:

17 November 2023

Outcome

Ludworth Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Ludworth Primary School serves its community well. The school works hard to ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of pupils. Leaders strive to remove barriers to learning. They provide pupils with rich experiences, such as visiting the theatre and museums. Most pupils achieve well and have high aspirations for the future. They are considering careers in, for example, engineering and architecture.

The school's values, such as equality and staying safe, are securely embedded. Pupils treat everyone equally and with respect. They talk confidently about how to keep themselves safe, both online and in the community. Behaviour in school is very positive. At breaktimes, pupils can choose to take part in a range of activities, such as climbing and construction. During lessons, pupils show 'gem powers'. These powers help pupils to develop independence and resilience. They also help pupils to work collaboratively with others. Pupils frequently offer support and encouragement to their peers.

The school has recently developed the 'Limestone Leopards' programme. The purpose of this is to engage pupils in extra-curricular activities. Pupils earn badges for taking part. The programme offers a wide range of opportunities for pupils to develop their talents and interests.

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

The curriculum is broad and ambitious. Many subjects are coherently planned and sequenced. Curriculum plans take account of the mixed-age classes in the school. Leaders think carefully about the important knowledge that pupils need to learn. The school considers how key concepts, such as governance in history, will develop over time. Teachers show secure subject knowledge. They choose teaching resources that support pupils to learn the curriculum. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. For example, pupils use timelines well to help them understand chronology in history.

Teachers regularly check what pupils know and remember. Lessons enable pupils to recap what they have learned before. Sometimes, this part of the lesson is too long. This means that pupils may not learn some of the key, new knowledge that is set out in the curriculum.

Reading is a priority for the school. Most pupils quickly become competent readers. Those who find reading difficult are effectively supported to catch up with their peers. The school trains all staff in how to teach phonics well. From Nursery, children learn how to tune into sounds. When they start Reception, more formal phonics teaching begins. Once pupils have mastered phonics, they move on to another reading programme. This supports them to develop their fluency and comprehension skills. Pupils enjoy reading. They are keen to earn rewards that will secure them a place on the trip to the bookshop and café.

In the early years, children enjoy strong relationships with adults. Adults are adept at extending children's communication and language skills. The environment is calm, well planned and organised. There are many opportunities for children to develop their early reading, writing and mathematical skills. For example, children can share books in the 'treehouse', or take part in baking activities.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They behave well in lessons and have positive attitudes to learning. Classrooms are free from low-level disruption. There have been recent improvements in attendance. However, there are some pupils who do not come to school regularly enough. This means that persistent absence is high. The school works hard to improve pupils' attendance, but sometimes concerns are not escalated quickly enough.

Leaders consider how to ensure that pupils receive a wide set of experiences so that they are prepared for life in modern Britain. Educational visits to cities, such as Newcastle and Edinburgh, help pupils to develop their independence and teamwork skills. Pupils visit different places of worship as part of their learning in religious education. The school uses a character education programme to develop pupils' self-confidence and resilience.

School leaders, including governors and the local authority, have an accurate view of the school's current position. Governors are committed to the continual improvement of the school. They understand their roles and responsibilities. However, they are not fully clear about how to fulfil their duties under the Equality Act 2010. Leaders take action to reduce staff workload. For example, the marking policy has recently been reviewed. Teachers now spend less time marking, but the new approach is having a more positive impact on pupils. Teachers 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 lessons, adults spend too long recapping prior knowledge with pupils. This impedes the introduction of new content and means that pupils may not learn some of the key knowledge that is identified in curriculum plans. The school should ensure that lesson structures enable pupils to recap prior learning, but also allow them sufficient time to build on this knowledge.
- Persistent absence is high. The school takes action to address poor attendance. However, there are some instances where this action is not timely enough. The school should ensure that systems and processes for monitoring attendance are more robust and that the actions taken to improve attendance are recorded.

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 July 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

Unique reference number	114126
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10290022
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	94
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Liam Fellows
Executive headteacher	Joanne Sones
Website	www.ludworthprimaryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 May 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, the school has become part of the Limestone Learning Federation with another local school. The headteacher of Ludworth Primary School is now the executive headteacher of both schools in the federation. One governing body oversees both schools.
- The school has been affected by significant staff absence in the autumn term. The headteacher, as well as other members of staff, have taken on additional responsibilities in response to this.
- The school has a nursery which admits children from the age of two.
- The school does not make use of any alternative providers.
- A breakfast club runs daily, as well as an after-school childcare club. Both provisions are managed by the governing body.

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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, as well as the chair and other members of the governing body. Inspectors spoke with the school leadership adviser from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. 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.
- Pupils were observed reading to familiar adults.
- The school's offer for pupils' wider development was considered.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and during breaktimes was observed.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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.
- The responses made by parents to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including any free-text comments were considered as part of the inspection. Inspectors also considered the responses to the staff and pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Philippa Kermotschuk, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Andrew James

Ofsted Inspector

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