

Inspection of Berwick Hills Primary School

Westerdale Road, Middlesbrough TS3 7QH

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 November 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Early years provision	Good
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Previous inspection grade	Good
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What is it like to attend this school?

The core values of the school, including respect, responsibility and kindness, inform much that it does. Pupils feel safe and happy, and they enjoy coming to school. Pupils strive to meet the high expectations set for them in their behaviour and learning. They thrive as a result of the support that they receive.

Pupils develop good friendships. They are supportive of one another and display positive attitudes to learning. Pupils demonstrate high standards of behaviour, showing tolerance and respect for others. Pupils learn how to manage their own behaviour through the school's 'Decider Skills' programme. They also know that there are trusted adults in school who they can talk to if they have any worries.

The school's personal development curriculum is a strength of the school. Pupils access a range of opportunities and experiences to develop their confidence, character and resilience. Children in the early years benefit from positive relationships with adults. This enables them to flourish as they begin their educational journey.

Pupils are wholly at the centre of the school's work. This is lived out through the school's positive relationships with parents and carers. This is a strength and directly benefits the pupils.

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

Leaders have a clear vision for the school. They know their pupils and community well. They ensure that pupils receive a highly ambitious curriculum that is well designed to meet the needs of the pupils. Leaders have identified the key knowledge that pupils need to learn. Pupils are acquiring stronger knowledge in important areas, including reading and mathematics.

The school ensures that teachers have good subject knowledge and the ability to teach their subjects well. This is evident in the wider curriculum as well as in core subjects. Children in the early years are taught the foundational knowledge they need to prepare them for later learning. For example, they learn to use geographical vocabulary and explore the local area and develop basic knowledge of mapping. Pupils at key stages 1 and 2 are increasingly able to talk about the important knowledge that they have learned in the wider curriculum. Some older pupils have not benefited as much from improvements to teaching and the curriculum, resulting in some gaps in their knowledge. They are less able to recall and apply the knowledge they have been taught.

Teachers adapt the curriculum effectively to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They use appropriately matched resources, additional adult support and focused intervention. This ensures that all pupils can access the full curriculum. As a result, pupils with SEND achieve well.

Leaders prioritise the teaching of reading. Adults encourage a love of reading from the moment children start school. In the early years, there is a strong focus on developing communication and language skills. Staff quickly introduce children to nursery rhymes and songs. From the start, pupils are taught letter sounds and words in a structured way. As pupils develop their phonics knowledge, they are provided with books that carefully match the sounds that they know. Pupils quickly gain the knowledge and skills to become confident, fluent readers. Those who struggle with learning to read are swiftly identified. Extra support is put in place to enable them to catch up quickly.

The good quality of education that pupils are now receiving is not reflected in the outcomes achieved by pupils in 2023. These pupils were more adversely affected by the disruption caused by the pandemic. They had not benefited from improvements to teaching and the curriculum.

Pupils at Berwick Hills benefit from a strong personal development programme that is woven throughout the curriculum. Through assemblies and the school's personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum, pupils learn about relationships, diversity and fundamental British values. The school's drive on offering science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) opportunities develops pupils' aspirations for the future. Providing opportunities for visits, trips and experiences for the pupils is a priority for the school. Pupils perform Shakespeare plays. They participate in activities such as yoga, wheelchair basketball and sport. Pupils also contribute to school decisions through their roles on school council, eco council and peer mediator groups.

There is a strong team spirit at Berwick Hills. All staff are committed to making a positive difference to the lives of the children. Staff feel well supported by leaders and governors. They appreciate the professional development opportunities they receive and leaders' consideration for their workload and well-being. Staff are highly motivated and morale is high. The governing body is a strength of the school. It has a clear understanding of the school's context and challenges. Governors meet their statutory obligations and hold leaders to account effectively. The school communicates effectively with parents to support pupils' education.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some older pupils have not fully benefited from improvements to teaching and the curriculum. This leads to gaps in knowledge for some pupils who are less able to apply what they have been taught in some contexts. The school should take further action to enable all pupils to remember important knowledge and skills across the curriculum.

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	111626
Local authority	Middlesbrough
Inspection number	10290005
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	349
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Co-Chairs of governing body	Mr R Kerr and Ms J McGee
Headteacher	Tessa Smith
Website	www.berwickhills.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	19 June 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses two different alternative provisions. Both of these are registered.

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 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 did deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography and design and technology. Inspectors spoke to leaders about the curriculum and met with teachers from the lessons visited. Inspectors looked at pupils' work and spoke to pupils about the curriculum, behaviour and what it is like to attend this school.

- Inspectors looked at curriculum documents from a range of subjects.
- Inspectors listened to a range of pupils read from different year groups.
- Inspectors met with the special educational needs coordinator, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- 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 spoke to an early careers teacher and her mentor.
- Inspectors spoke to parents and observed pupils at breaktime and lunchtime.
- Inspectors considered the responses made by parents to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including any free-text responses. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

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