

Inspection of Cambo First School

Cambo, Morpeth, Northumberland NE61 4BE

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 December 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a caring, nurturing school at the heart of a rural community. The school has a strong sense of family and inclusion. Pupils are safe and well cared for. They say that bullying is not a problem. Pupils know that if bullying did happen, adults deal with it quickly. One parent summed up the views of many by saying that, 'Everyone at the school brings care and creativity to the work they do.'

The school has high expectations of all pupils. Pupils are well supported within their mixed-age classrooms. As a result, they achieve well. This is particularly the case in reading and mathematics. The school is working to develop some subjects to further strengthen pupils' achievement.

Pupils enjoy a range of leadership responsibilities. For example, they are elected to become school councillors or eco-councillors. Pupils can suggest extra-curricular clubs. They organise and lead these. The school gives pupils opportunities to visit cities, such as London and Newcastle. This helps to develop pupils' understanding of the world around them. The school has formed strong relationships with parents through events, such as the weekly coffee morning.

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

The school promotes a love of reading. Adults choose engaging books for pupils to read and listen to. Pupils can talk about their favourite authors and books. The school has a therapy dog, who is used to encourage younger pupils to read. Staff are trained well in how to teach phonics. The phonics programme begins as soon as children start in Reception. Teachers ensure that the books pupils read align with the sounds that they have been taught. Staff provide opportunities for children to re-read sentences to practise their fluency. Pupils become fluent and accurate readers.

Most subjects have a coherently planned and well-sequenced curriculum. The school has worked with a local partnership to ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of all pupils and prepares them well for the next stage of their education. The school is working to strengthen the curriculum in some subjects. In these subjects, pupils occasionally complete tasks that do not closely match the intended learning of the lesson. As a result, sometimes, pupils' knowledge does not build and deepen over time as well as it could.

The curriculum in early years is well planned and sequenced. The school considers how to ensure that children are prepared for Year 1. Adults model the use of language effectively. Children enjoy learning through a mixture of play and more formal learning. Adults support children well. For example, they teach them to use an appropriate tri-pod pencil grip.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported effectively to access the curriculum. The school works with external agencies, such

as speech and language services, for additional support where necessary. Teachers closely monitor the progress that pupils with SEND make towards their learning targets and they update these regularly.

The school has a well-structured curriculum for personal, social, health and economic education. This ensures that pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of the protected characteristics. For example, pupils can talk about different types of family structure. Pupils learn about diversity. They take part in events, such as 'show racism the red card.' They understand that everyone should be treated equally. The school provides opportunities for pupils to interact with the local community.

The school encourages pupils to be individuals. Pupils are confident to speak out and ask questions. They learn to collaborate, discuss and share their ideas with others. As a result, they are excited and enthusiastic learners. Teachers add pupils to the 'proud cloud' to celebrate their successes. Many pupils behave very well. However, a small minority of pupils need frequent reminders about how to behave during lessons.

The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities. This includes its duties regarding safeguarding the welfare of pupils. Governors complete an annual equalities review, alongside school leaders. Leaders, including governors and the local authority, make checks on the impact of the curriculum in the school.

The school considers staff workload and well-being. Staff appreciate this. They value the time that leaders give them to work on important tasks as a team. As a result, staff are proud to work at Cambo First School.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know how to refer any concerns about pupils' well-being or those who may be at risk of harm. The school takes action to keep pupils safe. However, some minor improvements need to be made to strengthen written record-keeping. This does not have an immediate impact on the safety of pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's curriculum is not fully developed for all foundation subjects. Sometimes, learning activities do not secure pupils' understanding of key knowledge. This means that occasionally, pupils do not build on prior learning or make connections between concepts taught. The school should continue to develop their curriculum, so that pupils know more and remember more over time.

- The school does not routinely keep written records of low-level concerns that have been identified by staff in relation to safeguarding. This means that sometimes there is not a clear chronology of the actions taken by the school. The school should ensure that low-level concerns are recorded in writing as well as being reported verbally.

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	122232
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10290110
Type of school	First
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	42
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Pam Walker
Headteacher	Paula Cummings
Website	www.camboschool.com
Date of previous inspection	9 and 10 December 2010

Information about this school

- Before- and after-school care is available on site, provided by Cambo Wraparound. This provision is run separately to the school.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- Transport is provided free to children who live within the school's designated catchment area.

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 met with the headteacher, school leaders, other school staff, representatives of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors 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.
- An inspector also looked at curriculum plans and samples of pupils' work in history.
- An inspector listened to pupils from Year 1 read to a familiar adult.
- 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 considered the responses to the staff and pupil online surveys and Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.

Inspection team

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Ofsted Inspector

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His Majesty's Inspector

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