

Inspection of Frosterley Primary School

Bridge End, Frosterley, Weardale, Bishop Auckland, County Durham DL13 2SN

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 January 2024

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	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a friendly school. Pupils get on well with each other. Instances of bullying and discriminatory behaviour are exceptionally rare. New pupils often arrive. They are welcomed and settle in quickly. Relationships between staff and pupils are respectful and warm. Pupils trust adults and feel safe in school.

Pupils respond well to adults' high expectations. Adults are keen for all pupils to achieve as well as they can. They praise pupils when they master something they find tricky.

Behaviour is good. Pupils are attentive in lessons. They work hard and present their work to a high standard. Younger pupils get on with tasks independently and are not distracted. Pupils work with a range of adults throughout the week and respond well to all. A very few pupils struggle to manage their own behaviour. Adults support them well and learning is not disrupted.

Pupils are well prepared for life beyond school. For example, visits help pupils understand how life is different living in a city. Pupils are thoughtful. Adults encourage pupils to think deeply about issues such as fairness, equality and discrimination. Older pupils enjoy the responsibilities they have in school. Among the many roles, there are digital leaders and school councillors.

The school prioritises pupils' well-being. Participation in projects has helped them understand their emotions. They use the well-being area in school purposefully.

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

The new curriculum is well designed so pupils build up their knowledge in small chunks. Over time, they learn more in different subjects. For example, they understand what it is like to be a historian or a computer scientist. Pupils revisit 'treasured knowledge' to ensure that they remember it long term.

Staff check pupils' understanding regularly. In mathematics, they ask probing questions and correct misunderstandings when they arise. They break learning down into smaller steps if pupils struggle. Action is taken to help pupils who have gaps in their knowledge. This helps pupils to catch up. All staff, including teaching assistants, have good subject knowledge and teach accurately. Pupils respond well.

A well-structured phonics programme ensures pupils learn to read as quickly as possible. Expert staff guide pupils to read books well matched to their phonics knowledge. Pupils become enthusiastic, fluent readers. Older pupils challenge themselves to read books with complex language, such as 'The Jungle Book'. Reading café adds to pupils' enjoyment of reading and their exposure to a rich range of vocabulary.

The school is ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities

(SEND). Most pupils get the right support and use the right resources. Occasionally, some pupils with SEND do not have their support targeted in small enough steps to ensure they progress as well as possible.

Children in the early years settle quickly, helped by caring adults. Adults gently guide children to follow rules. They become confident and explore the properties of sand and water. They read books with adults and develop their vocabulary. For children of Reception age, the curriculum builds up in small steps. They learn to read and gain mathematical knowledge. This is not the case in all areas of learning across the early years. The curriculum is not detailed enough to develop children's understanding of the world effectively. Activities are not well matched to children's capabilities.

Pupils' wider development is strong. Family group time encourages cooperation between older and younger pupils. Older pupils act as role models. Pupils listen to each other respectfully. They consider each other's views. They understand the need for fairness and tolerance. Pupils learn about different faiths and lifestyles. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

The federation with two other schools has brought significant benefits. Subject leaders are responsible for one or two subjects across the federation. They now make a difference and have implemented an effective curriculum. This arrangement has also made a positive difference to staff's workload and well-being.

Governance is also more focused. Governors now have good knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development. They use their expertise well. They provide appropriate challenge and make important strategic decisions. Currently, they find it difficult to check that new developments stay on track. This is because improvement plans are not precise enough.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, in the early years, adults do not stretch children as much as they are capable. At other times, activities are too demanding and do not build well on what children already know and can do. This is because the early years curriculum does not build up in small enough steps in some areas of learning, such as understanding the world. Therefore, the school should ensure that the early years curriculum builds up in smaller steps in line with children's developmental stage in all areas of learning and development.
- On occasions, some pupils with SEND do not receive the precise support that they need. The school should further enhance plans to identify the small steps these

pupils need to take to improve their learning.

- The school's improvement plan does not set out clear milestones and timescales for intended developments. This makes it difficult for the governing body to check that developments stay on track. Therefore, leaders should ensure that the school's improvement plan has more precise milestones and success criteria so governors can assure developments.

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	114062
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10290017
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	36
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Joy Bellis
Headteacher	Clare Carr
Website	www.frosterleycommunity.durham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 September 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Frosterley Primary School is part of The Dales Partnership, along with Butterknowle Primary School and Woodland Primary School. The headteacher is executive headteacher of all three schools in the federation. One governing body oversees all three schools. Teachers lead a subject across all three schools.
- The school offers a breakfast club and after-school care.
- The school runs a provision for two-year-olds.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

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 members of the governing body and spoke to a representative from the local authority on the telephone.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. 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.
- Inspectors reviewed the curriculum in the early years as well as the curriculum for pupils with SEND.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff, pupils and parents; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors reviewed school documentation, spoke to staff with different responsibilities and had discussions with pupils about aspects of school life.
- Inspectors considered the responses, including the free-text comments, to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View and spoke to a sample of parents. Inspectors also considered responses to the online staff survey.

Inspection team

Susan Waugh, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Chris Mitchinson	Ofsted Inspector

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