

Inspection of Bearpark Primary School

Colliery Road, Bearpark, Durham DH7 7AU

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 February 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	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils and parents enjoy being part of the Bearpark family. Pupils are happy and safe in school. They are respectful and place high value on the importance of friendship. Pupils receive pastoral care that meets their personal needs. Staff know them well.

Pupils develop an enjoyment of learning. They know the school has high expectations for what they can achieve. Pupils learn across a broad range of subjects. This helps them discover their talents and interests. The enriched curriculum inspires pupils to think about their next steps. In design and technology, pupils learn about a range of inventors, engineers and designers. This helps to motivate them to learn more about the subject. Children in the early years access carefully planned learning. This prepares them for the broad range of subjects in Year 1.

Pupils behave well at Bearpark Primary School. They understand the boundaries that the school has put in place for them. Pupils and staff do not tolerate bullying or discrimination. Pupils are certain that people from all backgrounds are welcome in their school.

Pupils have wide and varied learning opportunities beyond the academic curriculum. The school has developed an engaging range of clubs. This includes photography, languages and sport. Pupils appreciate this offer. The vast majority of pupils take part in extra-curricular activity regularly.

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

The curriculum at Bearpark is highly inclusive. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) enjoy the same curriculum as their peers. Staff in the early years identify children's additional needs swiftly. They work with external agencies to address any barriers to learning and development. Staff also receive training to adapt learning in the classroom. They support pupils skilfully and with care.

The school has ensured that the quality of education has improved over time. Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum. They make the goals of learning clear for staff and pupils. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They explain learning well. In mathematics, teachers use questions well to ensure that pupils have a firm understanding about shapes before moving on. In some subjects, however, implementation of the curriculum is not consistent. Staff do not move pupils' learning forward as purposefully as they should.

The school prioritises learning to read. The teaching of phonics begins in the Nursery phase. Children in Nursery are enthusiastic about story time. Well-trained staff help them to recall important events in Goldilocks and the Three Bears. Children respond well to questions about characters. This demonstrates their

learning over time. Daily phonics continues through reception and key stage 1. There is an effective assessment and intervention programme in place. If pupils fall behind, they quickly catch up. Older pupils enjoy reading and talking about their books. The school carefully plans opportunities for them to engage with a wide range of texts. Pupils build on their phonic knowledge to become confident and fluent readers.

Pupils' attendance at Bearpark is not as high as it should be. There are too many pupils who are persistently absent, including those with SEND. The school is acutely aware of this. A system of rewards and recognition encourages pupils to maintain high attendance. Pupils value this approach. The school works with parents and carers to improve their child's attendance. Parents receive regular contact from the school during periods of absence. However, systems to analyse attendance and develop focused actions are not sharp enough. Too many pupils do not benefit consistently from the improved quality of education. This is because they miss too many lessons.

Pupils' social and emotional development is a priority in the school. Pupils are happy in an environment where staff apply the rules consistently. Early years children are calmly reminded about expectations for sitting and listening. This prepares them for future learning. Pupils and staff are positive about the school's restorative behaviour system. Strong relationships are evident throughout the school.

Pupil learning is developed beyond academic subjects. This is a whole-school commitment. They teach pupils about age-appropriate risks. This includes how to stay safe on- and offline. Pupils also learn about different faiths and cultures. A visiting Muslim speaker and trip to a synagogue enhance this further. Children in the early years enjoy learning in a range of well-designed settings. They develop their fine and gross motor skills to aid writing in the outdoor area. Children also enjoy learning about nature when learning outdoors. They talk enthusiastically about different types of trees and insects.

The school has relentlessly focused on improvement since the last inspection. This has had a positive impact for the whole community. The school is proud of its early years provision. The local authority uses the setting to exemplify good practice. Governors commit to supporting leaders and the school's further development. They know the school well. Staff are proud to work at the school. They appreciate the consideration leaders give to their well-being and workload. Parents are also highly positive about the work of the school. One parent said the school is 'approachable, inclusive and caring'. This represented the views of many.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's ambitious curriculum is not implemented consistently well across all subjects. For some pupils, this leads to slower progress through the curriculum. The school should intensify its work to identify and improve pockets of variability in the quality of education.
- The school's understanding of barriers to pupils' attendance is not precise enough. Pupils' attendance has been stubbornly low over time. The school should improve their systems for effectively analysing and understanding attendance issues to support their work with parents on improving rates of absence.

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	114129
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10290023
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	89
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jeffrey Teasdale
Headteacher	Joanne Clements
Website	www.bearpark.durham.sch.uk
Date(s) of previous inspection	21 – 22 January 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use providers of alternative provision for its pupils.
- The school has a governor-run nursery with provision for two- and three-year-olds. There are currently 24 children in the nursery.

Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) 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 and the deputy headteacher over the course of the inspection. The lead inspector also met a representative from the local authority.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with the chair of the governing body and four governing body members. They reviewed documentation relating to governance, including minutes from governing body meetings.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, maths, and science. 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.
- The lead inspector discussed provision in the wider curriculum including design technology and art.
- An inspector met with the special educational needs coordinator and considered the support given to pupils with SEND during lesson visits.
- 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 met with the leader responsible for personal development.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils and students formally throughout the inspection and spoke with them informally at social times and in lessons.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documents including the school's self-evaluation and the school's improvement plans.
- Inspectors considered the views of pupils, parents and staff gathered through Ofsted's questionnaires, including Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors also spoke to parents during pupils' arrival to and departure from school.

Inspection team

Hannah Millett, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Katrina Morley

Ofsted Inspector

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