

Inspection of Bedlington West End Primary School

Ridge Terrace, Bedlington, Northumberland NE22 6EB

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 March 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?

Respect and kindness are engrained throughout the culture of West End Primary. The school provides high levels of nurture and care while maintaining a sharp eye on raising academic standards. There are high expectations for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This is encapsulated in the school motto, 'Yes I can'.

Behaviour is a strength of the school. Pupils feel happy and safe. A new approach has been introduced to ensure that all pupils are 'ready, respectful and safe'. This is modelled by staff and understood by pupils. Classrooms are calm and purposeful. Pupils actively participate in lessons, where they can learn without distraction.

Parents value regular communication from school. They say that staff are approachable and will listen and act on any concerns. Central to the success of this school is the strong relationships that it fosters with adults and pupils.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of after-school clubs, such as chess, guitar and book club. Pupils participate in local sporting tournaments. The school has been awarded the Gold School Games Mark.

Pupils benefit from a number of leadership roles and responsibilities in school. For example, they participate in a behaviour working group, checking on behaviour in classrooms and reporting back to leaders. Pupils have a voice and know their opinions matter.

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

Since the previous inspection, a newly appointed leadership team has taken swift and effective action to improve the quality of the curriculum. The school provides an ambitious curriculum that is sequenced and progressive. Since transitioning from a first to primary school, leaders have considered the knowledge and skills that pupils must learn from Nursery through to the end of Year 6.

Children get off to a strong start in the early years. The environment supports learning and promotes children's independence effectively. Children want to explore, and they are curious to learn. Adults are skilled at knowing when to intervene in play to develop language and problem-solving skills. Children are confident in early number and know their numbers to 10. When challenged, children in Reception can explain 'how many more' and 'how many less'. The development of mathematical vocabulary continues throughout key stages 1 and 2. In Year 5, pupils can build on their prior learning to help them tackle complex fractions.

However, in some subjects, such as history, pupils find it more difficult to make links with what they have previously learned. As a result, their understanding of concepts such as invasion, monarchy and parliament is not secure. In art and design, pupils can talk confidently about new learning but cannot remember the famous artists

they have studied. The school is trialling new ways of checking what pupils know, but assessment is less developed in some foundation subjects, such as history and physical education (PE). Therefore, teachers sometimes do not identify gaps in pupils' knowledge quickly.

The school has introduced a new approach to teaching phonics. All staff have been trained to deliver the programme consistently. In Nursery, children are taught to recognise letter sounds. This prepares them well for more formal phonics teaching in Reception. Teachers make regular checks to ensure pupils are 'on track' with their learning. Pupils at risk of falling behind their classmates are quickly identified to receive the extra help they need to catch up. New reading books have been purchased that closely match the sounds pupils are learning. Pupils can apply their phonics knowledge confidently to read unfamiliar words. All pupils have regular access to the new school library and take books home to share with an adult. Pupils in key stage 2 are enthusiastic about their class novels and can talk in depth about plot, character and setting.

West End Primary is an inclusive school. Leaders have introduced new systems to ensure the needs of pupils with SEND are identified and the appropriate support is in place. Pupils with SEND are able to learn alongside their classmates with additional help, such as adult support and visual checklists. Where appropriate, pupils use technology to record their work when writing is a barrier.

Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain. They have a secure knowledge of fundamental British values, such as democracy and the rule of law. Pupils have a good understanding of equality and diversity. They celebrate difference and say everyone is welcome at West End, regardless of race, religion or disability. The curriculum addresses issues such as homophobic bullying, and pupils know that this is never acceptable. Pupils are taught to keep themselves safe. They know about relationships and consent and can explain how to protect themselves online.

Governors know the school well. They make regular visits to check on school improvement priorities and meet with staff and pupils. They have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development.

Staff appreciate the changes that leaders have introduced to reduce their workload and support their well-being. This includes the introduction of 'live' marking and a termly well-being week.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, the school does not explicitly link new learning to what pupils already know. This limits the depth of knowledge that pupils acquire. The school should strengthen the existing curriculum by making it explicit how new learning builds on what pupils have learned before.
- The system for checking what pupils know in some foundation subjects does not enable teachers to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge. Some pupils do not remember long term the content they have been taught. The school should look at subjects where assessment is secure to develop a meaningful system for checking how much knowledge pupils remember so that gaps in pupils' knowledge can be filled.

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	122176
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10320365
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	267
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Karl Green and Reverend Alan McGougan
Headteacher	Joanna Ward
Website	www.westend.northumberland.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	28 February 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school converted from a first school to a primary school in September 2020.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.

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.
- 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.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders and the special educational needs coordinator. They spoke with the chair of the governing body, members of the governing board and spoke to a representative from Northumberland County Council. Discussions were also held with some teachers and support staff.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, history and PE. 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 discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Inspectors gathered views of parents, informally, in person and formally, through responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and free-text responses. The views of staff were considered through the staff survey and through meetings with them. Pupils' views were considered through a pupil survey and through pupil meetings.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in classes and during breaks and at lunchtime.

Inspection team

Andy Jones, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Kathryn Fenwick	Ofsted Inspector
Lynn George	Ofsted Inspector

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