

Inspection of a good school: Highfield Community Primary School

Whinfield Way, Rowlands Gill, Tyne and Wear NE39 2JE

Inspection dates:

14 February 2024

Outcome

Highfield Community Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

At Highfield Community Primary School staff have created a caring and nurturing environment for pupils. The school provides high levels of support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils enjoy attending school and feel safe. They talk positively about the help that they get from adults.

Pupils behave well in lessons and at social times. Staff and pupils understand the behaviour policy well. Pupils feel that it is fairly applied. Lessons are calm and purposeful. Many pupils are keen to contribute and demonstrate their learning. Pupils enjoy taking part in reading out loud and demonstrating their skills at using appropriate expression. Staff have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. They encourage all pupils to participate and focus on ensuring that pupils know what their next steps are.

The school provides many opportunities for pupils' wider development. This is a small school, yet there are an array of activities and clubs on offer. These include choir, book club, various sports clubs and board games club. Pupils also enjoy taking on leadership roles. This includes being on the school council. A particular favourite role is being a librarian on the quirky school library bus!

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

School leaders have made significant improvements to the school curriculum of late. There is a sharp focus on ensuring that all curriculum areas are sequenced towards end points. There has also been a focus on ensuring that pupils are helped to remember the content that they are learning. Recall activities are now embedded into lessons and pupils discuss using 'flashback four' and 'memory joggers' in lessons to review previous learning. Staff regularly check what pupils know and use assessment to identify pupils who may need additional support.

The school has given priority to developing English and mathematics within the curriculum subjects. In history and geography for example, pupils in Year 5 and 6 are provided with plenty of opportunities to demonstrate their learning through writing developed and detailed responses. These responses demonstrate their geographical or historical knowledge well. However, in other subjects and year groups, this is not consistently the case. Pupils' responses are often too brief to enable them to demonstrate the depth of their knowledge and skills.

The school has small number of pupils in each year group. This means that published pupil outcomes in comparison to national data can vary considerably. However, leaders are ambitious that more pupils will achieve their full potential. The school's focused work on the curriculum is beginning to have a positive impact. Pupils' work in their books shows that, overall, current pupils are making good progress and achieving well

The school ensures that pupils with SEND are quickly identified. Staff work well with the local authority and external agencies to ensure that pupils get the right level of support. As a result, pupils with SEND access the curriculum alongside their peers and are a full part of school life.

The reading curriculum has been structured carefully. Staff have been trained to deliver the phonics programme. This is taught consistently well and pupils are familiar with routines. Children in Reception Year enjoy spotting sounds in words. Those pupils at an early stage of reading, or who find reading difficult, have effective extra support to ensure that they catch-up with their peers. There has been a focus on ensuring that pupils learn to read fluently and with confidence. As pupils become more capable readers, they can select from a wide range of books they enjoy. Adults regularly read to pupils and listen to pupils read.

Pupils benefit from the well-considered personal development programme. Pupils understand the importance of respecting individual differences, equality and diversity. As a result, pupils know to treat everyone fairly. There is a comprehensive assembly programme and leaders also use assemblies to educate pupils about local issues. There are planned trips and visits to enhance the curriculum. Pupils enjoy visiting local museums to support their knowledge of history and visiting the Centre for Life enhances the science curriculum. Pupils are enthusiastic about these visits and particularly like the residential trip which focuses on wider development.

Senior leaders have an accurate understanding of what the school does well. They also know where it needs to improve. The vast majority of staff value the support provided by senior leaders. In particular, they appreciate how they are helped to manage their workload. Governors are knowledgeable and have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. The school has events to engage parents such as coffee mornings. Many parents are positive about their children's experiences at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some curriculum subjects and year groups, pupils do not have enough opportunities to demonstrate the depth of their knowledge and skills. At times, pupils are capable of more than they are being asked. The school should ensure that all pupils in all subjects and year groups are provided with ongoing opportunities to demonstrate their depth of knowledge and skills.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in September 2018.

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	108351
Local authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	10297248
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	126
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Val Chilvers
Headteacher	Claire Spencer
Website	www.highfieldprimarygateshead.co.uk/
Dates of previous inspection	26 and 27 September 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses no alternative provision.
- The school is smaller than average. Pupils are taught in mixed-year-group classes.
- The school has nursery provision for three- and four-year-olds.

Information about this inspection

- 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.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher and other members of staff. The lead inspector met with representatives of the local governing body, including the chair of governors. An inspector also met with the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into early reading, mathematics and physical education. They met with curriculum leaders, teachers and pupils, visited lessons, and

looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also looked at work in history and geography.

- The lead inspector listened to pupils 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 reviewed a range of documents, including records of governing body meetings, leaders' evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for improvement and documents relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors also reviewed the responses that were received through the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, which included free-text comments. The inspectors considered the responses that were received through Ofsted's staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Jessica McKay, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sharon Common

Ofsted Inspector

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