

Inspection of a good school: Longhoughton Church of England Primary School

Lacey Street, Longhoughton, Alnwick, Northumberland NE66 3AJ

Inspection date: 29 February 2024

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a warm and nurturing school where pupils are happy and feel safe. The school's Christian vision that 'everyone is welcome', permeates throughout. Pupils are accepting of all. Being situated near a Royal Air Force (RAF) base, the school has a high number of service children. The service children feel welcomed. They settle quickly and make strong friendships as they join or return to the school.

Pupils are well cared for. They feel safe to talk to adults if they are worried. Pupils readily take on responsibilities. Older pupils enjoy being playground leaders for younger pupils. This develops the community spirit in the school.

Staff are positive role models. They forge supportive relationships with pupils. Pupils show respect and consider the feelings of others. They know the importance of being a good friend. Pupils say that bullying does not happen, but they know that adults would address it if it were to.

The school has a passion to provide the best education for all, but this is not fully realised. Pupils currently experience a variable quality of education. The school knows what needs to improve and is working on addressing these areas: for example, some areas of the curriculum lack sequence and precision. This makes it difficult for pupils to remember their learning over time.

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

The school provides a broad, inspiring curriculum. However, in some subjects, the precise knowledge, skills and vocabulary that pupils should learn are unclear. At times, activity choices do not help pupils to focus on the key learning that they need. This limits the ability of some pupils to recall key facts and build on prior learning.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge. When curriculum thinking is clear, they select appropriate resources to support learning and accurately check exactly what pupils know.

The school has taken effective action to begin to strengthen the early reading programme. Staff have been trained in how to teach phonics effectively. Children in Reception make strong progress. They receive a daily, structured phonics programme, when they learn how to say the sounds that letters represent and then apply this in their reading. However, key stage 1 pupils do not have daily practice. In addition, the books that some pupils read are not accurately matched to the sounds they know. This prevents pupils reading fluently and with enjoyment.

The school inspires pupils to develop a love of reading. Books are celebrated and displayed all around the school. Pupils enjoy visiting the library and choosing books. They delight in listening to stories that adults read to them.

The school identifies accurately the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). It draws on external expertise and involves parents and carers in planning and reviewing support. Despite this, some staff do not routinely adapt learning well enough to fully support these pupils. This hampers the progress that some pupils with SEND make.

The early years provision gives children a strong start to their time in school. The development of children's language and communication is a high priority. Mathematics is well planned. Children in early years learn numbers and numerical patterns quickly. They recognise and recall number facts well.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They have wonderful manners and are very polite. Pupils move around the school in a calm and orderly manner. They hold doors open for adults and show courtesy and respect towards staff and visitors alike. In lessons, pupils behave well. They are keen to learn and work hard.

The school is an important part of the local community. Strong links with the church and RAF support pupils' personal development. Pupils demonstrate a mature understanding of people's differences. They value diversity. Pupils have a strong understanding of democracy and the rule of law. Visiting speakers, such as the dentist, the fire crew from RAF Boulmer and a group of walkers on a pilgrimage, support and enrich the curriculum.

Leaders provide a range of opportunities for pupils' broader development. Pupils enjoy attending a variety of sporting events and the 'Let's get cooking' club. Pupils are proud to represent school in local competitions, such as a recent community art competition.

Pupils value their education. There are clear systems in place for checking attendance. The school works closely with families to ensure that they understand the importance of attending school regularly. As a result, most pupils attend school regularly.

Governors make frequent visits to school. They know what needs to improve and they are supportive of the staff team. Leaders are considerate of staff's workload and well-being. Staff are happy and feel valued. They enjoy working at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a strong culture of safeguarding. Staff receive regular training. They are vigilant and report any concerns swiftly. However, the school's agreed procedures for recording safeguarding concerns are not always carefully adhered to. This means that the school does not have the most important information stored in one place or recorded in the correct way. As a result, it cannot fully assure itself that actions are taken in a timely manner and that detailed information is available to share with others, if required.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some areas of the curriculum do not identify precisely the key knowledge, skills and vocabulary that pupils should learn. Therefore, sometimes, teachers do not teach what is intended. This means that, at times, pupils are not able to build on prior learning and deepen their knowledge. The school needs to provide teachers with more detail about the precise knowledge it wants pupils to know and remember, so that teachers can plan sharply focused lessons that enable pupils to build their knowledge over time.
- Pupils in key stage 1 do not have daily phonics lessons, and the books that some pupils read do not closely match the sounds that they know. This leads to pupils struggling to read. The school should review the school timetable to ensure that all pupils in key stage 1 have daily phonics lessons. The school should make sure that books are carefully matched to pupils' needs.
- The needs of some pupils with SEND are not yet met well enough. Sometimes, these pupils do not receive the support they need to achieve as well as they could. The school must ensure that learning is adapted effectively for pupils with SEND so that they learn well in all subjects.
- The school's agreed procedures for recording safeguarding concerns about pupils are not carefully adhered to. This means that the school sometimes does not have the most important information stored in one place or recorded in the correct way. As a result, it cannot fully assure itself that actions are taken in a timely manner and that detailed information is available to share with others, if required. The school must ensure that all staff follow the correct procedures to record safeguarding concerns so that detailed information is available to share with others when required.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2014.

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	122277
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10313249
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	92
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Charlotte Best
Headteacher	Tracey Critchlow
Website	www.longhoughton.northumberland.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 December 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses one alternative provider.
- A section 48 inspection to evaluate the distinctiveness and effectiveness of Longhoughton Church of England Primary School as a church school took place in May 2019. The school was judged to be good. The next section 48 inspection will be within eight school years.

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 had 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, 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' interest first.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, and design and technology. 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 responses to surveys and talked to parents, pupils and staff.
- Inspectors held meetings with members of the local governing body, the school improvement partner and a representative of the diocese.

Inspection team

Alison Stephenson, lead inspector Ofsted Inspector

Chris Mitchinson Ofsted Inspector

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