

# Inspection of a good school: Grange View Church of England Voluntary Controlled First School

Grange Road, Widdrington, Morpeth, Northumberland NE61 5LZ

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Inspection date:

20 March 2024

## Outcome

Grange View Church of England Voluntary Controlled First School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, staff and families are overwhelmingly positive about their school. Parents and carers describe it as an 'asset' to Widdrington village and a 'privilege' for their children to attend. Leaders and staff have purposely positioned the school as a hub in the local community. They have built positive relationships with local businesses and charities to benefit pupils and families. Pupils play their part as active local citizens, for example growing vegetables for a local pop-up charitable café and supporting the food bank.

Carefully planned curriculums and effective teaching help pupils to achieve well. Staff are well supported by leaders to develop the skills and expertise they need. Adults know pupils particularly well. They provide considered support for those who need help, especially pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Most pupils behave well and attend really well. Classrooms and corridors are orderly and pupils are confident that staff address the minor issues that arise. Pupils' personal development is given high priority. They demonstrate a good understanding of, and respect towards, others with different beliefs and backgrounds. Pupils are not concerned about bullying. They know it will not be tolerated in school. They have trusted adults whom they are happy to approach if they need help.

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

Since the previous inspection, the school has taken significant steps to strengthen aspects of the curriculum. Subject leaders can confidently describe the small steps of knowledge that they want pupils to remember over time. Careful links have been made between curriculum subjects to help pupils make the most of their learning. A strong focus on local heritage is enabling pupils to develop an understanding of their community.

Adults plan well-chosen tasks to help pupils to learn and remember the curriculum. A strong focus on teaching vocabulary is benefiting all pupils, especially those who need extra help with their speech, language and communication. Staff use assessment wisely. They check what pupils can already do and quickly spot if someone needs more help. Pupils can talk impressively about their learning in a range of subjects and they achieve well during their time at school.

Adults ensure that most pupils quickly become fluent and accurate readers. A well-planned programme for early reading is delivered effectively by staff. Pupils who need more support, including those with SEND, are rapidly identified and helped to catch up. Pupils enjoy their daily story time. They encounter a range of books that have been carefully chosen to broaden their experience of literature.

In the early years, children are supported well to work independently and to concentrate on tasks for extended periods of time. The youngest children settle quickly into school routines. 'Older' children in Nursery work happily alongside them. Parents are extremely positive about the support children are given to flourish as individuals. Staff model language and vocabulary well. This helps children to talk with more confidence.

Historically, some children have not developed important skills linked to early writing well enough. This can be seen in older year groups, where some pupils do not hold pencils or pens correctly and do not consistently form letters and numbers accurately. Leaders have recognised this. They have strengthened the curriculum in early years so that children are now developing better writing skills. However, there is more to do to ensure that older pupils are helped to improve their writing, and that staff consistently set high standards for the accuracy of pupils' written work.

Leaders have strengthened their work to improve pupils' attendance. Adults meticulously follow up individual absences and work closely with families. This has made a difference. Pupils' attendance is high and very few are regularly absent. This means they can benefit fully from school life.

Pupils typically behave well around school. Most get on well with each other. Incidents of poor behaviour or bullying are extremely rare. The school's personal development curriculum and Christian ethos help pupils to understand the importance of tolerance and respect for others. At times, some pupils need more prompts to help them to stay on task. Some older pupils can be a little boisterous around school. Leaders have begun some focused work to help pupils take more responsibility for ensuring consistently positive behaviour.

Governors have a clear picture of the school's strengths and priorities and regularly ask questions to check that improvements are being made. There is a strong culture of teamwork among staff in the school. Staff appreciate the opportunities for training and professional development. Leaders, including governors, routinely consider staff's workload. Staff feel happy, valued and well supported by leaders.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

### What does the school need to do to improve?

#### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils in key stages 1 and 2 do not hold their pens and pencils correctly. Some pupils form letters and numbers inaccurately and this is not systematically addressed by staff. The presentation of pupils' written work, including their handwriting, is variable across school. This limits some pupils' ability to write with automaticity. The school should ensure that all staff have consistently high expectations of pupils' written work and that pupils are quickly supported where they need extra help to write with accuracy.
- Some older pupils do not demonstrate consistently positive attitudes to learning. Occasionally, during unstructured times, some older pupils need help from adults to behave sensibly. The school should ensure that expectations for behaviour and attitudes around school are clearly understood by all and continue the planned work to help pupils to take greater responsibility for regulating their own behaviour.

## 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 February 2015.

### 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	135634
<b>Local authority</b>	Northumberland
<b>Inspection number</b>	10320373
<b>Type of school</b>	First
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	112
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Local authority
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Rebecca Griffin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Louise Laskey
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.grangeview.northumberland.sch.uk">www.grangeview.northumberland.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	27 February 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Since September 2023, the school has offered educational provision to a small number of two-year-old children on a part-time basis within a Nursery unit.
- The school is currently working with the local authority to extend the age range of the school in September 2024 to include pupils up to the age of 11.
- There are no pupils attending alternative provision.
- The school is part of the Church of England diocese of Newcastle. The school was inspected in March 2023 through the framework for the statutory inspection of Anglican and Methodist schools. The inspection report is available on the school's website.

## Information about this inspection

- 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, the assistant headteacher and other leaders responsible for subjects.
- Inspectors held discussions with a number of governors, including the chair of the governing body, and held telephone discussions with the local authority school improvement partner and a diocesan representative.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and geography. Inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with pupils and teachers and looked at samples of pupils' work. This included in the early years.
- Inspectors reviewed the safeguarding checks on adults working at the school and met with leaders, staff and pupils to discuss the safeguarding arrangements in place. Inspectors reviewed examples of safeguarding and behaviour records to check on the school's work to support pupils and families.
- Inspectors met with teaching and non-teaching staff and with groups of pupils to consider their views of the school. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's online inspection questionnaires from pupils, parents and staff.

### **Inspection team**

Claire Brown, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Deborah Ashcroft

Ofsted Inspector

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