

# Inspection of a good school: Annfield Plain Infant School

Northgate, Annfield Plain, Stanley, County Durham DH9 7UY

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Inspection dates:

26 March 2024

## Outcome

Annfield Plain Infant School continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Ann Kane. This school is part of Stanley Learning Partnership, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Mark Stewart, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Tom Harpe.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Annfield Plain Infant School are succeeding academically and socially. The school has established an ambitious curriculum to help pupils to develop the skills of resilience and enquiry. For example, pupils shared their impressive understanding about the pioneering work of Amelia Earhart. This inspires pupils to be aspirational for their futures. The school makes long-lasting memories for pupils through exciting visits and visitors that bring learning to life. The school is a very happy place to learn. Pupils flourish at this school.

Behaviour is exemplary. In early years, staff help children to understand what is expected of them. Adults apply their high expectations of behaviour and routines consistently. Children rise to these expectations. This sets the foundation for pupils' exceptional attitudes to learning throughout the school. Leaders have shaped a highly inclusive school culture based on the rights and responsibilities of each pupil. Pupils know that adults respect their views and opinions. This motivates pupils to do the same.

Many pupils extend their learning by contributing as pupil leaders. These roles are a golden thread that inspire pupils to be role models for others. Some pupils contribute as 'mini-buds', supporting their peers at playtime. Others work to improve the school as school councillors. Pupils are very proud of their school.

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

The school has created a broad curriculum that identifies the most important knowledge that pupils need to learn and remember. Adults make sure that pupils learn this knowledge by connecting new ideas to the things that they already know. In history for

example, pupils find out about a local soldier in the First World War. They use sources of evidence to find out about his life. They then connect this learning to their broader understanding of the impact of war. The way this supports pupils to remember the things that they have learned is impressive. Pupils' learning in history is exceptional. However, some approaches that the school uses to present new learning for pupils are in the earlier stages of development. This recently improved practice has not yet had time to fully impact on pupils' learning in all subjects.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), learn the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. Leaders work to remove any barriers that pupils might face to their learning. They do this by making sure that all staff have the expertise to help pupils with SEND. These pupils receive the right support to become confident learners.

Children in early years get off to an impressive start with phonics. They use their secure knowledge of phonics to become confident and fluent readers. Staff are experts in teaching children to read. Pupils' books are closely matched to the sounds that they know. In early years, children encounter five books, five times each day. Children become immersed in the language and stories because they revisit these texts so often. Pupils across school talk with enthusiasm about the stories and the characters that they encounter. Pupils often recite parts of these stories, copying the expression that their teachers use. This inspires pupils to read widely and expressively. They do so with confidence and joy. If pupils struggle to read, they receive the precise support that they need to help them to catch-up.

In early years, children quickly develop accurate mathematical language. Children confidently use this language to explain their mathematical thinking. The school makes sure that older pupils build on this excellent start. For example, pupils understand the difference between volume and capacity because adults provide clear explanations for pupils. Staff use assessment to check what pupils know and can do. They make sure that pupils have many opportunities to revisit their learning. This is helping them to become fluent mathematicians.

The school has established a range of opportunities for pupils to broaden their experiences. For example, pupils visit the theatre and the local history museum. This helps pupils to widen their knowledge about the world around them. Pupils develop a deep understanding of difference and diversity. They talk about differences with considerable maturity. Pupils understand their rights as children, but also their responsibilities to those around them. This learning inspires pupils to treat everyone in school with the utmost respect. One pupil summed this up by saying, 'we are not mean to anyone just because they are different'.

Governors challenge and support leaders to improve the school. They share leaders' ambition to provide pupils with a high-quality education. Staff are passionate about the community that they serve. They feel that leaders support them well and are very proud to be a part of 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)

- Some approaches that the school uses to present new learning for pupils are in the earlier stages of development. This recently improved practice has not had time to fully impact on pupils' learning. Leaders should continue to support all staff so that the approaches used to present new learning to pupils are consistently applied.

## Background

When we have judged 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 predecessor school, Annfield Plain Infant School to be good in October 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	148466
<b>Local authority</b>	Durham
<b>Inspection number</b>	10297534
<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	100
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Tom Harpe
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ann Kane
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://www.annfieldplaininfants.co.uk/">https://www.annfieldplaininfants.co.uk/</a>
<b>Date(s) of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- This is a smaller-than-average sized infant school.
- The school runs a breakfast and after- school club for pupils.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, subject leaders and teachers.
- Inspectors held a meeting with trustees and governors, including the chair of the governing body The lead inspector held a separate meeting with the CEO of the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject

leaders, 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 also listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.

- 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 scrutinised a range of other documentation, including governor meeting minutes and leaders' evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors also spoke informally to pupils to gather their views on school life.
- To gather parents' views, inspectors took account of the views of parents from the Ofsted Parent View survey, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including free-text comments.
- To gather the views of staff, inspectors took account of the staff survey.

### **Inspection team**

Jen Sloan, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Ann Muxworthy

Ofsted Inspector

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