

Inspection of a good school: Lumley Junior School

Cocken Lane, Great Lumley, Chester le Street, County Durham DH3 4JJ

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 April 2024

Outcome

Lumley Junior School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a warm and welcoming school. There are positive relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils know the school's values and these help to create a sense of community. Pupils feel safe in school. They know that there are trusted adults who they can talk to if they have any concerns. Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. They act swiftly if pupils need support to make the right choices.

Pupils enjoy working together in purposeful classrooms. Staff encourage them to try their best and many pupils are eager to contribute their ideas. The school has high expectations for the achievement of all pupils. They benefit from a thoughtfully constructed curriculum. Pupils achieve well, particularly in mathematics.

Pupil ambassador roles are well established. Pupils who have these roles play an important part in the life of the school. Librarian ambassadors are rightfully proud of the school library. They take a lead role in promoting the library and they organise competitions for other pupils. Classroom ambassadors ensure that pupils' suggestions are discussed with leaders. There is a range of after-school sporting clubs that are well attended. Pupils discuss their school trips with enthusiasm. A recent visit to the Centre for Life proved very popular with pupils and enhanced their knowledge of the science curriculum.

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

The school has designed and implemented a curriculum that is broad and balanced. The key knowledge that pupils need to know from Year 3 to Year 6 is clearly thought out. The curriculum is sequenced well so that pupils build their knowledge over time. In some subjects, pupils do not have enough opportunities to use their subject knowledge precisely. The tasks that staff set do not routinely expect pupils to draw precise conclusions. For example, in geography pupils can demonstrate knowledge of geographical content, such as some areas having more rainfall than others. However, they are not able to use their geographical knowledge to explain why these differences exist.

Teachers revisit prior learning at the start of lessons and regularly check pupils' understanding. Teachers present information clearly. They use subject-specific language that develops pupils' vocabulary and builds their understanding. Pupils use mathematical vocabulary accurately. Their mathematical knowledge is secure. Pupils are confident mathematicians and achieve well.

The school understands the importance of helping pupils to become fluent readers. The phonics curriculum continues for pupils in Year 3 who are not secure in their phonics knowledge. These pupils access daily phonics sessions. Pupils are given regular opportunities to practise reading with books containing sounds they have learned. Teachers regularly check that pupils' reading books closely match their reading ability. Many pupils are ambitious to move through the reading book levels and become competent readers.

The school organises appropriate support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) in classrooms. Support in classrooms and in 'The Den' helps pupils with SEND to learn and remember the same curriculum as their peers wherever possible. Staff, parents and carers and pupils all contribute to pupils' support plans. These have appropriate and manageable targets to help pupils to make progress.

Pupils are polite and well-mannered. The school ensures that pupils behave well by, for example, encouraging pupils to make red or green choices in their behaviour. This works to promote good choice-making and most pupils make green choices when given the option. Pupils walk between classes sensibly and calmly. In the playground, pupils respect one another. Leaders do all that they can to promote good levels of pupil attendance. For example, leaders contact parents whenever a pupil is absent, and where necessary, conduct home visits to check that pupils are safe.

The extra-curricular and student leadership programme is broad. The school organises a selection of clubs. Pupils participate well in these. Pupils regularly take part in educational visits to deepen their understanding of the curriculum. The school is working to establish 'The Lumley Offer' to ensure that all pupils access experiences beyond the academic curriculum.

Staff say that they enjoy working here and that school leaders are mindful of their workload and welfare. They feel supported. Governors are well informed about their role and are very active in their support for the school. Together with school leaders, they are ambitious for every pupil.

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 subjects, teachers do not consistently expect pupils to apply their subject knowledge when drawing conclusions. As a result, pupils are not making connections between concepts and building on prior learning. The school should ensure that pupils have regular opportunities to apply their subject-specific knowledge.

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/outstanding. 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	114002
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10297270
Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	179
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Stephen Forster
Executive headteacher	Tracey Wilson
Website	www.lumley.durham.sch.uk/
Date(s) of previous inspection	11 September 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is in a hard federation with Lumley Infant School. The executive headteacher is executive headteacher for both schools.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the executive headteacher and curriculum leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator. They also met with school governors and the school's local authority adviser.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector 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.
- The inspector talked informally with pupils and staff to gather general information about school life. They took account of the responses to Ofsted's questionnaires for staff and for pupils and the responses to Ofsted Parent View. The inspector also spoke to some parents in the playground.
- The inspector observed pupils in class, at lunchtime, on the playground and at the start and end of the school day. The inspector observed some pupils reading to an adult.

Inspection team

Jessica McKay, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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