

Inspection of a good school: New Penshaw Academy

Langdale Road, New Penshaw, Houghton le Spring, Tyne and Wear DH4 7HY

Inspection dates:

28 June 2024

Outcome

New Penshaw Academy continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Stephanie Johnson. This school is part of Inspire Multi-Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Joanne West, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Stephen Ruffell.

What is it like to attend this school?

This inclusive school strives to make all pupils feel welcomed as valued members of the school community.

The school is determined to help all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to achieve well. Leaders successfully use visitors to school and external visits to enrich the curriculum. Pupils enjoy learning because teachers make it interesting and relevant.

The school places pupils' well-being as a priority. There is a culture of mutual respect. Pupils know that staff care for them. They trust staff to help them if they have any worries. The school responds to pupils' needs effectively. Pupils are happy in this nurturing school. Pupils know what bullying is. The school deals with any behavioural incidents swiftly and effectively. This helps pupils to stay safe and secure.

Pupils' behaviour is delightful. Pupils move around the building sensibly. They are proud to show off their 'fantastic walking'. Pupils behave well in lessons, concentrating on their learning. They demonstrate positive attitudes to their education and are motivated to succeed.

The school has designed a curriculum to enable pupils to have 'success for today and be prepared for tomorrow.' Pupils take pride in the leadership roles that they have, such as eco-warriors. Pupils are keen to make a positive difference to the school and community.

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

The school has a rich and challenging curriculum. The curriculum helps to bring learning to life. It places a strong focus on developing language and communication skills. Vocabulary development starts with the Nursery children. Across the school, pupils talk to each other and adults with confidence. Pupils use a wide range of vocabulary to explain their new learning.

Reading is a priority. The school is determined to see all pupils develop fluency and confidence in reading. The library and areas around school are full of high-quality texts for pupils to share and enjoy. Well-trained staff deliver high-quality phonics lessons. Pupils practise reading using books that are carefully matched to the sounds they know. Pupils who are at risk of falling behind receive extra phonics sessions to help them to catch-up. Almost all pupils achieve well in phonics and are fluent readers by the time they start Year 3.

In some subjects, the curriculum is implemented with expertise. Tasks are carefully selected to enable pupils to frequently recall and build upon their knowledge and skills. Across a unit of work, pupils have the opportunity to apply their knowledge and make connections to previous learning. This approach is not in place securely for some foundation subjects where pupils have fewer opportunities to revisit and connect their learning. Work to address this is already underway but there remains more to do.

Children in the early years get off to a strong start. They benefit from an effective curriculum. Relationships between adults and children are positive and caring. Knowledgeable adults model language well. They help children to develop a love of learning. Children are well-prepared for life in key stage 1.

Leaders are determined that all pupils should thrive. Support for pupils with SEND is a strength of the school. The Communication Hub is an effective enhanced provision to support pupils with language and communication difficulties. Pupils with SEND, including those in the Communication Hub, receive precise support to meet their personal targets. Across the school, staff adapt teaching skilfully. In class, adults provide effective support and encouragement. As a result, most pupils with SEND achieve well.

Across the school, warm relationships are evident between adults and pupils. There are a range of incentives available to promote positive behaviour. Pupils' behave well. Additional support is sensitively provided for those pupils who may need assistance in managing their conduct.

Attendance is a high priority. It is valued and celebrated. Pupils understand the need for regular attendance. The school works with families to promote good attendance. However, some pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged or pupils with SEND, are absent from school too often. This means they miss valuable learning experiences.

Pupils are well supported in their personal development. The school curriculum ensures that pupils have a range of opportunities to understand the world around them. Pupils have a strong understanding of democracy. They show respect for other people's points of

view. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including online. They have a good awareness of what a healthy relationship is. The school encourages pupils to have high aspirations and to help them understand the contribution they can make to the wider world.

A united team of staff and leaders have coped admirably with the many challenges faced this year, whilst supporting school improvements. All leaders, including trustees and governors, are highly ambitious for the school. They provide a clear vision and well-timed actions to support continuous improvements. Staff feel incredibly supported by leaders. They value the help from leaders to manage their workload and well-being.

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 foundation subjects, opportunities for pupils to revisit, connect and embed prior learning are inconsistent. This means, at times, some pupils do not learn and remember as well as they could. The school should ensure that staff are well-trained so that they can implement the curriculum effectively allowing pupils to recap and make connections to prior learning.
- A high proportion of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND are absent from school too often. This means that some pupils miss out on learning important knowledge in the curriculum. This is restricting some pupils from achieving well. The school should continue to work with families to ensure that pupils' attendance improves.

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 February 2019.

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	139391
Local authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	10323048
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	146
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Stephen Ruffell
Headteacher	Stephanie Johnson
Website	www.newpenshawacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 and 13 February 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative providers.
- The local authority provides an onsite resource base for children with speech and language difficulties who require intensive direct speech and language therapy and teaching. There are currently 7 pupils accessing this provision.

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.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, who is also the special educational needs coordinator, and other school leaders. They also talked with a

trustee, the chief executive headteacher of the trust, the school improvement officer and the board of governors, including the chair.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work.
- The inspectors also discussed the monitoring of behaviour, attendance and provision for pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey. Inspectors also considered the responses to the staff and pupil surveys.
- 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.

Inspection team

Alison Stephenson, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Nicola Murray

Ofsted Inspector

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