

# Inspection of Benfieldside Primary School

Moorlands, Blackhill, Consett, County Durham DH8 0JX

---

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 June 2024

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

This is a school where everyone takes care of one another. The school welcomes all pupils, ensuring they have a sense of purpose and pride. The school encourages pupils to achieve their very best. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They are safe. Adults model positive behaviour and expect pupils to meet their high expectations. Pupils are respectful and listen to one another's opinions. They learn about the importance of manners and are proud to show this to visitors.

Pupils are enthusiastic and focus well on their learning. Pupils listen attentively and work diligently. Pupils are confident that staff are there to support them. They know staff will listen to any concerns that they may have. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive timely and effective support.

Parents and carers of children in the early years typically comment on how well their children settle into school life. Children are happy in the setting. Caring staff support children's learning in considered ways.

Pupils enjoy trips in the local area to deepen their learning, including visits to places of worship. They travel further afield to widen their understanding of the world. All pupils can attend residential visits where they develop their resilience and their teamwork skills. Pupils represent the school at sporting events. This helps to develop their talents and interests.

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

Pupils benefit from a strong reading curriculum. Reading outcomes have matched or exceeded national expectations in recent years. Key reading skills are prioritised across the curriculum. The school promotes the importance of reading for future academic success effectively. Well-trained staff teach phonics to younger pupils. Pupils read books that are well matched to their abilities. They have additional opportunities to share quality books with parents and others. Pupils' progress in reading is carefully checked to identify gaps in their understanding. The school uses this information to adapt teaching and address any gaps in pupils' knowledge.

The school has reviewed its curriculum offer to ensure that it is ambitious. The rich and varied curriculum builds on previous learning. The school has identified the important knowledge it wants pupils to know. Pupils' understanding of this knowledge is checked before they move on to new skills. For example, in geography, early years children learn about the differences between man-made and natural features. This prepares them for learning about physical and human geography during key stage 1. By the end of key stage 2, pupils confidently use and analyse these aspects of geography when studying landscapes. Teachers regularly check pupils' understanding. This helps subject leaders review the effectiveness of the curriculum in their subjects. However, in some subjects, resources are not well matched to the intent of the curriculum. This limits the progress some pupils make through the curriculum.

Many children enter the early years foundation stage with weak communication skills. Staff develop children's oracy skills well. They talk to children regularly and encourage them to speak with clarity. Well-chosen activities allow children to extend or practise their vocabulary. Songs and rhymes are used to develop children's skills and to make learning exciting. If children need extra support, they are quickly identified. Expert staff use early intervention programmes to help children to catch up with their peers.

The school works with local partners to identify and support children with SEND. Plans to support these children are shared with parents and staff. Pupils with SEND access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. Skilful adaptations are made to learning to allow individualised progress to be made. The school ensures that pupils with SEND are fully included in all aspects of school life.

Pupils are keen to win the attendance award that is presented in school weekly. However, pupils' overall attendance at school is too low. The school has taken positive steps to improve pupils' engagement with school. It has worked with external agencies to identify and remove barriers to attending well. This is starting to have an impact.

Online safety is taught regularly in school and reinforced to parents through newsletters. Staff warn pupils of the dangers of social media. In assemblies and lessons, pupils are taught a balanced view of world and local events. They also learn about how their bodies change. Pupils enjoy opportunities to deepen learning of other religions with visits to places of worship. The school ensures that the voice of their pupils is heard. There are several pupil forums that provide feedback to school leaders. This includes on topics such as ecology and school meals.

The school prioritises the well-being of staff. Workload is regularly reviewed by leaders. Members of the governing board take an active role in checking the school's performance. Governors visit the school, examine processes in detail and question senior leaders about the impact of changes. Governors have also actively sought new members with specific expertise. This has strengthened the impact they have in areas such as finance and safeguarding.

## **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, resources are not well matched to the intent of the curriculum. This can slow some pupils' progress through the curriculum. The school should ensure that resources support the aims of the curriculum across different subjects

effectively.

- Some pupils do not attend school regularly enough. This means pupils develop gaps in their learning and miss out on important experiences. The school should continue to work with partners and families to reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent.

## 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>	114045
<b>Local authority</b>	Durham
<b>Inspection number</b>	10322968
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	214
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Adam Stubbs
<b>Headteacher</b>	Caroline Addison
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.benfieldsideprimary.co.uk">www.benfieldsideprimary.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	9 and 10 February 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

## Information about this school

- The school offers a breakfast club.
- The school does not use any alternative provisions.
- The number of pupils who are entitled to free school meals is well above the national average.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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.
- During the inspection, inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, science and geography. 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 a sample of pupil's work.

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, curriculum leaders, the special educational needs coordinator and the school's inclusion manager.
- Inspectors met with members of the governing body, including the chair, and spoke to a representative of the local authority, the school's improvement officer and the chief executive officer of a local trust who have provided brokered support since the last inspection.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, at the breakfast club, around the school and at breaktimes. Inspectors considered the views of pupils and parents about behaviour in 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' interests first.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents, parents and staff gathered through Ofsted's questionnaires. Inspectors also spoke to a sample of parents at the beginning and end of the school day.

### **Inspection team**

David Hodgkiss, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Sharon Common

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2024