

Inspection of a good school: Ellington Primary School

Warkworth Drive, Ellington, Morpeth, Northumberland NE61 5HL

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 July 2024

Outcome

Ellington Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive at Ellington Primary School. The school has very high expectations of pupils. Pupils understand the school rules of 'be ready, be respectful, be kind'. They live by these rules every day. As a result, the school is a harmonious and happy place. Pupils are safe. Pupils benefit from high-quality pastoral care. The school prioritises pupils' well-being. Staff often go the extra mile for pupils.

The school is inclusive and offers all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), an ambitious curriculum. The curriculum is taught well. As a result, pupils achieve well, particularly in reading and mathematics. The school recognised the need to develop the curriculum to improve pupils' writing skills. This work has been successful.

Pupils behave very well. Bullying is not tolerated. Pupils are keen to learn. Pupils get the opportunity to contribute to their school community. Pupils can take on roles such as peer mentors, sports leaders and members of the school council. They relish these opportunities.

Parents who responded to the inspection survey were very positive. One parent captured the view of many when they said, 'The school really is at the heart of the village and an asset to the community it serves.'

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

The school has designed a curriculum that is broad and carefully sequenced. The key knowledge that pupils should learn and remember over time is clear. Teachers explain concepts clearly. Pupils get to practise what they have been taught. The school has designed activities to help pupils remember what they have been taught before. For example, in mathematics, pupils begin each lesson with a 'green star challenge'. This is a task that helps pupils to consolidate their understanding before they move on to more challenging concepts.

The school has thought carefully about how to make the curriculum relevant to the needs of the pupils. Pupils read books that teach them about different cultures, traditions and relationships. They develop their academic skills by exploring their local area. For example, pupils develop their skills in geography by learning about local rivers and by visiting local beaches and farms.

Arrangements to check what pupils know and can do across the curriculum are well established. This helps to ensure that any gaps in pupils' knowledge or skills are quickly identified. When this happens, pupils are provided with effective support to help them catch up.

Reading is prioritised by the school. In the early years, children are introduced to the sounds that letters represent through songs and rhymes. Adults deliver the school's phonics programme consistently well. Pupils read books that are well matched to their knowledge. The school promotes reading for pleasure effectively. Pupils enjoy reading. They recognise its benefits. For example, when pupils read for enjoyment with their teacher after lunch, they see this as a calm start to the afternoon that helps them to refocus their attention.

The school ensures that teachers have detailed information about pupils with SEND. However, sometimes, the strategies outlined on pupils' plans are not implemented consistently in lessons. When this happens, pupils do not achieve as well as they could. There are aspects of the school's SEND provision that are monitored more closely than others.

In the early years, children develop very well. The school designs activities for children to develop their curiosity, creativity and knowledge. As a result, children engage well. They sustain their concentration. They play cooperatively. The curriculum that children follow is planned to provide them with meaningful opportunities to express themselves and learn about the world around them.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They demonstrate highly positive attitudes to learning. Pupils have confidence in staff to deal with any concerns that they might have. Leaders monitor attendance regularly. They put in place appropriate support when it is needed.

The school's programme for pupils' personal development is planned thoroughly. It focuses on the school's values that underpin its work. Pupils have a deep understanding of tolerance and equalities. For example, they learn to challenge gender stereotypes. Pupils are also offered a range of ways to enrich their learning. For example, pupils recently enjoyed watching a play in school performed entirely in French.

Pupils are given opportunities to develop their interests and talents. Pupils can attend clubs in sewing, coding, cheerleading and a range of sports. The school has been awarded recently for its dedication to music education and raising environmental awareness.

Leadership of the school is very effective. Leaders, including those responsible for governance, are highly skilled and committed to the school. They have a detailed

understanding of the quality of education that pupils receive. Staff are proud to work at the school. Morale is high. They say that leaders are considerate of 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)

- There are some inconsistencies in the ways in which some pupils with SEND are supported in lessons. This means that these pupils are not making the progress they could. The school should improve the monitoring of its SEND provision, to ensure that the support for pupils with SEND is implemented consistently well so that pupils can learn, develop and achieve consistently well.

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 January 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

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| Unique reference number | 122198 |
| Local authority | Northumberland |
| Inspection number | 10297328 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 215 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Barry Nelson |
| Headteacher | Kevin Hodgson |
| Website | www.ellingtonprimaryschool.co.uk |
| Dates of previous inspection | 8 and 9 January 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The current headteacher has been in post since September 2021.

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. 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 held meetings with leaders, teachers, non-teaching staff and pupils.
- The inspector met with the chair, and members, of the governing body.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, including early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector discussed the curriculum in geography and physical education with subject leaders.
- The inspector met with the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator.
- The inspector met with the leader in charge of the personal, social, health and economic curriculum and pupils' personal development.
- The inspector observed some pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- The inspector observed pupils during social times. He spoke with pupils and leaders about opportunities for pupils' personal development.
- 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 considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View. He also took into consideration the responses to the surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Dan McKeating, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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