

# Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: West Pelton Primary School

Twizell Lane, West Pelton, Stanley, County Durham DH9 6SQ

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Inspection date:

15 October 2024

## **Outcome**

West Pelton Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

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

This school has high expectations for pupils. Pupils learn important knowledge and skills across many subjects and achieve well.

The school prepares pupils well for life beyond the Year 6. Pupils' horizons are widened through relevant and meaningful educational experiences. Leaders widen pupils' view of the world through planned visits beyond their locality. This raises pupil aspirations and supports them to make informed choices about their future.

Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. Lunchtime is delightful, as older pupils sit with younger children and chat with them over lunch. The school has a calm and purposeful atmosphere. The school works with pupils to help them to understand the importance of good behaviour. Pupils value 'restorative' conversations where they learn to think about the impact of their behaviour on themselves and on others.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. Pupils know that they have a right to be safe and that they can speak to a member of staff if they have any worries. They learn about the importance of looking after one another and about healthy relationships. In Nursery, there are warm, nurturing relationships between the adults and children.

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

Since the last inspection, the school has reviewed its curriculum. The school has thought about what pupils learn and in what order they learn it across all subjects. There is an effective two-year cycle in place that allows pupils to learn knowledge and skills one year and then reinforce and apply their learning in the following year. The school has identified

the most important vocabulary pupils need for each lesson. Teachers emphasise this vocabulary in their teaching to ensure that pupils can understand and use these new words.

The school ensures that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) access a broad and balanced curriculum. The school regularly checks the knowledge pupils have remembered. However, strategies to help pupils, particularly those with SEND, make links between their current and prior learning are less developed. This means they find accessing the content of some lessons difficult.

The school teaches phonics in ways that ensure that each year group in the mixed-age class receives teaching matched to their ability. The school matches reading books so that pupils read books with sounds that they know. The school checks pupils' phonics knowledge regularly. Pupils who need more help access extra phonics lessons. In Nursery, adults read stories in engaging ways so that children are keen to join in with repeated words and phrases. The school's two-year-old provision prepares children well for the rest of their educational journey.

In mathematics, teachers support pupils to use sentence starters to help them to explain their thinking. However, on occasions those pupils the school identifies as 'expert mathematicians' do not access the more ambitious mathematical problems they need to deepen their thought.

The school provides pupils with lessons about respect and tolerance. Pupils speak positively about how they can apply the fundamental British values in their lives. Pupils exhibit pride when they receive certificates for their learning, behaviour, effort or kindness. The school is aware of the risks to pupils within the local area. It works closely with the police community support officer to ensure that pupils make the right choices, such as knowing not to experiment with vapes.

The attendance of some pupils is low. The school has identified improving pupils' attendance as a priority. There is a process in place for addressing daily absence. The school supports and challenges families when pupil attendance drops below 90%. However, the school's persistent absence figure remains high.

The school uses every inch of its environment to enhance learning. Teachers use displays outside classrooms to maximise learning opportunities for pupils. The school does all it can to meet the complex needs of pupils with SEND. Any extra catch-up sessions are carefully considered to ensure that they are in pupils' best interest.

Many staff have multiple responsibilities due to the school context. However, they recognise that leaders are mindful of their workload and do all they can to reduce it.

Governors understand their role and hold the school to account. They will ask questions and challenge where necessary. The governors have ensured that the school has continued to improve since the last inspection.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In mathematics, the work that some pupils complete does not enable them to deepen their mathematical knowledge. This can limit achievement for some pupils. The school should ensure that the tasks that pupils are set enable them to respond in depth, drawing on what they have learned.
- Some of the strategies to enable pupils to connect current learning with what they have learned before are not fully developed. This means some pupils cannot link their learning as well as they should. The school should further develop strategies that enable different groups of pupils to remember more over time.
- The attendance of some pupils is too low. This low attendance means that these pupils miss out on essential learning. The school should further strengthen further its work to improve the attendance of these pupils.

## Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 for overall effectiveness on 6 and 7 November 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	114004
<b>Local authority</b>	Durham
<b>Inspection number</b>	10346287
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	67
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Michelle Radford
<b>Headteacher</b>	Victoria Hewison
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.westpelton.durham.sch.uk">www.westpelton.durham.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	6 and 7 November 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- This school is federated with Cassop Primary School. These two schools form The Acorn Federation share a headteacher and governing body.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school has nursery provision for two-and-three-year-old children.
- Pupils are in mixed-age classes.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 and other leaders from the school.

- Inspectors also met with representatives of the governing body and the local authority representative for Durham.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- 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 considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's survey for staff and pupils. Inspectors spoke with groups of staff and pupils to gain their views about the school.

### **Inspection team**

Alison Stephenson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lianne Dixon

Ofsted Inspector

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