

Inspection of a good school: Cramlington Northburn Primary School

Horton Drive, Cramlington, Northumberland NE23 3QS

Inspection dates:

4 and 5 October 2022

Outcome

Cramlington Northburn Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Cramlington Northburn Primary is a very caring and happy place. Pupils and staff enjoy coming to school. Mutual respect and kindness are part of daily life. Leaders make well-being the highest priority. Staff use 'zones of regulation' consistently across school to help everyone understand how each person is feeling. This ensures that pupils are ready for learning. Even the youngest children in school understand how to help themselves and each other to be happy and to feel safe. Staff share appropriately how they are feeling; this demonstrates the importance that leaders place on a shared approach to well-being. As a result, the oldest pupils in school understand how adults are feeling. Pupils understand strategies that can help everyone to learn well, like working more quietly. Behaviour is good.

Leaders have high ambitions for all pupils. Teachers ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are fully included and supported. Pupils' needs are quickly identified. Leaders provide staff with high-quality, relevant training. As a result, staff have a deep understanding of the needs of individual pupils. Effective systems and strategies are in place to provide individual, quality support. Leaders ensure the consistent use of resources and approaches to support learning across the school. This consistency ensures that all pupils feel happy and confident, even when challenged.

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

Leaders give reading across school the highest priority. There are a wide range of opportunities for pupils to enjoy high-quality books and stories. Carefully chosen texts are used to deepen pupils' understanding of diversity and differences. Teachers use these to sensitively explore difficult family and friendship experiences. There is targeted adult support wherever needed in response.

Leaders provide well-planned opportunities for children to read across the school. Pupils throughout the school talk with enthusiasm about the books they read. Leaders have identified key texts for each year group which are linked with the planned curriculum.

These well-chosen books support pupils to gain wider knowledge and understanding. In the early years, teachers prioritise the teaching of reading. Teachers share books daily to help children develop a love of reading. This helps to develop children's understanding of rhyme and phonics. Leaders have introduced a systematic approach to the teaching of phonics. However, some staff have not accessed the training they need to deliver the phonics programme consistently well. Some pupils, including those with SEND, do not read books which are well matched to the sounds that they know. This results in some pupils being moved on too quickly before they are ready to do so. This affects pupils' fluency and understanding. Leaders have identified effective support for pupils who need extra help to catch up.

In the early years, leaders provide regular opportunities to develop early reading and mathematics. Communication and language skills are prioritised. Adults provide extra small-group opportunities to develop early reading and language skills for those who need it. Fine motor skills opportunities are woven into other activities, such as those which develop an understanding of early number. However, some children still need to develop a consistent pencil grip. Behaviour is impressive in this busy learning environment. Children access a 'toolbox' independently to help express how they or their friends are feeling. This helps them to manage and regulate their feelings. As a result, they are ready for learning.

Leaders have high ambition for all pupils with SEND. Leaders ensure that pupils who need it have quiet, separate spaces to learn. These spaces are well resourced with the tools pupils need to succeed. Pupils say that they welcome challenge in their learning. They know that this can make them feel uncomfortable at times. Pupils recognise through their 'zones of regulation work' that these feelings are normal and that feelings change as they learn.

Leaders and teachers take bullying very seriously. Well-trained 'anti-bullying ambassadors' help to ensure that it is not tolerated. Through charity work and fundraising, children are actively involved in supporting others in the local or wider world. Visitors from the local community and organisations like The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association contribute to the pupils' understanding of diversity. Leaders are proactive in ensuring that these experiences take place. Opportunities for purposeful outdoor play and forest school learning are risk-assessed and well managed. Pupils are challenged to take healthy risks, such as enjoying making toast safely on the fire pit.

The school offers a diverse, rich and well-sequenced curriculum. This ensures that pupils have every chance of success. Leaders provide staff with high-quality training in early reading and mathematics. However, in other subjects, such as science, some staff do not have the subject expertise necessary to deliver the planned curriculum consistently well.

Leaders are knowledgeable about the strengths and areas for further improvement across school. Opportunities exist for subject leaders to monitor learning in their subject areas regularly. This informs the clear plans that are in place to continue to drive the school forward. Leaders have taken appropriate steps to manage staff workload. Governors are experienced and supportive of leaders. They know what the school needs to focus on next. They support senior leaders with their workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The whole staff team shares a strong culture of safeguarding. Leaders ensure that appropriate checks are carried out on staff and visitors to help keep pupils safe. High-quality training helps staff to know what they need to do if they have a concern about a child. Leaders are tenacious and determined in working with external agencies. This results in pupils and families receiving the support that they need.

Pupils feel safe and happy in school and they appreciate this. Parents and carers agree. They know that leaders will respond if they have any concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils with SEND read books that do not match the sounds that they know. Teachers move them on to new books before they are ready. This means that some pupils struggle to read with accuracy and fluency. Leaders should ensure that teachers use assessment well to ensure that reading books closely match pupils' phonics knowledge.
- Some teachers do not have the subject knowledge necessary to deliver the planned curriculum well. As a result, pupils do not access the ambitious curriculum knowledge that leaders intend. Leaders should provide all staff with the high-quality training and support they need to deliver the curriculum effectively.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2013.

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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	122269
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10240299
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	331
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mrs Ann Wheat
Headteacher	Mrs Clare Scott
Website	www.northburn.northumberland.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	6 June 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school is a larger-than-average primary school.
- No pupils attend alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and science. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders and a range of subject leaders. The inspector met with the leader responsible for personal development and looked at curriculum plans.
- The inspector met staff and pupils across school, both formally and informally.

- The inspector met with the chair and vice-chair of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, as well as responses to the pupil and staff surveys.

Inspection team

Kate Byrne, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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