

# Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Birtley East Community Primary School

Highfield, Birtley, County Durham DH3 1QQ

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Inspection dates:

8 and 9 October 2024

## **Outcome**

Birtley East Community Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

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

Pupils enjoy attending this warm, welcoming and caring school. They have fun and show great interest in their lessons. Pupils form strong relationships with staff. They have trusted adults that they can talk to and share any worries or concerns. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are particularly well supported.

The school is ambitious for what pupils can achieve. Pupils rise to these expectations and achieve well. This is particularly the case in mathematics. Pupils also benefit from a strong programme of personal development. They enjoy learning about the different jobs and careers that they can aspire to when they are older. As part of the school's 'being me in my world' programme, pupils learn how to be good citizens in their community and beyond. They behave and conduct themselves well.

A variety of enrichment opportunities encourage pupils to develop their talents and interests. Pupils are enthusiastic about these clubs and activities. They attend in large numbers. Along with sport, there is a strong commitment to drama, music and outdoor education. The annual residential trip is a highlight of the enrichment programme. In preparation for this trip, pupils train to cycle a 26-mile circuit. They are rightly proud of their achievements.

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

The school teaches pupils a rich and broad curriculum from the Nursery Year to Year 6. By the end of each stage of education pupils are well prepared for their next steps. The early

years provides a particularly strong foundation for future learning. The curriculum in early years focuses on what children most need to learn. Staff use careful questioning to check what children know. Staff make sure that children are socially and emotionally ready for more formal learning in Year 1.

Pupils at the early stages of learning to read learn well. The development of children's communication and language is a high priority in the early years. This strong start to communication and reading helps pupils to learn effectively in other parts of the curriculum. Some pupils need more help with their reading. The school puts prompt and well-planned support in place to enable these pupils to become confident readers. The wider love of reading is continuously developed throughout the school. Older pupils read widely and often.

Pupils achieve well. For example, they learn accurate mathematical methods and strategies for solving problems. In geography, older pupils can explain how tectonic plates cause earthquakes. However, this knowledge is not secure across the full range of subjects. Pupils do not have a firm understanding of key concepts and essential vocabulary in some subjects. The school continues to review and refine the curriculum to focus more precisely on this important knowledge. The school quickly and accurately identifies pupils with SEND. Staff are skilled in providing appropriate support. Pupils with SEND study the full curriculum and are actively involved in all aspects of school life.

The expectations for behaviour in the school are high. Classrooms are calm and purposeful places to learn. Pupils listen attentively and are keen to answer questions. At social times, pupils of all ages play together and get on well. The playground is a busy and active environment where there is plenty of equipment to promote physical activity and games. Pupils make the most of their time outdoors and this benefits their physical health and well-being. The school takes effective action to ensure that pupils attend regularly. Most pupils attend well. Where pupils need more support to improve their attendance the school liaises effectively with families to make this happen.

The programme for personal development teaches pupils to understand themselves and the world around them. This begins effectively in the early years. Pupils of all ages have plentiful opportunities to reflect and to persevere. This develops their moral values, character and resilience effectively. A range of clubs and activities support pupils' wider development. The drama club is especially popular with pupils of all ages. During the inspection, the school hall was filled with enthusiastic singing.

Staff appreciate the way that their workload and well-being is prioritised. They are given the time and the training to carry out their roles effectively. Governors take an active role in the life of the school. They have the right skills to fulfil their responsibilities well. Governors understand the local community. They have played their part, along with school leaders, in maintaining standards since the previous 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 a minority of subjects, the school does not ensure that pupils develop some of the key knowledge that they need for their next steps in learning. This makes it more difficult for pupils to build a secure body of subject knowledge. The school should refine these subject curriculums so that teachers know the most essential vocabulary and ideas to emphasise and revisit.

## 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in April 2015.

## 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>	108337
<b>Local authority</b>	Gateshead
<b>Inspection number</b>	10346238
<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>	199
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Ian Bowater
<b>Headteacher</b>	Anna Diggle
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.birtleyeastprimary.org">www.birtleyeastprimary.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	10 July 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school does not currently use any alternative education provision.
- The school offers a breakfast club.

## 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. 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 spoke with the headteacher and other leaders, along with a range of staff. Meetings were held with governors and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector 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, 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 studied a variety of documents. These included the school's development plan, minutes of governing body meetings, attendance information and safeguarding records.
- The views of parents and carers, staff and pupils were gathered through Ofsted's surveys and face-to-face discussions.

### **Inspection team**

Carl Sugden, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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