

Inspection of a good school: Durham Lane Primary School

Amberley Way, Eaglescliffe, Stockton-on-Tees TS16 0NG

Inspection dates:

15 and 16 November 2022

Outcome

Durham Lane Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

At Durham Lane Primary School, pupils come first.

Pupils say, 'We act like one big family. We are kind and look out for each other. No one is left out and everyone feels supported'. This typifies the views of many. Behaviour is good and pupils can focus on their learning, without distraction. Bullying is very rare. Pupils are confident that any issues would be dealt with swiftly by leaders.

Pupils enjoy a number of special roles and responsibilities, such as team captains, sports leaders and school councillors.

Communication with parents has improved. Parents are well informed about how well their children are getting on. Relationships between home and school are strong. Parents value the wraparound childcare that the school provides. Pupils enjoy a varied range of after school clubs, such as football, Relax Kids and dance club.

Leaders have worked hard to develop an ambitious curriculum. They have high expectations for pupils. Recent changes are already making a difference. There is an emphasis on both academic success and pastoral care. Vulnerable families were well supported during the COVID-19 pandemic. Leaders provided technology to help pupils access learning at home and food vouchers. This was appreciated by families.

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

Leaders have prioritised reading since the last inspection. A new approach to teaching phonics has been introduced. Teachers and support staff have been trained and deliver the programme well. New reading books have been purchased that closely match the sounds pupils are learning. Younger pupils can use their knowledge of letter sounds to help them read unfamiliar words. Teachers make timely checks on how pupils are getting on. Pupils at risk of not keeping up are quickly identified and receive extra help. However,

some older pupils in key stage 2 struggle with their reading because they have gaps in their phonic knowledge.

Leaders actively promote a love of reading. The library has recently been refurbished and restocked with a wide variety of fiction and non-fiction books. There are regular author visits and the school has a strong relationship with a local bookshop. A lunchtime book buddy club encourages pupils to try new authors and genres.

Leaders have undertaken an extensive review of the curriculum. Curriculum plans are sequenced to ensure that pupils build new learning on what they already know. Leaders have mapped out the knowledge and skills that they want pupils to learn. For example, in mathematics, children begin to develop a secure understanding of number in Nursery. They know that pairs are made up of two objects and they can use vocabulary well to describe shape and pattern. Teachers in the Reception Year introduce children to 'one more' and 'one less' to build the foundations for addition and subtraction. As pupils progress through key stage 2, they work with larger numbers, and by Year 6 they can order and compare numbers to 1,000,000.

Pupils talk confidently about what they are learning. In mathematics, they can make links to what they already know and explain how this has helped them. For example, Year 6 pupils know that multiplication is the inverse of division. They can apply this knowledge when learning the formal method for dividing a 4-digit number by a 1-digit number. Teachers use checks well to adapt their teaching and target support for pupils. Leaders have developed effective systems for checking what pupils know in some foundation subjects, such as history and geography, with clear end points established for pupils to achieve. However, knowledge is less secure in other foundation subjects, such as computing. Pupils struggle to recall their learning about spreadsheets or talk about what they have previously learned.

This is a school that caters for all needs. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive the support they need. Wherever possible, pupils with SEND learn alongside their classmates, following a bespoke curriculum. Professionals such as occupational therapists and educational psychologists provide support for pupils with cognitive and physical needs. Teachers and support staff are skilled in delivering these programmes.

Equality and diversity are promoted effectively throughout the curriculum. Reading books celebrate diversity and are representative of the families that attend the school. Pupils learn about different faiths in religious education. They make Eid cards to send to friends and Diwali lamps.

The curriculum helps pupils to become responsible citizens. Pupils support local families, contributing hamper items, through the Cause for Christmas campaign. Further afield, pupils have sponsored school uniform for pupils in Kenya.

Staff are proud to work at Durham Lane Primary School. They feel valued by leaders and part of a team. Changes to a new marking policy and shared planning have helped to reduce workload. These changes are appreciated by staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All pre-employment checks are undertaken prior to staff appointment.

Leaders ensure all staff receive statutory safeguarding training. Staff are vigilant and know 'it could happen here'. Procedures for reporting concerns are robust. Appropriate referrals are made to external services. Leaders are not afraid to challenge professionals if they are not satisfied by their response.

The curriculum helps pupils to stay safe online. Pupils know when it is not appropriate to share personal details, why they should report concerns, and the importance of age restrictions on games and apps.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils in key stage 2 are unable to segment and blend unfamiliar words. This is because they have gaps in their phonics knowledge. Leaders must ensure that these pupils receive the targeted support they need to catch up.
- The assessment system for checking what pupils know in some foundation subjects does not enable teachers to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and make links with prior learning. Pupils do not always remember the content they have been taught. Therefore, they can find it difficult to access new learning without a secure base of prior knowledge. Leaders should develop a meaningful system for checking if pupils are remembering the crucial knowledge they need in foundation subjects, so that any gaps in pupils' knowledge can be filled.

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 2012.

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	111562
Local authority	Stockton-on-Tees
Inspection number	10240371
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	189
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Clair Robinson
Headteacher	Helen Gregory
Website	www.durhamlane.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 June 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school provides a breakfast club and after-school childcare for a charge.
- The school does not use any 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 has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, senior leaders and SEND coordinator. He met seven governors, including the chair of governors, and met with a representative from Stockton-on-Tees local authority. Discussions were also held with some teachers and support staff.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and computing. For each deep dive, he 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 considered the views of parents through face-to-face discussions and via responses to Ofsted Parent View.
- The inspector listened to pupils reading to a familiar adult, observed their behaviour moving around school and at lunchtime, met with pupils formally to gather their opinions and held informal discussions across both days of the inspection.
- A wide variety of safeguarding information and documentation was scrutinised, including referrals and attendance records.

Inspection team

Andy Jones, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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