

Inspection of a good school: Lord Blyton Primary School

Blyton Avenue, Simonside, South Shields, Tyne and Wear NE34 9BN

Inspection dates:

17 and 18 May 2022

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Lord Blyton is a small nurturing primary school. This was summed up by a parent who quoted the proverb, 'It takes a whole village to raise a child.' This is very much the case. Staff work tirelessly to support pupils and their families. Pupils describe the school as one big family, where everyone feels valued.

Leaders understand the needs of the community they serve well. They know it is important to raise pupils' aspirations to ensure the best possible life chances for all. Pupils are ambitious and want to succeed when they are older.

Some aspects of the curriculum are very well developed. A focus on reading is having a real impact. However, leaders know that in some subjects, there is still more work to be done. They have plans to address this swiftly.

Pupils are happy and feel safe. Behaviour is good in classrooms and around school, such as breaktimes. Pupils say bullying in school is very rare, but they can talk about incidents that have happened online. Teachers are quick to resolve any issues and take them as seriously as if they had happened in school.

Pupils enjoy a variety of special roles and responsibilities, for example eco-warriors, school councillors, school sports games organisers and well-being buddies.

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

Leaders have prioritised reading since the last inspection. They have introduced a new phonics scheme. Staff are well trained and pupils make good progress. In Nursery, pupils learn about sounds in the environment. This prepares them well for more formal phonics teaching in Reception. Learning is carefully sequenced so that pupils can build on what

they already know. Timely checks are made to ensure pupils are on track. Pupils at risk of falling behind are quickly identified for extra support. This helps them to catch up. New reading books have been purchased that closely match the sounds pupils are learning.

Pupils love to read. School leaders promote this well. The school has taken part in the 'Changing the Story Reading Programme'. This has provided staff training and helped parents support their child's reading at home. Pupils in Year 6 talk enthusiastically about the class novels they have studied. They can recall main events and talk about characters confidently.

Pupils get off to a flying start in mathematics in the early years. In Reception, they can recognise a small number of objects without having to count, prompted by the teacher with 'don't count, say the amount'. This deep understanding of number helps them with more challenging concepts as they progress through school. In Year 1, pupils show a good understanding of two-digit numbers. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well to access learning alongside their classmates. For example, they use counters and straws to learn about place value. There is a strong emphasis on developing mathematical vocabulary. Year 3 pupils can give an accurate definition of perimeter and use terms such as quadrilateral, parallelogram and pentagon.

School leaders know that recent changes to the mathematics curriculum are not fully embedded throughout the school. Some pupils in key stage 2 are less engaged in their learning because it does not build on their prior knowledge. Some pupils struggle with new concepts, such as percentages, because there are still gaps in their mathematical understanding. Teachers do not always use assessment accurately to identify these gaps and adapt their teaching.

The curriculum is not as carefully planned in some foundation subjects, such as history and geography. Insufficient thought has been given to the knowledge and skills that leaders want pupils to learn. As a result, pupils are unable to build on prior learning and deepen their understanding of important concepts. For example, in history, Year 5 pupils studying the Anglo-Saxons and Scots struggle to recall previous learning on invasion and empire.

Lord Blyton Primary is an inclusive school. The school has recently opened a specially resourced provision for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs (specially resourced provision). Behaviour is well managed to enable pupils to follow a bespoke curriculum.

Equality and diversity are promoted and celebrated throughout the curriculum. For example, pupils learn about different family types through personal, social and health education. Library books are chosen to reflect the diversity of modern Britain. As one pupil said, 'If everyone was the same, life would be dull.'

The curriculum is enriched by frequent visits and visitors to the school. For example, ex-servicemen from South Tyneside and County Durham lead assemblies on remembrance. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 attend a residential visit to Thurston. Pupils learn first-hand about democracy when they visit South Shields town hall and take part in the Staryland project.

School leaders offer an extensive variety of after-school clubs, such as girls' and boys' football, Latin club and mindfulness club.

In discussion with the headteacher, the inspector agreed that the sequencing of components of knowledge and assessment in foundation subjects may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

School leaders ensure that all staff receive regular training updates. Staff are vigilant and follow school procedures for reporting concerns. Appropriate and timely referrals are made. School leaders will challenge professionals if they do not believe an outcome is in the best interests of a child or their family.

School leaders are acutely aware of local risk factors, such as domestic violence and drug and alcohol misuse. They work closely with external agencies, such as Safer Hands, who provide support for pupils who have witnessed domestic violence. This is also addressed through the curriculum.

Appropriate recruitment checks are undertaken to ensure all adults are safe to work in school. During the inspection, leaders needed to make some minor additions to the records they keep on staff and governors. These were completed while the inspector was on site.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school curriculum is not coherently planned and sequenced towards cumulatively sufficient knowledge and skills in some foundation subjects, such as history and geography. Therefore, pupils are unable to integrate new knowledge into larger ideas. Leaders should revisit the curriculum intent and carefully consider the knowledge and skills pupils need to remember long term and how they will use assessment to keep a check on this.
- Teachers do not always check pupils' understanding in mathematics to identify misconceptions. As a result, some pupils are unable to access their learning because of gaps in prior knowledge. Teachers must check pupils' understanding systematically and adapt their teaching to ensure all pupils can access the curriculum.

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 a

section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2017.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	108700
Local authority	South Tyneside
Inspection number	10211523
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	246
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Councillor Edward Malcolm
Headteacher	Joanne Atherton
Website	www.lordblytonprimaryschool.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	1 March 2017

Information about this school

- The school offers a 16-place, funded, part-time provision for two-year-olds.
- There is a specially resourced provision for 13 pupils with primarily social, emotional and mental health needs.
- A breakfast club operates daily from 8am for a small charge.
- After-school care is offered by the school for a charge. The Hive operates between 3.15pm and 5.15pm.

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, deputy headteacher, child and family pastoral manager and senior leader for early years. He met four governors, spoke with the chair of governors and met with a representative from the local authority. Discussions were also held with some teachers and support staff.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. 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 their 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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