

Inspection of a good school: Cramlington Shanklea Primary School

Nairn Road, Parkside Chase, Cramlington, Northumberland NE23 1RQ

Inspection dates:

30 April and 1 May 2024

Outcome

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Shanklea Primary School is a caring and highly inclusive place to learn, grow and develop. Staff nurture pupils and care for them deeply. Pupils are given a range of opportunities to develop their interests and talents. For example, pupils take part in a range of sports, music and academic clubs.

The school offers pupils a variety of experiences and visits to develop their knowledge and cultural understanding. At the time of the inspection, pupils were excited to be attending the theatre to watch a performance of 'The Boy at the Back of the Class', having enjoyed reading the novel with their teacher. Pupils visit many local places of interest to enrich their understanding of the curriculum.

Pupils behave well in school. Incidents of bullying are rare. Pupils trust that the staff in school will respond to their concerns.

Academic standards have declined over time, resulting in many pupils not achieving as well as they should in their national tests at the end of key stage 2. However, a new leadership team has recently been appointed at the school. Leaders have taken swift and effective action to begin to improve the quality of the curriculum.

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

Reading is a priority at the school. There is a clear approach to teaching phonics. Leaders have recently invested in books, resources and staff training to help pupils who are at the earliest stages of reading. Pupils regularly practise their reading. The school provides additional support for those pupils who begin to fall behind. Pupils are becoming increasingly confident and fluent readers. The school has carefully planned the different

books that pupils will read from early years through to Year 6. Pupils read a range of genres written by a broad range of authors from diverse backgrounds.

Leaders have recently increased the ambition and consistency in the curriculum. They have recently identified the most important knowledge and skills they want pupils to know and remember. They have planned the order of the curriculum logically. For example, across the curriculum in geography, pupils learn to identify key features of human and physical geography, before describing them and then exploring the similarities and differences between a range of environments.

The school has recently developed its assessments of pupils so that they are closely connected to what pupils have learned over time. However, in some foundation subjects, assessments mostly cover the facts that pupils have been taught and not the important subject-specific skills.

The implementation of the curriculum is in its early stages. Pupils have not benefited from learning the new curriculum in full, so its impact is yet to be fully realised. Teachers are skilled. Their explanations are clear. In some lessons, teachers do not always check pupils' understanding systematically or adapt learning when they should. This means that sometimes teachers do not identify pupils' misconceptions. In other instances, it means that progress through the curriculum is slower than it should be.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported very well in school. Pupils have detailed support plans that outline strategies and interventions to ensure they can succeed. These strategies are implemented well. Leaders are committed to helping pupils develop their independence. For example, the recent work on the 'zones of regulation' is helping pupils recognise the signs of becoming upset or anxious. The school is successfully teaching pupils ways to try to manage this themselves.

Behaviour in lessons is calm and orderly. Pupils are polite and welcoming to visitors. Younger pupils are particularly enthusiastic about their learning. They enjoy taking part in lessons and helping each other with their work. Leaders have worked effectively to improve attendance. However, there are still some key groups of pupils who are absent from school too often.

The personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum is structured well. It is age-appropriate. In the early years, children learn to recognise emotions and feelings. The curriculum develops to focus on friendships and healthy relationships. Pupils have an assured understanding of how to keep themselves safe online.

Pupils strongly value the difference in other people. They understand British values. Pupils are given opportunities to develop their leadership skills in a range of roles, such as bullying ambassadors and reading governors. Pupils' confidence and resilience are well developed.

Leaders support staff with their well-being and workload. Governors take a full and active role in the school. They know its strengths and the areas to develop. They fulfil their statutory duties well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The implementation of the school's revised curriculum is in its early stages. As a result, it has not had a sustained and significant impact on pupils. The school should ensure that the new curriculum is embedded and that effective, adaptive teaching of it consistently promotes higher levels of academic challenge, progress and support for all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged.
- Some disadvantaged pupils do not attend school often enough. This means that they have significant gaps in their learning. The school should strengthen its strategies further to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils.
- Assessment in some foundation subjects is not as rigorous as it needs to be. This means that teachers do not know the full extent of what gaps pupils have in their knowledge and skills in these subjects. The school should further develop its assessment in foundation subjects to ensure it is more rigorous and covers aspects of both substantive and disciplinary knowledge. This is so that teachers can identify precisely what pupils know, remember and can do in these subjects.

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 October 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](#)' 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

Unique reference number	122194
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10313248
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Dawn Nicholson
Headteacher	Laura Ritson
Website	www.shanklea.northumberland.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	27 November 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The current headteacher joined the school in January 2023.
- A small number of pupils access unregistered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement 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, including the special educational needs coordinator, about progress since the last inspection.
- The inspector met with members of the governing body. The inspector also spoke to the school's improvement adviser and a representative from the local authority.
- To evaluate the quality of education, the inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector also reviewed the curriculum in history and in art and design.
- The inspector met with the leader of early years to discuss the curriculum. The inspector visited the early years provision.
- The inspector spoke to pupils in groups, in lessons and around the school during social times.
- 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 discussed the PSHE education curriculum with leaders and spoke to pupils about how this curriculum and associated experiences support their understanding.
- The inspector evaluated the responses to the online parent, pupil and staff surveys.

Inspection team

Dan McKeating, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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