

# Inspection of Swarland Primary School

Leamington Lane, Newton-on-the-Moor, Morpeth, Northumberland NE65 9JP

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Inspection dates:	8 and 9 October 2024
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Previous inspection grade	Good

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

Pupils enjoy attending this happy, friendly school. They work hard, behave well and treat each other with respect. The youngest children thrive in Reception class and make a great start to their education. Pupils continue to grow in confidence through the school. They achieve well and are skilfully prepared for the next stage of their education.

The school builds very strong relationships with children and their families. Right from the start, staff adapt their approach to meet children's needs. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well. The support these pupils receive enables them to play a full part in all aspects of school life.

The school expects pupils to 'be the best they can be' in all aspects of school life. Pupils try hard to meet these high expectations. They achieve well across many subjects and enjoy a wide range of clubs, from Irish dancing to chess. Pupils value the school's support for managing their mental health. They speak positively about the techniques they learn to reduce anxiety and cope with setbacks.

Pupils feel safe at school. They know when and how to seek help. They trust staff to take them seriously and to sort out any problems if they arise.

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

In this school there is a shared ambition that all pupils will succeed. There is a continuous drive to improve outcomes for pupils whatever their needs. The school's work to improve the curriculum and provision for mental health is particularly effective. Leaders, including governors, are considerate of the pressures on staff in this small school. Staff feel well supported and are proud to work at the school.

The school's curriculum is broad and well sequenced. It is successfully adapted to mixed-age classes. Subjects such as geography, that were previously less developed, are now much improved. Pupils generally learn well across different subjects. Staff receive a wide range of training and have detailed subject knowledge. Pupils have a thorough understanding of their learning. They draw on this to help them understand new content. For example, pupils relate their knowledge of Vesuvius to their learning about volcanoes in Iceland.

Provision for pupils with SEND is of a high quality. The school works closely with parents and external agencies to identify individual needs. This often takes place well before pupils join the school. As a result, staff provide appropriate and timely support. This includes specialist equipment, reassurance from adults and pre-teaching. This support enables pupils with SEND to learn the curriculum well.

Reading is a strength of the school. Children in Reception enjoy a curriculum rich in stories, rhymes and conversation. They develop a wide vocabulary. Consequently, children are keen to learn to read.

Staff teach the school's phonics programme with precision. Pupils' reading books and writing activities match the sounds they have learned. Pupils who are at risk of falling behind receive extra phonics and reading sessions. This helps them catch up. Pupils routinely achieve well in phonics. They go on to become accomplished readers by the time they leave school.

Pupils gain a thorough understanding of mathematical concepts and vocabulary. They get regular opportunities to develop their understanding through solving problems. Pupils enjoy their mathematics lessons and achieve well in national tests and other assessments.

The school's programme for personal development is wide ranging. Pupils learn about the diversity of modern Britain through their studies in geography and religious education. They visit Newcastle and London, and hear from visitors such as Paralympians. Pupils value their learning about online safety and healthy relationships. They have some understanding of fundamental British values through school events, such as the election of school councillors. However, pupils' understanding of aspects of democracy, such as national elections and parliament, is less secure.

The school's approach to behaviour is effective. High expectations begin in early years and are consistent throughout the school. Lessons and breaktimes are calm and orderly. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, an increasing number of pupils at the school have struggled with their behaviour. The school has sought advice from external specialists. As a result, staff have reviewed the school behaviour policies and how these are implemented. Incidents of poor behaviour are increasingly rare.

The early years provision is exceptional. The curriculum is impressively well planned and continuously adapted to children's needs. Staff are particularly adept at developing children's language and social awareness through conversation. Children show remarkable resilience and independence in their learning. This is because activities are expertly chosen to allow pupils to build on their existing knowledge. Children in the early years achieve the best possible outcomes and are well prepared for life in Year 1.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The school's programme for pupils' personal development does not cover some fundamental British values, such as democracy, in sufficient depth. This means that pupils are not as well prepared for life after school as they could be. The school should develop further opportunities for pupils to learn about all of the British values, to support pupils to develop their understanding of the world around them.

## 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>	122240
<b>Local authority</b>	Northumberland
<b>Inspection number</b>	10346367
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	83
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Local authority
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	John Scott
<b>Headteacher</b>	Louise Fletcher
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.swarland.northumberland.sch.uk">www.swarland.northumberland.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	9 January 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- Wraparound childcare is provided by a private registered provider on site.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and with governors. The lead inspector also held conversations with a representative of Northumberland local authority.
- Inspectors spoke with leaders about provision for pupils with SEND and considered relevant documentation and practice.
- Inspectors spoke with teaching and support staff and considered responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors met with pupils throughout the inspection, both formally and informally, during breaktimes and in lessons.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and computing. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, visited lessons, talked with pupils and looked at pupils' work. Inspectors also spoke with pupils about their learning in other subjects.
- Inspectors considered the content of governing body minutes and other documentation.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: 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.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and spoke with parents at the beginning of the school day.
- Inspectors considered pupils' behaviour in and outside lessons. Inspectors also considered school behaviour records and spoke with pupils about behaviour.

### **Inspection team**

Ian Dawson, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Jonathon Bull

Ofsted Inspector

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