

# Inspection of Ebchester CofE Primary School

Shaw Lane, Ebchester, Consett, County Durham DH8 0QB

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Inspection dates: 27 and 28 June 2023

|                              |             |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b> | <b>Good</b> |
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|---------------------------|-------------|
| 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>Good</b> |
| Previous inspection grade | Good        |

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

Leaders and staff have created a welcoming, nurturing and friendly environment in the school. There is a strong sense of community and a family atmosphere. Pupils of all ages socialise together. They are kind to one another and get along well. Older pupils act as role models and support younger pupils, for example by eating lunch with them. Pupils are very involved in the life of the school. Among other things, they act as playground leaders, run the computing committee and look after Elvis, the school tortoise.

Pupils engage very well with their learning. They show interest, determination and effort. Behaviour is good. Lessons proceed without interruption. Pupils say that bullying is very rare. If there are any problems, they trust the teachers to help them sort it out.

Leaders have high expectations for what pupils will learn and how they will be ready for the next stage in their education. They have made sure that pupils have access to a wide range of opportunities outside of the classroom. Pupils make the most of these enrichment activities, such as ice-skating, art gallery visits and the chance to experience wheelchair basketball.

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

Leaders have drawn on external support to improve the curriculum by clearly identifying the knowledge required in each subject. This work has been effective. In mathematics, for example, pupils advance their knowledge of fractions in a careful sequence with increasing complexity. Teachers check that pupils are secure in their understanding before they move on. Teachers mostly ensure that pupils revisit important concepts and knowledge. However, this recap and recall is stronger in subjects such as mathematics and science. It is not as effective in other subjects, such as history and geography.

Leaders have ensured that there is a programme for reading that starts in early years and is taught with consistency. All staff are trained in the delivery of phonics. The books that pupils read are matched to the sounds they know. Pupils who need more support are quickly identified and given extra sessions to keep up. Pupils of all ages express an enjoyment of reading. They talk confidently about the authors and books that they enjoy reading. Pupils like visiting the library, which is at the heart of the school. Teachers ensure that pupils experience a range of fiction, non-fiction and poetry, which also links to their learning in other subjects.

In the early years, staff have established routines that children understand and follow. The curriculum is ambitious and provides a strong start for the following years. Children listen to stories and join in with enthusiasm. In Reception, they are introduced to mathematical ideas using number frames. Staff interact skilfully with children to develop their vocabulary, confidence and independence.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well. Leaders identify the needs of pupils with SEND early and accurately. Leaders ensure that pupils with SEND who need expertise from external agencies receive it. Pupils with SEND access all aspects of the curriculum and enjoy the same range of enrichment opportunities as their peers.

Leaders have given careful thought to pupils' personal development. Pupils learn important information about how to keep themselves safe, e-safety and healthy lifestyles. Leaders ensure that everyone can take part in after-school activities and go on trips and visits. These activities give pupils a range of experience that supports their learning in subjects such as geography and history, along with sports coaching and residential visits.

Leaders and staff engage effectively with parents. They know the families well. Parents are extremely supportive of the school. They value the care, support and opportunities that staff provide. In this small school, everyone has to work as a team and take on multiple responsibilities. Staff say that leaders understand this pressure and are mindful of their well-being. There is a school-wide emphasis on well-being that is deliberately developed for both staff and pupils.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that there is a strong culture of safeguarding at the school. Staff training is effective. Staff know the risks that pupils face. Their work in safeguarding is supported by clear systems and policy. Appropriate recruitment checks are carried out. Leaders respond quickly to safeguarding concerns. When necessary, they work effectively with external agencies.

Pupils of all ages are taught about important aspects of safeguarding, such as healthy relationships and online safety. Pupils know who to speak to if they have concerns.

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

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

- Pupils are not given sufficient opportunities in some foundation subjects to revisit previous learning. This means that they cannot routinely apply what they have learned previously to what they will learn next. Leaders should ensure that, as the new curriculum embeds, there is sufficient opportunity for pupils to re-cap the most important knowledge and ideas.

## 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

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| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 114214   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Durham   |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10240394   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary  |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Voluntary controlled   |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 5 to 11  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 93   |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body   |
| <b>Chair of governing body</b>             | Geoff Gibson   |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Rachel Clasper   |
| <b>Website</b>                             | <a href="http://www.ebchester.durham.sch.uk">www.ebchester.durham.sch.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | 1 December 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005                   |

## Information about this school

- The school is part of the Diocese of Durham.
- The school provides a breakfast and after-school club.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and computing. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with subject leaders, discussed the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work.

- Inspectors observed pupils reading to familiar adults.
- Inspectors observed the behaviour of pupils in lessons and at social times.
- Inspectors studied a variety of documents. These included the school's self-evaluation, the minutes of governing body meetings, attendance information and safeguarding records.
- Inspectors held meetings with governors and representatives from the local authority and the diocese. Further meetings were held with a range of school leaders, including those responsible for early reading, the special educational needs coordinator and the leader for early years.
- Inspectors scrutinised the single central record and looked at how safeguarding is managed. Inspector spoke to leaders, teachers, support staff and pupils about the culture of safeguarding in the school.
- 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

Nichola Irving

Ofsted Inspector

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