

Inspection of Ferryhill Station Primary School

Ferryhill Station, Ferryhill, County Durham DL17 0DB

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 October 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy being at this school. They say, 'Everyone is welcome here.' Pupils who are new to the school are quick to settle and make friends. This is because pupils are very caring and supportive of each other. They work and play together well.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils respond well to these. They understand the school's 'snakes and ladders' system. They like getting points for good behaviour. Pupils also learn about the rights and feelings of others through lessons and conversations with staff. They say that this helps them to understand different opinions and needs.

Leaders are ambitious in what they want pupils to achieve. However, some teachers do not have the subject knowledge required to deliver all aspects of the wider curriculum as well as they should. Leaders recognise this and have planned a training programme to support all staff to deliver the wider curriculum well.

Pupils take responsibility from an early age. The youngest children learn to tidy up after activities. Older pupils volunteer to be school council members or community ambassadors. They feel safe and well looked after by staff at school. Pupils learn about bullying and know how to recognise it. They say it is very rare and that when it has happened, staff have been quick to put a stop to it.

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

The school has faced considerable financial and staffing challenges since the previous inspection. To address these challenges, governors have created a federation with Ludworth Primary School. This has enabled leaders to share resources and expertise between the two schools.

Leaders have prioritised reading and mathematics. Children listen to stories and begin to learn sounds from the moment they enter Nursery. This prepares them well for phonics lessons in Reception. The school phonics programme is well structured. Pupils learn to decode and encode words. They build their fluency in reading by practising these familiar sounds in school and at home. Reading books match the sounds pupils know well. Staff make regular checks to identify any gaps in pupils' phonics knowledge. Leaders are swift to address any such gaps. Pupils access a wide range of quality books. Many of these texts reflect what pupils are learning in other subjects. This helps pupils broaden their understanding of the world.

Leaders have ensured that the mathematics curriculum builds pupils' knowledge over time. Teachers provide pupils with plenty of opportunities to apply what they have learned. Pupils use mathematical vocabulary to explain their reasoning when they tackle problems. Many pupils enjoy mathematics and say it is their favourite subject.

Leaders have worked with federation colleagues to introduce a new curriculum. Programmes of study identify the important content pupils should learn in each class. Teachers sometimes miss opportunities to develop important concepts such as chronology in history. This is because they lack some of the subject knowledge they need to deliver this new curriculum. Leaders know this and have organised a programme of training across the federation.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well provided for. Leaders ensure that staff understand individual pupils' needs. Staff are well trained. They provide effective support for pupils in lessons and during breaktimes. This enables pupils with SEND to play a full part in all aspects of school life. They attend school clubs, enjoy their learning and keep up with their peers.

Leaders have developed a thorough programme of personal development for pupils. Pupils enjoy sports opportunities, fundraising runs and team-building trips. They learn about world views and meet representatives of different faiths. Pupils vote for members of the school council. These members play an active role in improving the school. They buy new books for the library and plan improvements to the outdoor area. Community ambassadors engage in litter picks and local safety awareness. Through these activities, pupils develop a sense of democracy, tolerance and respect.

Children make a positive start to their education from their arrival in the provision for two-year-olds. Children develop their independence well through activities such as tidy up time and getting dressed for outdoors. They learn to find solutions to conflict as they access activities such as building houses for the three little pigs. This provides a strong foundation for positive behaviour throughout the school. Staff have established effective communication with parents. They are quick to identify children who may need extra support. The environment in the early years does not promote the learning of new vocabulary as effectively as it could. Children do not have the opportunity to learn or revisit new words and language through the repetition of familiar routines. Staff acknowledge they have work to do to improve this further.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors ensure a strong culture of safeguarding. All necessary checks and procedures are in place to make sure that children are safe in school. All staff receive regular safeguarding training. They know how to identify and report issues that might represent a safeguarding concern. Leaders have ensured that the curriculum includes lessons on how to stay safe. Children learn how to avoid online and offline risks. They learn when and how to seek help if something makes them feel uncomfortable.

Leaders work closely with families and external agencies to ensure that pupils are safe. A significant minority of pupils join or leave the school throughout the year.

Leaders maintain effective systems to support this process. They are determined that no child misses out on education. Governors take their safeguarding responsibilities seriously. They undertake audits of safeguarding arrangements and maintain oversight of attendance and behaviour. This enables governors to hold leaders to account.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, pupils' understanding of key concepts such as chronology is not strong. The school's new curriculum identifies key themes and concepts which must be taught. However, teachers do not have sufficient subject knowledge to fully implement the programmes of study. This means that lesson activities do not always cover key content in sufficient depth for pupils to remember it. Leaders should continue to train all staff to deliver the new curriculum so that key content is covered thoroughly.
- In early years, children's use of key vocabulary when playing and learning independently is limited. It does not match their vocabulary when taking part in adult-led activities. The environment in the early years does not provide opportunities for pupils to practise and become familiar with any new language they have learned. Leaders should carry out their plans to improve the early years environment so that it encourages children to become familiar with the vocabulary they are taught.

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	114078
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	10241148
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	70
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Stuart Kime
Headteacher	Joanne Sones
Website	www.ferryhillstationschool.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	8 and 9 January 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school formed the Limestone Federation with Ludworth Primary School in September 2021. The two schools share a headteacher and a single governing body.
- The school offers provision for two-year-olds for 15 hours per week.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- During this inspection, inspectors met with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. The lead inspector met with governors, including the chair of the governing body. The lead inspector also held conversations with a representative of the 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 the 12 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 early reading, mathematics, history and physical education. Inspectors met with subject leaders, visited lessons, listened to pupils read, 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, including reports from local authority officers.
- To evaluate the school’s management of safeguarding, inspectors considered a range of relevant school policies and examined the single central record and the school’s procedure for the safer recruitment of staff. Inspectors spoke with staff, governors and pupils to check their views on safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted 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

Amy Keith

Ofsted Inspector

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