

# Inspection of a good school: Portobello Primary School

Tamerton Drive, Birtley, Chester le Street, County Durham DH3 2LY

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Inspection dates:

25 and 26 October 2023

## Outcome

Portobello Primary School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Portobello Primary School is a calm and welcoming environment for pupils to learn. Staff meet pupils arriving at school with warmth and care. Pupils feel safe in school. They know there is an adult to talk to if they are worried. Some pupils, such as those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), have key workers who ensure that they participate fully in school.

Pupils want to achieve well and reach the school's high expectations of them. They participate in lessons and focus on their learning well. Lessons are engaging and interesting. Staff know pupils and their families very well.

Staff encourage pupils to be responsible citizens. Pupils engage positively in leadership roles, such as representing their peers on the school council or becoming a team captain. Pupils who hold these roles help to shape life in school. For example, pupils with leadership responsibilities discuss the changes they would like to make to the school site with governors. Pupils are very aware of their rights and responsibilities. Pupils attend the 'Rights Responsible' club, where they engage in community and charity work. There are several other clubs and activities for pupils to attend, such as the football and performing arts clubs. Many pupils are looking forward to taking part in the upcoming production of 'Matilda'. Their talents and interests are developed well.

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

The school reviews and evaluates the impact of the curriculum regularly. Subject leaders have created logical and well-sequenced curriculums with clear end goals in the core and foundation subjects. The important knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn begins in the early years. For example, early years children are introduced to mathematical concepts such as heaviest and lightest. Children in Reception predict which objects weigh more or less with increasing accuracy. This prepares children well for the mathematics curriculum in Year 1.

In lessons, staff check pupils' understanding regularly. Teachers and support staff have an accurate picture of what pupils know. Teachers ensure that any misconceptions are addressed. Lessons begin with activities which help pupils to remember what they have been taught previously. Teachers use this retrieval work to ensure that pupils' knowledge is secure before moving on to new topics and tasks. For example, in physical education pupils recall the different types of throws they could use for different activities before putting them into practice. There is also a sharp focus on ensuring that pupils learn the vocabulary they need to access the curriculum. Teachers model the use of the important words and terms that pupils need to know. Pupils feel confident when using these words and terms themselves.

Pupils with SEND are supported to access the curriculum when working individually, as part of a small group and within a whole class setting. Staff use appropriate resources to meet pupils' individual needs. One-to-one work is provided skilfully by teaching assistants. They are knowledgeable about the strategies needed to support pupils with SEND. Adults use these strategies well to help pupils with SEND to meet their targets. Pupils with SEND are fully included in the life of the school and are prepared for the next stage of their education. Parents and carers are very pleased with the provision that their children with SEND receive.

The school has implemented a clear phonics programme. This begins in Reception. Adults assess pupils' phonic knowledge regularly. Pupils who need help are quickly identified. These pupils receive help to catch up. The books that pupils read match the sounds that they know. The school promotes a love of reading. Pupils demonstrate an enjoyment of reading and can name favourite books, stories and authors.

There are positive relationships between adults and pupils. These create a positive foundation for learning. Pupils follow routines well. Staff quickly deal with any incidents of poor behaviour. The school monitors attendance effectively and ensures that pupils attend well.

The school has ensured there is a carefully considered personal, social and health education curriculum in place. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including online. They know about tolerance and respect. Pupils are taught about different faiths and religions. However, they cannot recall this knowledge readily. Pupils confuse religions and cannot discuss meaningful aspects of faith.

Staff are very positive about the school and enjoy working here. Leaders ensure that staff are well supported. Governors carry out their duties effectively and have a supportive and appropriately challenging relationship with the school. They have an accurate picture of the strengths of the school and the areas that require further development. The school keeps parents and carers well informed through regular newsletters. They are very positive about the education and experiences their children receive at the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- Some aspects of the curriculum to support pupils' personal development are not fully established. For example, the curriculum does not raise pupils' awareness of different faiths and beliefs in sufficient depth. The school should develop this aspect of the curriculum so that pupils learn more about different faiths and beliefs.

## 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 May 2018.

## 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>	108336
<b>Local authority</b>	Gateshead
<b>Inspection number</b>	10289973
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	193
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Dorothy McGuinness
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jayne Humphrey
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.portobelloprimary.eschools.co.uk">www.portobelloprimary.eschools.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	9 May 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspector carried out this graded inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

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 leaders and has taken that into account in the evaluation of the school.
- 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 lead inspector spoke to senior leaders, including the local authority school improvement partner and members of the local governing body.
- The lead inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, early reading and physical education. For each deep dive, the lead inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector evaluated responses from parents to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. The inspector spoke with some parents dropping their children off at school and evaluated the responses that staff and pupils made to Ofsted's online surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Jessica McKay, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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