

Inspection of Biddick Hall Junior School

Chesterton Road, South Shields, Tyne and Wear NE34 9SP

Inspection dates:	15 and 16 October 2024
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

This school has a profound impact on the growth of pupils both academically and socially. Staff care deeply about pupils. They inspire pupils to see that learning is important. Pupils are aspirational for themselves and each other. All pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, achieve exceptionally well across the curriculum. Published outcomes show that pupils attain well above national averages in English and mathematics. This is reflected in the high-quality work that pupils complete in school in these subjects and across the rest of the curriculum.

Pupils feel safe and confident in school. Those in Year 3 learn the school routines quickly and are supported by staff to settle in well. In the older year groups, behaviour is exceptional. Pupils listen intently to their teachers and are very focused in their lessons.

Pupils are extremely proud of their school. They appreciate the wide variety of character-building opportunities, including many educational visits linked to the school curriculum. Clubs such as 'Groove and Glow' allow pupils to follow their interests and learn new skills. Through their many leadership roles, such as being a member of the school council, pupils make a significant contribution to the school and the wider community.

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

The highly effective staff team is the cornerstone to this impressive school. Adults share a mission to give the pupils the best possible education that they can. Staff keep up to date with current educational developments and research. They are empowered to try new approaches to find out what works best for the pupils. The governing body works effectively with the staff team to provide the resources that pupils need. The way in which the curriculum is taught motivates pupils to do well. For example, the purposeful use of modern technology enhances pupils' learning in the curriculum.

The school has a highly ambitious curriculum which supports all pupils to achieve exceptionally well. The school has mapped out precisely the knowledge that pupils need to develop. Teachers routinely check what pupils know and adjust the curriculum content to fill any gaps in pupils' prior knowledge. Pupils have opportunities to practise their new learning and to recap on previous learning. As a result, they can recall their learning accurately in many subject areas. Their knowledge of concepts in science and religious education (RE) is particularly impressive.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have their needs accurately identified. The school ensures that pupils receive appropriate support when they enter Year 3. Staff encourage pupils with SEND to become independent in their learning. For example, they provide pupils with word banks and writing prompts. This boosts pupils' self-confidence and competence. They learn alongside their peers, as well as receiving personalised learning in the school's quiet spaces. Pupils with SEND achieve very well.

Staff have consistently high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils respond well to the clear boundaries set for them. This results in a calm learning environment. Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning. However, some pupils are absent from school too often and miss out on valuable learning. Staff have to direct their attention to these pupils when they return to school. This disrupts the teaching and learning of other pupils. The school has introduced many initiatives, such as rewards for good attendance, but these are not making a sufficient difference. The rate of persistent absence is high.

The school's work on pupils' personal development is exemplary. Pupils access a memorable programme of themed weeks throughout the academic year. These contribute greatly to their knowledge and understanding of the world beyond school. Multifaith Week was successful in teaching pupils that all can live well together. They are highly respectful of people of faith and those with no faith. Pupils readily articulate and discuss what the fundamental British values mean to their school and their wider community. Pupils have a keen sense of justice and equality.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Too many pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are absent too often. Consequently, they miss valuable learning and enrichment opportunities. The school should review its approach to improving attendance and make sure that the entire school community, including parents and carers, understands the value of regular attendance.

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	108678
Local authority	South Tyneside
Inspection number	10322964
Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	227
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Amanda Hayward
Headteacher	Michelle Collinson
Website	www.biddickhallschool.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	8 and 9 March 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses one registered alternative provision.

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 second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the continued impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other senior leaders and staff.
- The lead inspector met also with representatives of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives into English, mathematics, history and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors looked at curriculum planning, conducted joint lesson visits with leaders, spoke to pupils about their work and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspectors also considered the science curriculum.
- Prior to the inspection, the lead inspector reviewed documents on the school's website, as well as published information about the school's performance and previous Ofsted inspections.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms, around the school and at breaktimes. They spoke with pupils about their views of the school and their learning, behaviour and safety.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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.
- As well as speaking to some parents, inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including any free-text comments. The inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

Mary Cook, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Chris Connor

Ofsted Inspector

Chris Baines

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