

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Usworth Colliery Primary School

Manor Road, Sulgrave, Washington, Tyne and Wear NE37 3BL

Inspection dates:

7 and 8 January 2025

Outcome

Usworth Colliery Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Usworth Colliery Primary School is a welcoming and inclusive place where everyone is valued. Pupils' individuality is celebrated. Pupils enjoy being a part of the school community. From the early years onwards, pupils are keen to learn and excited to participate in the rich experiences the school provides.

The school has high expectations for all pupils. Pupils rise to these expectations, working hard in lessons and behaving well. Relationships between staff and pupils are highly positive throughout school. Pupils feel confident to speak to teachers about any worries they might have.

Recent changes to the curriculum have increased the opportunities pupils have to revisit prior learning. This is having a positive impact on pupils' learning. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) thrive because of the tailored support they receive. The school has effective systems to support pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs.

Pupils are proud to contribute to the life of the school. They remember their learning from educational visits to local museums and cultural events. These broaden their understanding of the world. Pupils know it is important to treat others fairly.

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

Pupils benefit from a well-designed and ambitious curriculum that prepares them effectively for the next stages of their education. The school has identified the important knowledge and skills that pupils need to remember in each subject. Teachers build on pupils' prior learning so that pupils can make meaningful connections and deepen their

understanding. The school's focus on developing pupils' oracy is helping them to discuss their learning with confidence. In some subjects, the curriculum in the past has not helped pupils to achieve as well as they should have. This resulted in lower outcomes. The school has made changes to the curriculum and lesson delivery to address this. However, the school is aware that there is more to do to close gaps in pupils' writing skills.

Early reading is a priority. Children begin learning to read as soon as they start Reception. Pupils who struggle with reading are identified quickly and receive targeted support. This ensures they catch up with their peers. Pupils of all ages enjoy reading. Older pupils act as reading ambassadors, helping to foster a love of books across the school.

The provision for pupils with SEND is an important part of the school. Staff are skilled at identifying pupils' needs and making effective adaptations to the curriculum. Appropriate use of interventions and effective support help pupils with SEND to develop independence and access learning alongside their peers.

The early years curriculum gives children a strong start to their education. The school has embedded a language-rich environment where children develop their communication skills. Children enjoy exploring the indoor and outdoor environments with their peers. They are curious, happy and play well together. Children are familiar with the well-established routines and expectations. This helps them to settle quickly and learn effectively. They have several opportunities during 'explore time' to practise new skills and learning.

Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. They show respect for each other and staff. Pupils have a positive attitude to challenges in lessons. They work together well and show resilience in the face of difficulties. Specialist staff play a key role in helping pupils to manage their behaviour and emotions.

The school recognises that attendance, including its work with pupils' families, must continue to be of the highest priority, and has taken several steps to strengthen this work. However, the school's systems to improve pupils' attendance are not effective enough. The culture of poor attendance and punctuality contributes to some pupils not achieving as well as they should be.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of opportunities to develop their character and cultural awareness. Trips to local historical sites, museums and the theatre enrich the curriculum and help pupils to understand different perspectives. All pupils benefit from the school's cultural passport, in which each year they gain 'stamps' for the cultural activities they have experienced.

Leaders and governors are committed to providing the best possible education for pupils. They have a clear vision for the school and regularly review progress against key priorities. Staff feel well supported. Their workload and well-being are a high priority for the school. Parents and carers appreciate the efforts made by staff to engage with them and support their children's education.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils have not had enough high-quality opportunities to practise their foundational writing skills. As a result, some pupils are not able to write with the fluency and accuracy they should. The school should ensure that the recently strengthened writing curriculum is fully embedded so that pupils achieve the best possible outcomes in writing, including their handwriting.
- The initiatives to improve pupils' rates of attendance are not having the impact that the school intends. Some pupils' low attendance means that they miss out on important learning and do not achieve as well as their peers. The school should strengthen the effectiveness of its current strategies to improve the attendance and punctuality of these pupils.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in January 2020.

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	108799
Local authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	10346271
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	352
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Alison Logan
Headteacher	Alison Forster
Website	www.usworthcolliery.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	15 and 16 January 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with autism spectrum disorder.
- The proportion of pupils who receive support for SEND is above the national average.
- The school uses one registered alternative education provider.
- The current headteacher was appointed in September 2023.

Information about this inspection

- 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector spoke to senior leaders, including representatives from the local authority and governing body.

- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector also spoke to leaders about pupils' learning in some other subjects.
- 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 inspector met the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator, spoke to pupils with SEND and reviewed plans to support these pupils. The inspector also visited lessons to see how pupils with SEND are supported.
- The inspector visited the early years provision to check safeguarding arrangements and discuss learning with children and leaders.
- The inspector observed behaviour at the start of the day, at lunchtimes and in lessons.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys for pupils and staff. They also considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including any free-text comments.

Inspection team

Georgina Chinaka, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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