

Inspection of Chollerton Church of England Aided First School

Station Road, Barrasford, Hexham, Northumberland NE48 4AA

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 April 2024

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Chollerton live out the school's vision of 'be the best you can be'. They embody the school's key values, including nurture, respect and inclusion. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They are happy and safe. Over their time in this small and welcoming first school, pupils develop into confident members of the community.

There are high expectations for pupils' achievement. Staff create a climate in which pupils can meet these high expectations. From their earliest days in school, staff nurture pupils. Adults encourage all pupils to reach their potential. Staff value pupils as individuals. There is a clear respect for, and celebration of, this individuality.

Pupils exhibit exceptional behaviour and attitudes. Pupils of all ages play happily and look after each other. Older pupils support the youngest pupils in their play and at mealtimes. They act as role models for others. Pupils know that trusted adults would deal with any issues quickly and effectively.

Pupils and parents alike share in the benefits of being part of the school 'family'. One parent summed up the thoughts of many by saying, 'Chollerton First School is an amazing school, where the children and the community are at the heart.'

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

From their first days in Reception, children enjoy a vibrant and well-planned curriculum. This inspires them to develop their innate curiosity. There is a clear focus on communication and language. Adults use careful modelling of adventurous vocabulary in their interactions with children. Children then use this vocabulary in their own exploration and learning. Children engage with tasks for prolonged periods of time. They demonstrate high levels of concentration. Children confidently apply their learning from different areas of the early years curriculum to new learning experiences. Achievement in early years is high. As a result, children are prepared well for the next stage of their education.

Well-trained adults teach the school's chosen phonics programme with consistency. Staff use assessment to precisely highlight any gaps in pupils' phonics knowledge. Pupils then receive bespoke support, tailored to individual need. As a result of this quality phonics teaching, pupils secure high outcomes in national tests at the end of Year 1. Pupils develop into fluent and confident readers. They enjoy many opportunities to read for pleasure. This means that pupils have the reading skills that they need to access the wider curriculum in Years 3 and 4. This prepares them well for the transition to middle school at the end of Year 4.

Leaders have carefully considered how best to meet the needs of all pupils at the school. As a result, pupils benefit from a broad curriculum, which addresses individual needs. Leaders foster an inclusive environment. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well. Pupils enjoy their lessons. Children in Reception used their prior knowledge of space and planets to design and

build 'rockets' in the playground, for example. However, in a small number of subjects, assessment is not used to identify gaps in learning or in pupils' knowledge with sufficient precision. Teaching is, therefore, not sufficiently well focused to address these gaps. Pupils are not committing to long-term memory their learning in these subjects.

Pupils have positive attitudes towards each other. As a result, issues with behaviour are few in number. The school takes effective action to address issues if they arise. Pupils value the 'worry boxes' that they have in the classroom. They know that adults check these regularly and deal with any worries quickly.

The school's approach to pupils' wider development is exemplary. Pupils benefit from a well-planned curriculum for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Through carefully planned experiences, including visits and visitors to school, pupils develop a keen sense of equality. The school plans discrete opportunities for pupils to understand and appreciate other faiths, religions and cultures. A grandparent came into school to talk about Diwali, for example. The headteacher has also developed links with a school in Ethiopia, with teachers from Ethiopia visiting Chollerton. This helps pupils broaden their horizons. Pupils understand and respect difference. The school also works in partnership with a local charity that supports people with dementia. Children in school build relationships with these adults. This fosters a keen sense of empathy and understanding.

Leaders have a clear understanding of the school. Governors get all the information they need to offer challenge and support to the school. They hold leaders to account effectively. Staff are very positive about the way that leaders take staff well-being and workload into account. Staff are very well supported by leaders at all levels.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, assessment is not used effectively to check that pupils have a secure understanding of their learning. This means that further teaching does not allow pupils to develop a secure base of knowledge that matches the school's ambition. The school must ensure that assessment is used to inform future teaching so that pupils build more secure knowledge over time.

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 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	122272
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10297331
Type of school	First
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	44
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sarah Lunn and Ummu Feeley
Headteacher	Hazel Davey
Website	www.chollerton.northumberland.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	20 and 21 November 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The governing body has recently appointed a new headteacher, who will take up her post in September 2024.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The number of pupils on roll at this school is well below average.
- As the school is designated as having a religious character, it is inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005. The last section 48 inspection of the school was in June 2019.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, the senior teacher, other school staff, representatives of the governing body, a representative of the diocese and the local authority school improvement partner.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- An inspector listened to some pupils from Years 1 and 2 reading to a familiar adult.
- 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.
- The inspectors considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. An inspector also spoke with some parents.
- The inspectors considered the responses to the online staff and pupil questionnaires, including the free-text comments.

Inspection team

Richard Beadnall, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Chris Mitchinson

Ofsted Inspector

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