

# Inspection of Horndale Infants' School

Scholars Path, Newton Aycliffe, County Durham DL5 7HB

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Inspection dates: 4 and 5 October 2022

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

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils demonstrate the school values of kindness, honesty and respect. The school is a friendly family where everyone gets on. Teachers expect pupils to work hard and behave well. In the main, this happens. Playtimes are full of fun as pupils play games and use the plentiful equipment. Any falling-out is soon resolved, often by the pupils themselves. Bullying is very rare. Teachers are quick to deal with any issue.

Pupils are proud of the school. Their pleasure in the new library in the hall is obvious. 'Playground buddies' look after pupils who have fallen over, or offer to play with anyone on their own. The school council has a genuine say in school activities. Members help to organise important events such as the contents of 'holiday packs' for pupils.

Competition between classes to win the best attendance trophy each week is fierce. Pupils have an opportunity each week to dip into the 'golden box' of treats as a reward. Pupils are safe. They know how to stay safe online at home or in school.

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

The school has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Leaders have worked hard to address weaknesses. This is despite difficulties resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. The governing body has played its part in checking on the work done by leaders. It has made sure safeguarding procedures are effective. Leaders' use of external support has been pivotal in driving improvements. Leaders have managed staff's workload with care. Teamwork remains strong. A culture of positivity and determination defines the mood in school.

The new system to teach phonics is well embedded. Lessons in Reception and key stage 1 are systematic, daily and follow the same structure. This builds pupils' knowledge progressively. Teachers and teaching assistants model phonics sounds with clarity. Pupils copy and repeat them with accuracy. Reading remains a priority for leaders. Training for staff is regular and easily accessed online. Investment in the new library has boosted pupils' enthusiasm to read. Teachers use daily checks to find out which pupils may be falling behind. Extra help is then given. Pupils are becoming fluent and confident readers.

In some subjects, such as mathematics and geography, curriculum thinking is clear. Leaders have designed a curriculum structure that identifies the key ideas that thread through a subject. Learning is broken into smaller units. The essential knowledge pupils need is planned in sequence so pupils can make connections in learning. This helps pupils remember more and do more over time. Pupils build new learning on what they already know. In other subjects, such as history and physical education, curriculum planning is not as well developed.

Pupils work hard in lessons. They try their best to concentrate and most usually succeed. Pupils have fun and enjoy learning. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers quickly spot pupils who struggle. Leaders make sure specific help is provided. Teachers make changes and adapt lessons so that pupils learn the same curriculum. Teachers and teaching assistants complete regular checks to make sure pupils understand new concepts. Pupils who have not quite grasped new learning access extra support.

Leaders plan opportunities that effectively support pupils' wider development. Children in the Nursery settle quickly into school routines. Many children play and learn independently and alongside their friends. Children explore a range of activities inside and outside. These extend children's learning well. Children show curiosity and excitement when investigating Reception's dark tent with torches.

Themed assemblies alert pupils to issues and events from around the world. Pupils have recently learned about the floods in Pakistan and how this affects people of a different culture. Pupils know how to stay healthy and physically active. They learn how to deal with upset or what to do if they are anxious. Pupils dispose of worries in the 'worry monster'. Pupils use the 'zone of regulation' to alert adults to how they feel. Leaders plan trips to notable places of interest in the locality. Pupils enjoyed a recent trip to Durham Cathedral. Pupils are well prepared for their move to junior school in every regard, not just academically.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff agree that safeguarding is everyone's concern. Staff access regular and relevant training. This helps them to spot even the smallest concern. Teachers are clear on the specific safeguarding risks in the locality. Leaders secure the help pupils need using external partners whenever necessary. The safeguarding governor keeps a close eye on safeguarding systems and records. Newly appointed staff complete safeguarding training as part of their induction to school. The school administrator carries out vetting checks on all new appointments. Teachers know how to report concerns about colleagues should they ever arise. In lessons, pupils learn how to stay safe.

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

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

- A few foundation subjects are not sufficiently well planned. In these subjects, essential knowledge is not clearly identified. Key ideas that link learning are absent. New learning is not planned to connect to what pupils already know. As a result, pupils find it difficult to make connections in learning or to remember the new knowledge over time. Leaders should ensure that all curriculum areas are carefully planned. This will help to ensure pupils link their knowledge to what they already know.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	114190
<b>Local authority</b>	Durham
<b>Inspection number</b>	10241166
<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	76
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Deborah Halton-Cason
<b>Headteacher</b>	Craig Brown
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.horndale.durham.sch.uk">www.horndale.durham.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	12 and 13 February 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative providers.

## Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, curriculum leaders and teachers. An inspector met four members of the local governing body, including the chair. The lead inspector also met the outgoing school leadership adviser from the local authority and her successor.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, geography, art and design and mathematics. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons where

available, spoke to teachers and teaching assistants, spoke to pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- An inspector listened to a range of pupils from different year groups read.
- The lead inspector looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about other curriculum subjects.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lesson visits, at breaktime and at breakfast club. Inspectors spoke to pupils about their views of behaviour. A group of pupils gave an inspector a tour of the school.
- An inspector looked at the single central record of recruitment and vetting checks. Inspectors spoke to leaders, teachers, governors and pupils about safeguarding.
- The views of parents who responded to Ofsted's questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, were considered.
- Inspectors met with staff to discuss their well-being and workload. Inspectors considered the responses and comments from Ofsted's staff survey.

### **Inspection team**

Phil Scott, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Dawn Foster

Ofsted Inspector

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