

Inspection of Mowbray Primary School

Stakeford Lane, Guide Post, Choppington, Northumberland NE62 5HQ

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 June 2025

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Outstanding**

Personal development **Outstanding**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

The school is a nurturing environment where pupils thrive. The school has high expectations of pupils' achievement and personal development. The underpinning values of the school's curriculum, such as self-belief, resilience and perseverance, encourage pupils to develop positive character traits. Pupils enjoy leadership roles such as 'big friends and little friends', where pupils from different year groups look after younger pupils in school. This helps children in the early years to feel secure and cared for.

Staff understand the needs of the pupils. They encourage pupils to work hard. The school's curriculum prioritises development of vocabulary and language. Pupils are encouraged to use subject-specific vocabulary to explain their learning.

The development of pupils' character is exceptional in this school. Routines are established from the start in the early years, where children are taught to consider each other's feelings. Pupils show high levels of respect for each other and the adults who care for them. They concentrate extremely well in lessons. Pupils are highly motivated to achieve well. Any pupils who struggle to manage their emotions receive the help they need from staff who know them well. Pupils trust that staff will deal with any issues quickly.

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

Since the previous inspection, the school has revised its curriculum to ensure that gaps in pupils' knowledge are addressed. Published outcomes at the end of key stage 2 in 2024 in mathematics and aspects of English fell below national averages. This was due to gaps in pupils' knowledge caused by weaknesses in the previous curriculum and the COVID-19 pandemic.

The impact of leaders' actions to improve standards in English and mathematics are evident in current pupils' learning. Overall, pupils currently in the school achieve well and develop appropriate skills and knowledge. In mathematics, previous learning is now revisited regularly to help pupils remember important knowledge. This continues to be a priority and is developing well. Pupils' starting points are considered so that gaps in learning can be addressed.

In English lessons, the school has placed a greater emphasis on grammar, punctuation and spelling. This work is at an early stage. Some pupils do not have a strong enough knowledge of grammar, spelling and punctuation to apply these aspects of English with consistent accuracy across their work.

A love of reading is developed from the start in the early years. Staff with expert knowledge in phonics ensure that the reading programme is implemented well. Routine checks of pupils' phonics knowledge mean that pupils who fall behind are identified quickly. The school provides appropriate support to help weaker readers to catch up. Staff make thoughtful choices about the texts that pupils read. This helps pupils to understand important themes, such as rights and equalities. Pupils achieve success in reading as they

progress through the school.

A clear system is in place to identify and meet pupils' additional needs. The school engages with external specialists extremely well. For example, occupational therapists work with pupils across the school to support them to access learning. Staff adapt their teaching in lessons to help pupils learn the curriculum successfully. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well from their starting points.

The school has made significant progress in addressing the areas of weakness identified in the early years at the previous inspection. Staff focus well on promoting children's language. For example, in mathematics, staff skilfully support children to learn and remember the names of numbers. Well-considered activities support children's interactions with each other. Children develop strong social skills. This prepares children well for future learning.

Pupils develop high levels of self-control. They are well supported by staff who have an in-depth understanding of their needs. Pupils benefit from consistent routines and high expectations of their behaviour and conduct. Pupils behave exceptionally well in lessons and around the school. The school's new systems and expectations for attendance have brought about a significant reduction in pupils' persistent absences. The school tracks absences closely. Leaders build strong relationships with parents and carers to encourage high attendance.

The school has an impressive personal development offer, providing a rich set of experiences to develop pupils' talents and character. Pupils celebrate difference and diversity. They have a strong understanding of fundamental British values, such as the rule of law. Opportunities to develop pupils' interests include cycling. Some pupils extend their cycling skills to become trained as 'ride leaders'. Pupils benefit from well-considered roles and responsibilities that promote their leadership skills. For example, anti-bullying pupil ambassadors receive training to enable them to identify and support pupils who may be impacted by bullying.

Leaders, including governors, are determined for all pupils to achieve well. Governors have a clear picture of the school's strengths and the priorities for further development. They make sure that pupils are at the heart of all decision making. Staff value the high levels of care for their workload and well-being, helping staff to focus on pupils' needs.

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 foundation subjects, the expectations for pupils' writing are not as high as in the core subject of English. Pupils do not consistently apply their knowledge of

grammar, punctuation and spelling well enough. This affects how well pupils build up their writing knowledge and skills. The school should ensure that expectations for writing are clear and implemented across the school to support pupils to write fluently and clearly

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	122243
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10379363
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	246
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Tony Railton
Headteacher	Andrew Miller
Website	www.mowbrayprimary.northumberland.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	28 and 29 January 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school provides a breakfast and after-school club for pupils who attend the school.

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 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.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, both deputy headteachers and other school leaders. The lead inspector met with representatives from the governing body, including the chair. The lead inspector also held a telephone conversation with the school's improvement partner from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, 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. The lead inspector observed some pupils from Years 1 to 3 reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- 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.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of policies and documents, including leaders' evaluations and plans for improvement. Inspectors scrutinised a range of policies and procedures, including those that relate to the curriculum, SEND, personal development, attendance and behaviour. They observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at the school.
- An inspector met with parents at the end of the school day. Inspectors also took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.

Inspection team

Kathryn McDonald, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Jenny Parker	Ofsted Inspector
Emily Stevens	His Majesty's Inspector

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