

Inspection of Bowesfield Primary School

Northcote Street, Stockton-on-Tees TS18 3JB

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 February 2024

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and proud to belong to this welcoming school. Pupils say that 'it is like being part of a family'. Many pupils join the school midway through the school year unable to speak English. The school helps new pupils to settle in quickly. Pupils show high levels of respect to one another.

Children get off to a flying start in early years. They enjoy being outdoors, where they explore the various activities on offer. Staff encourage children to recognise and praise each other for their achievements. Children quickly gain confidence. They celebrate each other's differences.

Pupils are keen to achieve 'gold' behaviour by following the 'Be Bowesfield values'. Pupils are polite towards staff and visitors. They concentrate well during lessons. During lunch break, pupils enjoy the activities on offer, such as skipping and basketball. Staff are on hand to help everyone get along well. They resolve any problems that arise quickly. This helps pupils to feel safe.

Pupils value the support that they receive to help them to learn. The school expects all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to achieve well. Across most subjects, pupils achieve well. Pupils are prepared for the next stage of their education.

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

All pupils study the same ambitious curriculum, including pupils with SEND. Many pupils speak English as an additional language (EAL). The school supports pupils effectively to become part of the school community quickly. Staff with expert knowledge ensure that pupils develop their language well. Teachers clearly model the vocabulary that they want pupils to use in lessons. They practise often. Teachers check pupils' understanding. This helps pupils to gain confidence in using new words. Pupils who speak EAL achieve well.

The curriculum reflects the diverse cultures and languages spoken in the school. Pupils also learn about the local area. For example, in geography, they visit different places, such as the Tees Barrage. Pupils experience the location of features on a map. This helps pupils to understand the locational context of the places they study.

In mathematics, teachers use assessment effectively to identify what pupils know. They address gaps in pupils' knowledge frequently. The school makes sure that pupils who speak EAL understand the tasks they are being asked to complete, as well as the learning in mathematics. Pupils start each lesson by revisiting prior learning, such as multiplication tables. Consequently, pupils retain important knowledge. Pupils achieve well in mathematics. However, in a few foundation subjects, gaps in pupils' knowledge are not precisely identified.

In early years, staff quickly get to know children. They identify the gaps in children's knowledge and skills exceptionally well. Activities are adapted extremely well to ensure readiness for Year 1. For example, staff know that some children struggle to hold a pencil or paintbrush. 'Motor Mondays' ensure that children get plenty of practise using their large-muscle movements through activities such as waving streamers and drawing with chalk or paint. As a result, children's drawing and painting in early years are exemplary.

The school has strengthened its approach to supporting the teaching of reading following low results in the Year 6 statutory test in 2023. The school acts quickly to identify and close gaps in pupils' knowledge. Pupils who are new to phonics receive extra support to help them learn to read and write using phonics. Books are well matched to pupils' phonics knowledge. Pupils practise reading often. Regular training ensures that staff have expertise to teach pupils the phonics knowledge they need to learn to read and spell. Pupils look forward to daily story time. Teachers model reading of stories in an exciting way. This encourages pupils to choose these books to read at home. Pupils read with increasing success as they progress through the school.

The needs of pupils with SEND are identified and understood by staff. Regular training and guidance from leaders ensure that staff have the necessary expertise to meet the needs of pupils effectively. As a result, pupils with SEND access the full curriculum and achieve well.

The school ensures that pupils understand the importance of regular school attendance. The school supports parents and carers to understand the causes of any absence. It takes effective action to improve pupils' attendance.

The school supports pupils' personal development well. The safeguarding aspects of the curriculum are a particular strength. This helps to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain. Visits from former pupils help pupils to learn about what it is like to be an engineer or a creative designer. Pupils enjoy looking after the local community. They join the 'Eco-Committee' and take part in local events, such as the 'Riverside Project'. Pupils develop their interests by attending clubs that include origami and table tennis. They are rightly proud of their achievements in sports competitions, such as winning third place in the area athletics competition.

Governors are a strength of the school. They work closely with leaders to check that actions benefit all pupils. Staff feel supported to do their job well in continuing to make important improvements to the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of foundation subjects, the gaps in pupils' knowledge are not identified well. Learning does not consistently build on pupils' starting points or address misconceptions. Some pupils are not as well prepared as they should be for the next steps in learning. The school should check that recently developed assessment strategies are being used effectively to identify gaps in learning so that teaching can be adapted to meet pupils' needs.

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	111540
Local authority	Stockton-on-Tees
Inspection number	10297268
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	326
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Janet Marriott
Headteacher	Joanne Vollands-Ross
Website	www.bowesfieldprimary.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	5 and 6 October 2021, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has experienced significant changes in leadership since the last inspection. The acting headteacher has led the school since September 2023.
- The school runs a breakfast club for pupils who attend the school.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

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.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with the acting headteacher and other leaders in the school, including the special educational needs coordinator. The lead inspector also held a meeting with members of the governing body, including the chair and vice-chair

of governors. The lead inspector met with the local authority Service Lead for Education.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, art and design, geography and physical education. 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 children reading to a familiar adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 views of parents were considered through their responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments from parents. The views of pupils and staff were gathered through surveys and discussions conducted throughout the inspection.

Inspection team

Kathryn McDonald, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Lisa Ponter	His Majesty's Inspector
Natalie Fountain	Ofsted Inspector

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