

# Inspection of Laurel Avenue Community Primary School

Laurel Avenue, The Woodlands, Durham DH1 2EY

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Inspection dates: 27 and 28 February 2024

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

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

Laurel Avenue Community Primary School is highly inclusive. The staff care deeply about pupils and the wider community. The school acknowledges that many pupils and their families face wider challenges in everyday life. The school provides a wealth of pastoral support. Pupils know that they are cared for. They are proud of the many leadership opportunities the school offers them. These roles contribute to how well pupils care for each other and their local area.

Staff have very high expectations for pupils. The school has a higher than average number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with SEND, and those pupils who are disadvantaged, now achieve well in most subjects. Pupils enjoy their lessons. They discuss their learning enthusiastically. The school provides memorable learning experiences and educational visits which enhance the curriculum.

The school prioritises pupils' broader development. This is done exceptionally well. Pupils strive to 'be the best they can be'. The careers and financial literacy education the school provides is high quality. The school has carefully chosen extra-curricular activities and events to raise pupils' aspirations.

Pupils behave well. They are motivated by the reward systems in school and enjoy celebrating each other's achievements. The school's attendance incentives work well. Pupils enjoy the competitive nature of whole school 'class-opoly' to monitor and reward attendance.

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

The school recognises that previous pupils have not achieved as well as they could in national assessments in reading and writing. The school has begun to make changes to the curriculum to address this. The school has introduced well-considered curriculums across each subject. The long-standing staff team has tailored commercial schemes to ensure that they meet the needs of pupils. Pupils' achievement is improving because of a new focus on vocabulary and retention of knowledge. Pupils discuss their learning with increasing clarity and confidence.

The school goes over and above to support and champion pupils with SEND. These pupils benefit from the very precise approach to early identification and support in lessons. Staff are well trained to support the needs of pupils with SEND. Staff develop excellent relationships with pupils. The school partners closely with external professionals to ensure that pupils receive the help they need. Some pupils with SEND contribute to the school through leadership roles. Bespoke adaptations help pupils with SEND to be successful, for example 'mini-apprenticeships'.

In most subjects, the curriculums have a positive impact. In general, pupils remember what they have been taught. However, in some subjects, some of the checks of what pupils can remember are not matched closely to the knowledge that

leaders have identified that pupils need to know and remember. As a result, sometimes teachers do not identify the precise gaps in pupils' knowledge.

The school has embedded a positive reading culture. Children learn to read when they start in Reception. Staff are experts at teaching phonics. As a result, most pupils quickly learn to read. Pupils enjoy their daily reading time. This contributes to their reading fluency and confidence. However, some older pupils do not receive enough focused teaching to develop their reading skills. As a result, some older pupils do not achieve as well as they could in reading.

Children in early years make a strong start to their education. They quickly settle into the routines and expectations of the school day. Children love the newly improved outdoor area. The regular 'come and play' sessions in Nursery are well attended by parents and carers. These provide opportunities to model storytelling, share resources and strengthen home-school links. Children have daily opportunities to identify and reflect on their feelings. This contributes to their readiness for key stage 1.

Pupils are extremely proud of their school, and rightfully so. The school provides a wealth of leadership opportunities for pupils to be involved in. These roles develop pupils' understanding of citizenship. Pupils have a great sense of pride for the responsibilities they hold. They are clear about the learning from their personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons and understand why this is important. For example, they confidently discuss historical figures from marginalised communities and link this to their own belief that everyone should be treated equally.

The school provides exceptional pastoral and well-being support for pupils, staff and families. One parent commented, 'This is a school that values each child's unique set of qualities [and] skills and nurtures their interests.' This echoes the views of many.

Governors understand their statutory duties. Leaders and governors are committed to this local community. The strong links with the neighbouring community centre and local charities provide practical support for pupils in an effective and special way. Staff's professional expertise is well developed. They are proud to be a part of 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)**

- Some older pupils do not receive enough focused teaching to develop their reading skills. This contributes to some pupils not achieving as well as they could.

The school should continue to review the reading curriculum in order to further improve pupils' attainment and readiness for the next stage.

- Some of the assessment systems are not closely matched to the important knowledge that pupils need to know and remember. As a result, sometimes, the school does not recognise where pupils have gaps in their knowledge. The school should review how it checks what pupils know and can remember.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	114140
<b>Local authority</b>	Durham
<b>Inspection number</b>	10297278
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	111
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Claire Linfoot
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gaynor Davison
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.laurelavenue.durham.sch.uk">www.laurelavenue.durham.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	12 September 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is above the national average.
- The school has provision for two-year-olds.
- The school provides a free breakfast club.
- The proportion of pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding is above the national average.
- The school does not use any 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.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke to senior leaders, including members of the governing body and the local authority school improvement partner.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in 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.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read from different year groups.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff, governors 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 analysed the responses to Ofsted's staff survey. They reviewed the responses to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments.

### **Inspection team**

Georgina Chinaka, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Zoe Carr

Ofsted Inspector

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