



Easington CofE Primary School

Address: Easington Village, Hall Walk, Peterlee, COUNTY DURHAM, SR8 3BP

Unique reference number (URN): 149659

Inspection report: 17 March 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- Met: The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- Not met: The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Strong standard ●

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

There is a rigorous approach to attendance across school. There are high expectations as soon as children join. Pupils attend school well. They know it is important, and so do their parents. If attendance does begin to slip, this is quickly addressed with families. Across school, there is a clear understanding of the potential barriers pupils face to attending school well. Timely support is offered to families when needed. As a result, rates of attendance are high for most pupils.

Behaviour across the school is calm, kind and purposeful. The behaviour policy is underpinned by the Christian ethos and values of the school. This is well understood by pupils and staff. There are high expectations of behaviour. Pupils rise to these. They display excellent attitudes to learning. There are extremely few incidents of poor behaviour. Leaders have designed the school day and environment to further support positive behaviour, for example by restructuring playtimes and whole-school singing time. The youngest pupils in school quickly learn what is expected of them and demonstrate excellent conduct. Where a pupil may need additional support with their behaviour, this is quickly provided through personalised approaches guided by staff's understanding of emotional regulation.

Early years

Strong standard ●

Children in the Reception class are happy, engaged and very settled. The school is highly ambitious for every child who starts their school journey at Easington C of E Primary School. This begins with tailored transition support when children start.

The school has skilfully shaped the Reception curriculum to give children a strong start to their school life. Leaders have carefully thought about how they reduce children's barriers to learning or address aspects of developmental need. The curriculum is well considered and sequences the key knowledge that children should learn across the Reception Year. Children are taught the essential knowledge they need. They begin learning to read as soon as they join the Reception Year. Children's emotional and social development is given high importance. For example, adults teach children how to hold positive conversations and share with their friends.

Staff in the Reception class engage children in high-quality interactions that extend children's thinking and vocabulary. Children enjoy their opportunities to talk about their learning with their friends, teachers and family members. A recent trip to a farm was particularly exciting for children.

Children are exceptionally well prepared for Year 1 and life in school as a whole. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the transition, nurture and education their children receive.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Recent staff professional development is having a positive impact with regard to staff better understanding pupils' needs. Staff have a deep understanding of the barriers to learning that

some pupils face and understand how to provide highly effective support for them. When children join the school, either in Reception or part way through the school year, the school uses a range of assessment tools to understand the support they may need. This is done in a timely manner.

The graduated approach is well embedded. Staff continually review plans and closely monitor the impact of the support strategies they use. Highly skilled staff lead tailored interventions for pupils needing additional support. The impact of these interventions is closely monitored.

The school prioritises the support and attainment of disadvantaged pupils. It is clear that the approaches are well thought out and the impact is closely tracked. This results in gaps closing for disadvantaged pupils.

The school develops and maintains strong partnerships with families and involves them in how best to support their children. Engagement with external agencies and local services is positive. Leaders draw upon the expertise required to best support pupils, and do so quickly, often before pupils even join the school.

A particular strength is the school's work to develop pupils' opportunities and experiences through their contribution to the wider life of the school and engagement in the breadth of the activities the school offers.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

Leaders act in the best interests of children. This drives the school's work. There is a clear culture of high expectations for all staff and pupils. Leaders are ambitious for all pupils, academically and socially.

The school is outward facing. It works closely with others to learn from and share good practice and expertise. There is a highly effective culture of professional learning across school. Staff value the training they receive and the development opportunities from the trust. Staff wellbeing and workload are prioritised by leaders. Staff value the provision of additional services to support their health and wellbeing.

There is a sharp focus on meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and other barriers to their learning. There is a whole-school commitment to training and development to embed inclusive practice across school. This is having a positive impact on pupils' achievement and sense of belonging. As a result, pupils are flourishing at Easington C of E Primary School.

Those responsible for governance have a clear understanding of their role and statutory duties. There are clear structures in place that facilitate effective challenge, allocation of resources and sharing of expertise. Those responsible for governance understand the change in context of the school and the response this has needed. The school's engagement and contribution across the diocese are valued regionally.

The school builds constructive relationships with the wider community and parents.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard 

The school has carefully designed the personal, social, health and economic education curriculum for its context. Pupils develop a deep understanding across all aspects of the personal development offer. For example, pupils learn how to stay safe in the community and use technology carefully. The school readily shares information about how to stay safe with parents and the wider community. Pupils discuss why understanding people who are different to themselves and fundamental British values is important. Pupils readily apply their learning to consider how they treat others and think about current affairs.

Pupils have varied opportunities to reflect on their feelings and beliefs, for example by using calm spaces in each classroom and time to come together and reflect each day. Pupils are respectful, thoughtful and considerate during these times and conversations.

Pupils have many opportunities to represent their school and develop their talents and interests. For example, some pupils have enjoyed participating in a basketball tournament or developing their interest in musical performance and programming through LEGO league. The school carefully considers how pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those with other barriers to learning are able to engage with wider opportunities.

Pupils are proud of the many leadership opportunities they hold. They feel that their thoughts and opinions matter. Pupils make a tangible contribution to the school. For example, pupil subject advocates work with subject leaders to develop and improve the curriculum.

There is a breadth of pastoral support for pupils and parents. Pupils feel well supported. Staff know them well. Pupils have opportunities to access timetabled emotional support and bereavement support when needed. Parents share the ways in which the extensive, highly personalised pastoral support has been a lifeline and a huge support to them.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

The school ensures that pupils secure the foundational knowledge and skills they need. Where the school recognises that pupils have gaps, it takes timely action to close these and prevent the gaps from widening.

Pupils achieve well, typically in line with national averages, and in some subjects considerably higher. This is also the case for pupils with disadvantage. While this cohort is small, there is an improving trend in their outcomes over time. However, pupils have not achieved as well in the Year 4 multiplication check. Leaders are closing these gaps for pupils through daily additional practice. At the end of key stage 2, across all subjects, there is a clear improving trajectory of outcomes, which shows the impact of leaders' actions.

Pupils discuss their learning with varying levels of depth and understanding. Typically, they learn well across the curriculum. However, some pupils do not consistently develop detailed

knowledge or skills or produce high-quality work. The school is striving for this to be the case. Regular subject leader checks on pupils' understanding are already having an impact.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have established an ambitious curriculum across all subjects. Staff's subject knowledge and confidence have been strengthened by recent training and development provided by the trust. Staff are well equipped to deliver the ambitious curriculum and meet pupils' needs. Leaders closely monitor the quality and effectiveness of the curriculum to make timely improvements to help pupils learn. For example, well-established daily lesson structures allow pupils to regularly revisit prior learning and key facts. The school prioritises ensuring pupils have a secure understanding of the knowledge they need in order to move on to new learning.

Staff have a clear understanding of pupils' starting points. In lessons, teachers typically present information clearly and help pupils build their knowledge step by step. Where pupils have gaps in their foundational knowledge, the school provides appropriate support to address this during lesson time and interventions. This is effective in closing gaps in pupils' knowledge.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and other barriers to their learning are well considered in the classroom. This has been a focus across school, through professional learning and sharing of good practice. Staff use a range of effective support and tools to help pupils to be successful in lessons.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils describe Easington CofE Primary School as a special place. They are highly enthusiastic about their learning and the breadth of opportunities available to them. Pupils enthusiastically share their memories and learning from previous educational visits and a breadth of visitors to school. These have supported pupils to learn about a wide range of areas, such as the local mining history and circus skills. Pupils are proud of the many opportunities they have to represent the school in sporting activities, leadership roles and science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) challenge days.

Pupils feel safe in school. They feel valued and part of the school community. They are excited whenever they are recognised in 'The headteacher's special book' or celebrated in weekly celebration assemblies.

The school has high expectations for all children who attend the school. Pupils achieve well. They are keen to show and talk about their learning. Pupils' outcomes in national tests are in line with national averages over time. Pupils with disadvantage and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve better than their counterparts nationally.

Pupils behave extremely well across school. Bullying is not a concern and poor behaviour is rare. Pupils are kind to each other and contribute to the wider school community through the

'random acts of kindness'. The school has strong links in the local community. This is reflected in the care and respect that pupils have for their local area.

Next steps

- Leaders should further strengthen and embed the school's work to embed highly effective and consistent practice across all lessons, particularly with regard to removing barriers to learning in the classroom.
 - Leaders should continue to develop the school's work so that pupils develop detailed knowledge and skills across the curriculum and outcomes continue on the upward trajectory.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Melrose Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Roger Ward, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Paul Mackings.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the school's senior leadership team, representatives of the board of directors and governing body and the CEO of the trust during the inspection.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

There have been no relevant changes since the previous inspection.

The school is registered as having a Church of England religious character. This Church of England school is part of the Diocese of Durham. The school's last section 48 inspection, for schools of a religious character, took place in 2024.

The school makes use of one registered alternative provision.

Headteacher: John Appleby

Lead inspector:

Georgina Chinaka, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Karen Butler, Ofsted Inspector

Amy Blackburn, His Majesty's Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 17 March 2026

School and pupil context**Total pupils**

156

Below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

147

Below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

22.44%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 26.3%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

0.00%

Well below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

10.90%

Below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Close to average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		61%	
2024/25 (revised)	65%	62%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	46%	61%	Below
2022/23		60%	

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		74%	
2024/25 (revised)	70%	75%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	69%	74%	Close to average
2022/23		73%	

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		72%	
2024/25 (revised)	75%	72%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	69%	72%	Close to average
2022/23		71%	

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		73%	
2024/25 (revised)	90%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	62%	73%	Below
2022/23		73%	

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		46%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	47%	S

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	S	46%	S
2022/23		44%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		62%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	63%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	62%	S
2022/23		60%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		59%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	59%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	58%	S
2022/23		58%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		60%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	61%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	59%	S
2022/23		59%	

'S' in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		68%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	69%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	67%	S
2022/23		66%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		80%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	80%	S
2022/23		78%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		78%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	78%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	78%	S
2022/23		77%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		80%	
2024/25 (revised)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	79%	S

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23		79%	

'S' in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	5.1%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	4.4%	5.5%	Below

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	13.8%	13.3%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	13.2%	14.6%	Close to average

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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