

Inspection of Morpeth Road Academy

Bates Avenue, Blyth, Northumberland, NE24 5TQ

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 March 2022

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils blossom in their learning at this friendly school. Staff strive relentlessly to find ways to improve pupils' lives, including through the delivery of the very carefully planned curriculum. This enthusiasm is infectious and shared by the pupils who always want to do their best. Pupils achieve well and produce work of a high quality in different subjects.

Pupils thrive with the high level of support given in this school where everyone is made to feel welcome. Relationships between the pupils and staff are very positive. This makes the pupils feel safe and confident. They trust the adults and share their concerns with them. The family team, made up of specialist support staff, helps pupils to talk about their feelings. This enables pupils to fully focus on their learning.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent. Everyone has high expectations of behaviour. Pupils are courteous and polite. The older pupils enjoy being role models for those younger in school. Bullying is very rare and is dealt with effectively if it happens.

Pupils relish in taking responsibility, especially being members of the school parliament. They are involved in debates and decision making, such as improving the activities available at lunchtime.

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

Leaders know the school and the needs of the community exceptionally well. They provide all pupils with a high-quality education by making sure that teachers are subject experts. Leaders give teachers time to work together to create a highly memorable curriculum.

The curriculum is expertly built up in small steps from nursery onwards. Pupils gain specific subject knowledge and skills across a broad range of subjects. Teaching approaches bring about rapid and deep learning for all pupils. Through excellent use of questioning, teachers frequently check pupils' learning. In history, pupils enthusiastically remember what they learn and have first-rate recall of facts. They confidently compare the Great Fire of Newcastle with the Great Fire of London. Careful thought is given to the historical figures studied to ensure that there are good role models for the pupils from different cultures.

Leaders ensure that staff teach early reading consistently well. The phonics programme is tightly structured. Children gain pre-reading knowledge and skills from the moment they enter the two-year old provision. Pupils learn their sounds quickly. They can blend sounds to read well. Class texts cover a rich range of authors, celebrating diversity. Pupils explore the texts in detail. This has improved their vocabulary choices in written work. Staff do everything possible to encourage reading for pleasure at home. Pupils love reading electronic books with their family.

The leadership and management of special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is a strength. Leaders ensure that every avenue of support is available to help pupils. Many pupils have complex needs. Many pupils have faced significant challenges that the staff have helped them to overcome. Staff have the highest expectations for pupils with SEND. Individual plans for pupils are carefully written and targets are broken down into small achievable steps. Leaders work tirelessly with external agencies and parents. Pupils with social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) needs have staff who understand them, but who will also push them to do their very best.

There is a thoroughly consistent behaviour approach across school. Staff really understand pupils and their individualised needs. Behaviour is impressive. Pupils are respectful and supportive of each other. Attendance is excellent and continues to improve because pupils want to be at school.

There is an impressive personal development programme. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education are woven into pupils' learning. By Year 6, pupils have an excellent understanding of equality and fundamental British values. The 'faculty time' introduces pupils to a range of career options. This gives them something to aim for. Pupils are inspired to do well in school by meeting business leaders and employees.

Children in early years get off to a flying start. Early years staff exploit every opportunity to move children on in their learning. Children love to learn and explore through the well-planned and well-presented activities. They independently collect the equipment they need; for example, finding and using a magnifying glass to look at a spider found in class. Children's individual needs are well met because staff regularly check what children know.

Senior leaders have brought about rapid change. Improvements are having an extremely positive impact on pupils' learning, development and behaviour. They ensure that staff have the time and guidance to carry out their roles extremely well. Governors use their expertise to challenge senior leaders. Governors provide them with highly effective support. This includes ensuring that there is more staffing to support pupils with SEND.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school is quick to respond to any pupil who is at risk of harm. The family team is highly supportive. All staff can report any concerns to them. Pupils are confident in doing so themselves. Leaders challenge external partners to ensure that the safeguarding needs of the pupils are met without delay.

Safeguarding is expertly woven through the curriculum. Pupils learn how to assess risk and to keep themselves safe. This includes online and real-life situations

reflecting the dangers faced locally. Leaders prioritise safeguarding when recruiting staff. They ensure that staff are well trained.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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

Unique reference number	139756
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10200705
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	361
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Christine Collins
Headteacher	Deb Ward
Website	https://morpethroad.wiseacademies.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	24 and 25 March 2015

Information about this school

- Morpeth Road Academy is a larger-than-average primary school.
- The academy became part of the WISE Academy Trust in 2018 when a new senior leadership team was formed.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this 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.
- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher, head of school, assistant headteachers, other subject leaders, the chief executive officer of the multi academy trust and a range of other staff.
- Inspectors spoke to the chair of the local governing body, parents and pupils.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science, design technology and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to

teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors also looked at samples of pupils' work in other subjects and talked to pupils about their learning.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors scrutinised a sample of safeguarding records and checked the single central record. They talked to staff, parents, and pupils.
- The 13 responses to the parent survey were considered.

Inspection team

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Her Majesty's Inspector

David Milligan

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