

# Inspection of an outstanding school: Cleaswell Hill School

School Avenue, Guide Post, Choppington, Northumberland NE62 5DJ

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Inspection dates: 29 and 30 June 2022

## **Outcome**

Cleaswell Hill School continues to be an outstanding school.

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

Pupils thrive at Cleaswell Hill. This is because staff develop strong, caring relationships with pupils. Pupils rise to the high expectations that adults have for them. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. Many expressed their appreciation. Comments praising 'staff who are always available to help' and stating that 'sending our children here is the best decision we ever made' reflected the thoughts of many.

Pupils behave exceptionally well. They move around school calmly and with great respect. Inspectors watched positive interaction between pupils in all areas of the school. Pupils are understanding and supportive of one another.

Pupils feel safe at Cleaswell Hill. They trust the adults who work with them and feel they can always go to an adult if they need support with a concern. Pupils are aware of the high expectations for their behaviour and say that they know that staff will deal with any behaviour which falls outside of these expectations. Pupils say that bullying does not happen but if it ever did, they are confident that staff would act very quickly to stop it.

All pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The adults across school are highly skilled at adapting the curriculum to the needs of the individual pupils.

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

Leaders know their pupils well. They are acutely aware that pupils have a wide range of specific needs. Some of these pupils need a highly specialised curriculum. Leaders have employed a range of therapists and specialist support workers to work with individual pupils. The work of these experienced staff is woven into the school day.

The curriculum is highly ambitious for all pupils. Leaders have ensured that the school's curriculum makes it clear what individual pupils must know, and be able to do, in all subjects. Leaders have planned this learning carefully so that it is taught in a way which helps pupils to build up knowledge and skills over time. Leaders have thought carefully

about the important knowledge that pupils need to learn. They have considered the ways that this can be made accessible to pupils who may have difficulties in accessing a mainstream curriculum. Leaders check carefully that the curriculum is being implemented effectively. Adults know their pupils well and design lessons which are matched to individual needs.

Adults help pupils to prepare for their next steps. Students in the sixth form described the support that they have had as being 'brilliant'. Pupils' next steps are well considered and managed by a group of multiagency professionals.

The pastoral and therapy teams within the school are an integral part of the school. They actively support pupils' well-being through a range of strategies, including through walking and talking, play therapy and pastoral one-to-one sessions. These teams work carefully to ensure pupils are well supported.

Staff are very aware that for many pupils, the COVID-19 pandemic meant their education was disrupted. Pupils who need additional intervention are expertly supported to ensure that they can catch up quickly.

Leaders and staff promote pupils' personal development highly effectively. Pupils enjoy the enrichment activities offered by the school. These activities include football, gardening, trips and visits as well as visitors into school.

Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the support they receive for their workload and well-being. Governors support the school well and provide effective challenge to leaders.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff have undertaken extensive training to ensure that they can identify and respond to any concerns over pupils' safety. Staff are vigilant and report concerns promptly. Leaders work with a wide range of external agencies to provide support for pupils and their families. Governors make regular visits to review the school's safeguarding procedures. The school makes robust checks to ensure that adults are safe to work with pupils. Pupils learn about keeping themselves healthy and safe. Adults plan activities which help pupils to understand more about the dangers they could face as they become more independent

## Background

When we have judged outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in March 2017.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	122382
<b>Local authority</b>	Northumberland
<b>Inspection number</b>	10227039
<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	194
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	13
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Tim Chrisp
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mike Jackson
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.cleaswellhill.northumberland.sch.uk">http://www.cleaswellhill.northumberland.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	20 October 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The pupils are grouped into pathways which reflect the level of their special educational needs. Pupils can move between the pathways on their journey through the school.
- The school does not use alternative education providers.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the second inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. However, inspectors continued to be mindful of the longer-term impact of the pandemic and have discussed this with leaders, taking this into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other senior leaders. The inspectors also met with a number of the governors and the school improvement partner.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science and personal, social and health education, including relationship and sexual health education. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils and looked at samples of work.
- Inspectors visited pupils across the school, including children in the early years foundation stage and students in the school's sixth form.
- Inspectors met with the school's designated safeguarding lead and the governor with responsibility for safeguarding to discuss their work. The inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including the school's single central record, which includes recruitment checks made on staff.
- The views of 89 staff who responded to Ofsted's staff survey were considered. The responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, were also taken into account. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil survey but inspectors spoke to pupils in school.

### **Inspection team**

Catherine Beard, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Gill Booth

Ofsted Inspector

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