



# NORHAM NEWS

Welcome to our December edition of the Norham News. Each month, we will send out information and updates about the great work that is being done at Norham to give our pupils the best education possible.

This month, we're focusing on the findings from our recent Ofsted Monitoring Inspection by Her Majesty's Inspector, Lee Elliott.

We are proud to share the following findings:

- Leaders and managers are taking effective action.
- The school's action plan is fit for purpose.
- The school may now appoint newly qualified teachers.

## What did Ofsted have to say about our school since the last inspection?

These are some of the great comments taken directly from our new Ofsted report:

'New senior leaders have brought to the school a renewed sense of purpose. Staff morale is strong and improving. This has been helped by **leaders' clarity and determination to succeed.**'

'Leaders' understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses is **strong.**'

'Leadership of the additionally resourced provision (ARP) and SEND are **strong.**'

'During the inspection, **pupils were polite** and eager to say 'hello'. They held open doors and moved sensibly around the well-supervised corridors and school building. Pupils' behaviour in and around the school is calm... and [they] move between lessons swiftly and sensibly. Pupils' behaviour is considerably better than it was. Pupils say relationships between staff and pupils are positive.'

'The quality of education which pupils receive is improving. Leaders' expectations of teachers and pupils are more explicit. This is helping to ensure that staff follow the school's agreed structure when planning lessons.'

'Teachers ask more from their pupils now. Pupils are now given more opportunities to discuss their opinions, contribute ideas and review their learning. Most pupils are responding well to teachers' questioning.'

'Pupils say **staff now see the best in them.** Pupils appreciate the many rewards on offer for positive attitudes to learning and the opportunity to have a say in the running of their school via the new school council and form representatives.'

He also saw '...teachers ask effective questions in the classroom, allowing them to probe pupils' understanding and assess how well pupils are remembering new information.'



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‘Staff say their opinions are valued and they have the resources to be more effective in their roles. Staff morale is high. Staff say that, more recently, they feel valued and supported to do their job effectively. There is a real determination to do what is right for all pupils.’

‘A new assistant Headteacher now leads on staff training and development. The capacity for further improvement in this area has strengthened. Teachers say the guidance and training they receive is much clearer than it used to be. This is helping to improve consistency in the classroom.’

‘Rates of attendance have improved... Leadership capacity has increased in this area. This is helping to ensure that pupils and families receive support when needed.’

### So, what are we focussing on next?

Ofsted agreed with us that ‘Leaders know that further improvements are needed to ensure that more teachers follow effectively the school’s chosen approach to lesson planning and teaching.’

‘Over time, the school’s curriculum has not led to pupils achieving well. There are some considerable gaps in pupils’ knowledge and understanding still...Senior and subject leaders have started to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum.’ This has already been included in our school improvement plan as we move into the new year.

‘While improving, the quality of education which pupils receive varies across the school. Some teachers are less effective when planning to meet the needs of pupils from their different starting points or when implementing the school’s new behaviour policies.’

**All comments are taken directly from the first monitoring visit by Ofsted following the appointment of new leaders. These are based on the inspection evidence gathered and shared by HMI Lee Elliott which can be found online.**

We are very proud of our pupils and staff, in addition to the support of our wider community, for helping the school to make such significant improvements in a short space of time. We have lots more exciting developments planned for Norham over the next few years. Watch this space!

Thank you for your support so far this year. Merry Christmas!

*T. Conway*

#### Staff Comment to Ofsted:

*‘It feels like our heart is beating again’ when describing the collective determination of staff to improve the school*

—Clare Hendry (EWO)

#### Pupil Comment to Ofsted:

*“relationships between staff and pupils are positive”....“More staff are ‘out and about’, monitoring lessons and taking an interest in how they are doing.”*

#### Parent Comment about our school:

*“Our two children have enjoyed attending Norham and it has improved significantly.”*

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