

Horton Grange Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122254
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	380435
Inspection dates	1–2 March 2012
Lead inspector	Ann Ashdown

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	418
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Hall
Headteacher	Jackie Chevaugon
Date of previous school inspection	7 December 2009
School address	Kitty Brewster Blyth NE24 4RE
Telephone number	01670 353503
Fax number	01670 354276
Email address	admin@blythhortongrangeprimary.northumberland.sch.uk



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Introduction

Inspection team

Ann Ashdown
Derek Sleightholme
Janet Greaves

Additional inspector
Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 19 teachers teaching 21 lessons, of which one was a joint lesson observation with the headteacher. In addition, inspectors listened to pupils read and visited specialist sessions teaching basic numeracy skills and the links between letters and sounds. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and school staff. The inspection team took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books, progress data, safeguarding information, and other documentation. Inspectors analysed 52 questionnaires from parents and carers and also those from pupils and staff.

Information about the school

This is an above average-sized primary school. A below average proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic groups and a similar proportion speak English as an additional language. A well above average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average. The school does not meet the current floor standard which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The school has gained Healthy School status.

The school was previously a First School for pupils aged three to nine years. It became a Primary School for pupils aged three to 11 years in September 2009 and the first group of Year 6 pupils took national tests in 2011.

The privately run provision for childcare, Horton Grange Out Of School Club, shares the school's site. It is subject to a separate inspection and will receive its own inspection report which will be published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
 Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall Effectiveness	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	3

Key Findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It continues to improve. Since the last inspection the progress of all groups of pupils over a sustained period has accelerated and the gap between their attainment and that of all pupils nationally is closing. The school is not yet good because attainment in mathematics remains low and teaching, although improving, is not consistently good across the school.
- Children enter the nursery with skills which are very low, typically at least a year or more behind those expected for their age. Pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school and although attainment is still low overall it is closer to average in mathematics and is broadly average in English by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is satisfactory. In some fast-paced and challenging lessons, where teachers match work closely to pupils' needs, teaching is good. This good teaching, particularly in Year 6, is doing much to eradicate the legacy of previous underachievement by current upper Key Stage 2 pupils. In satisfactory lessons, the pace of learning slows when work is less challenging and less well tailored to the needs of all pupils.
- Behaviour is typically satisfactory and in some lessons it is good. Behaviour is well managed by staff, and rewards and sanctions are consistently applied across the school. Any bullying is firmly dealt with and children say they feel safe in school. Attendance is below average but is improving over time.
- There is a relentless focus on raising attainment and improving teaching. Effective performance management and the decisive, talented leadership and management of the headteacher, senior team and members of the governing body have been instrumental in bringing about school improvement. However, changes of staff at middle leadership level have meant that their roles remain underdeveloped.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment, and accelerate pupils' progress in mathematics, by:
 - systematically developing pupils' basic numeracy skills through practical calculations and by solving real life problems
 - embedding, monitoring the impact of and refining the use of recently introduced structured programmes for teaching mathematics.
- Improve the quality of teaching so it is consistently good across the school by:
 - ensuring work is closely matched to the needs of all pupils in all lessons
 - ensuring that the pace of lessons is consistently challenging.
- Develop the roles of middle leaders and managers in monitoring the work of their areas of responsibility, identifying good practice and ensuring that this is shared across the school.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Most parents and carers are happy with the progress their children are making and agree that the school helps pupils to develop skills in communication, reading, writing and mathematics. Inspection evidence supports this view. Children enter the nursery with skills which are very low for their age, particularly in language and communication. They make satisfactory progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage so their skills, although still low for their age, have improved in all areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1. They learn to follow school routines, share and take turns. They were seen behaving well and enjoying learning as they shared yellow jelly and custard on the school's special Big Yellow Friday fund raising day.

In lessons, most Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils work hard, are keen to answer questions and concentrate on the task in hand. A few have shorter concentration spans and become restless when they are asked to listen for too long. Some pupils are more reluctant learners but are well managed by staff who ask perceptive questions and use praise to encourage them to contribute to lessons. Skilled and timely intervention by teachers and teaching assistants ensures that all pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, make at least satisfactory and sometimes good progress. In a particularly successful Year 6 English lesson pupils made good progress as they summarised their ideas following an interesting and well informed debate about the benefits of physical education in school. Pupils' satisfactory progress in reading was confirmed when inspectors looked at pupils' reading records and listened to them read. Attainment in reading is typically low at the end of Year 2 but is broadly average by the time pupils leave school.

From their very low starting points when they enter the school pupils are now making satisfactory progress. Although attainment overall across the school remains low, previous underachievement at Horton Grange is now being eradicated. A legacy of this underachievement was evident in results in national tests in 2011, which were particularly low in mathematics. Current pupils are on track to meet their targets this year. Work in pupils' books, that displayed on walls and the school's own detailed tracking data all confirm the satisfactory and accelerating progress over a sustained period of time that pupils are now making. Recently introduced, structured programmes for teaching mathematics are beginning to raise standards and ensure that the gaps in pupils' understanding of basic mathematical skills are being closed. However, these programmes are new and their full impact has yet to be evaluated.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is satisfactory. In some lessons it is good. Most parents and carers are, rightly, satisfied with the quality of teaching their children receive. Teachers know their pupils well and use interesting resources to engage their interest and make learning enjoyable. Pupils made good progress in a lesson where the teacher used real life examples to illustrate work on fractions and explained very clearly to pupils why they were learning about them. However, progress was slower in another mathematics lesson when work about metres and decimetres was repetitive for pupils who already understood the concepts being taught. In some slower paced and less challenging lessons, teachers' introductions are overlong so pupils begin to lose interest because they are keen to get on with work on their own and find out things for themselves. Most lessons are well planned and structured so pupils move smoothly from one task to the next. Pupils usually work harmoniously in pairs and groups and in some lessons share information sensibly as they discuss and assess each other's work. Teachers are knowledgeable, usually ask perceptive questions, and their clear explanations extend pupils' understanding well. In a few lessons, particularly in mathematics, teachers are not as adept at checking pupils' learning and identifying where there are gaps in their understanding. Work is marked regularly and pupils are frequently given good quality feedback on how to take the next steps in their learning. In one lesson 'green pen' time was well used to allow pupils to read and understand the feedback they had been given and to respond to this by improving their work.

The planned curriculum allows pupils to make satisfactory progress in developing their basic skills. The teaching of sounds and letters is well organised with short, structured daily sessions. Both the core curriculum and a range of enrichment activities contribute well to pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about trips they had been on to cities as far apart as London and Edinburgh, which had widened their understanding of communities and cultures which differed from their own.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' behaviour is typically satisfactory over time. In lessons, most pupils are keen to succeed and want to learn. A few are more reluctant learners and some lesson time is taken in managing their behaviour. A few parents and carers expressed concerns about behaviour in lessons but inspectors found that teachers manage

behaviour well and are skilled in ensuring that pupils are quickly brought back to the task in hand should their concentration lapse. Pupils know right from wrong and understand the consequences of misbehaving. Most pupils behave well in corridors and around the school. They are usually polite and kind to each other and to staff and visitors. Almost all parents and carers say that the school looks after their children well. Pupils echoed this view when they said that they feel safe in school. Older pupils consider that behaviour has improved markedly in recent years. Pupils are knowledgeable about different types of bullying, including cyber bullying. They feel that any incidents of bullying are firmly and fairly sorted out at school. Pupils have a sensible attitude to risk and a developing awareness of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. Attendance remains below average but is improving and most pupils are punctual to school.

Leadership and management

The headteacher, senior leaders and members of the governing body know the school's strengths and weaknesses well. On the basis of this accurate self-evaluation they have identified appropriate priorities for further improvement in order to sustain and build upon the school's current success in accelerating pupils' progress. A legacy of underachievement is now being eradicated because the teaching of basic skills is improving and assessment data is used more effectively to track pupils' progress. The school has a satisfactory and growing capacity to improve. However, although senior leaders monitor teaching regularly and, through effective professional development, enable some good practice to be shared, middle leaders and managers have yet to fully develop their roles. Leaders of literacy, numeracy, the Early Years Foundation Stage and the coordinator of special educational needs are all new to their posts. Consequently, the work of these areas has not been fully monitored and evaluated in order to identify best practice and share this further.

The school does not tolerate discrimination of any kind. It promotes equal opportunities increasingly well and support for vulnerable pupils and those who need extra help with their learning is now better structured and more timely. The gap between the attainment of Horton Grange pupils and those nationally is narrowing, as are the gaps in attainment and progress between groups of pupils, such as those who are known to be eligible for free school meals, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.

Members of the governing body are fully involved in monitoring the school's work and in determining its strategic direction. They and all staff ensure that safeguarding policies and procedures meet requirements. Staff clearly understand and are suitably trained in child protection procedures, and the support the school provides for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable is good. Partnerships with parents and carers are becoming stronger so they are better able to support their children's learning. Close links with a partner school allow staff to see the good practice of others.

The curriculum is satisfactory. It is broad and balanced and has an appropriate focus on raising attainment in pupils' basic skills. A wide range of trips, visits and visitors to the school promote pupils' spiritual and cultural awareness well. Pupils' social and moral development is successfully promoted through, for example, their organisation

of and participation in whole school events such as Big Yellow Friday, which was taking place during the inspection. The school was a sea of yellow, everything from skirts, to sweatshirts, tights, badges, ribbons, headbands and handbags as pupils and staff donned clothes and accessories to raise funds for and awareness of those who suffer from liver ailments.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



5 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Horton Grange Primary School, Blyth, NE24 4RE

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we inspected your school. A particular thank you to those of you who read aloud to us, talked with us and told us so much about your school. Please thank your parents and carers who also filled in our questionnaires.

This is what we have said about your school in our report.

- Yours is a satisfactory school which ensures you are kept safe.
- You make satisfactory progress and although your attainment is low overall and in mathematics, it is improving, particularly in English.
- The youngest children get a satisfactory start to their education in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- The teaching you receive, the way your school is led and managed and the curriculum you follow are all satisfactory.
- Your behaviour is at least satisfactory and often good.

This is what we have asked your school to do to make it even better.

- Improve your attainment in mathematics, by making sure you have good basic numeracy skills and are able to practise these by solving real-life problems in practical ways.
- Make your lessons even better, by always giving you work which is exactly right for you, neither too easy nor too hard and by making sure the work in all of your lessons is challenging so you learn more quickly.
- Ask your teachers to check the work of your school even more carefully and share their best ideas to help you make faster progress.

All of you can help your school to become even better by making sure you attend regularly and working with your teachers to achieve the very best you can.

Yours sincerely

Ann Ashdown
Lead inspector

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