

Tweedmouth Prior Park First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122187
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	380415
Inspection dates	7–8 March 2012
Lead inspector	David Shearsmith

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	3–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	170
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Isobel Hunter
Headteacher	Patricia Wilson
Date of previous school inspection	26 November 2008
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Introduction

Inspection team

David Shearsmith
Wendy Richardson

Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed seven teachers teaching 20 lessons and parts of lessons, of which two were joint observations with each headteacher. Meetings were held with members of the governing body and the school staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. Inspectors observed the school's work, looked at pupils' books and a number of documents, including those relating to development planning, safeguarding and child protection. They also analysed 50 parental and carers' questionnaires and those completed by pupils and staff.

Information about the school

This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The majority of pupils are of White British Heritage. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average. The school has gained Healthy School status and holds the Sports Active mark award, as well as the International and Eco-schools awards. Two part-time headteachers currently lead and manage the school.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- This is a good school that is improving rapidly. It is not outstanding because in Key Stage 1 progress is inconsistent. Parents and carers are happy to send their children here, as staff are strongly committed to promoting their well-being as well as their academic and personal development.
- Children enter the school with skills that are well below those typical for their age and make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1. They make rapid progress in Key Stage 2. They have very positive attitudes to learning, enjoy being in school and achieve well, although weak handwriting and insufficient opportunities for extended writing inhibit their progress in English.
- Teachers plan lessons that engage pupils’ interest well. Lessons usually contain a variety of interesting activities that keep pupils on task and meet their needs effectively. The teaching of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) is inconsistent and sometimes hinders pupils’ progress in Key Stage 1. Teaching assistants support pupils’ learning exceptionally well, increasing progress in pupils’ basic skills. Some lessons in Key Stage 1, however, lack urgency and pace and, consequently, learning is satisfactory.
- Pupils behave well and are safe in school. They are courteous and confident when speaking to adults and show respect for each other. They say that there is very little bullying and that it is dealt with appropriately by staff when it occurs. They know how to stay safe and how to assess risk.
- Leadership and management are good. The school has made good progress since the previous inspection and continues to improve. Staff work very effectively as a team and are developing new ideas for the curriculum. Leadership of teaching and performance management have been effective in improving teaching and learning and in improving pupils’ progress in Key Stage 1. Subject leaders, however, don’t give sufficient attention to progress when monitoring lessons and books.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the progress pupils make in Key Stage 1 by:
 - ensuring that lessons proceed at a brisk pace
 - ensuring that the teaching of letters and the sounds they make is more consistently applied
 - ensuring that best practice is shared and that subject leaders monitor and evaluate progress more effectively.

- Raise attainment in writing by:
 - improving handwriting and presentation
 - ensuring that there are more opportunities for extended writing in order for pupils to develop their skills.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Achievement is good. Although children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, their skills at the end of Reception are still below average. They make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 and rapid progress in Key Stage 2 to make average attainment overall by the time they leave the school. They generally learn well in lessons. They are attentive, concentrate on the teachers' explanations, and readily volunteer to answer questions. When given individual or partner work they complete the task to the best of their ability. Key Stage 2 pupils strive to improve their performance; in one lesson, for example, they competed with each other and against their own best time when taking part in a mathematics challenge to improve their basic skills. They understand the importance of working hard and of taking responsibility for their own learning and, as a result, attainment in mathematics has improved.

Although attainment in Year 2 has improved, it is below average overall. Pupils' reading skills are still below average by the end of Key Stage 1 owing to some inconsistencies in teaching letters and the sounds that they make. By the time they leave the school in Year 4, pupils' attainment in reading is average. Pupils in Year 4 read accurately, with confidence, and really enjoy books. They read aloud very fluently and with good expression, appreciating the use of punctuation. Their writing shows imagination and pupils are keen to use different words although occasionally, some good work is spoilt by poor handwriting and presentation skills.

All groups of pupils make good progress due to the school's good use of effective tracking of data and focussed interventions. Pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs make good and sometimes better progress. They get very good support, particularly in their basic skills where they enjoy a well-structured series of sessions carefully targeted to their needs. Pupils say they learn well in school most of the time and their parents and carers agree that they make good progress.

Quality of teaching

Most teaching is good and parents, carers and pupils agree. Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good with a strong focus on the basic skills, providing a stimulating environment that promotes children's independent learning. Lessons across the school

engage and meet pupils' needs well, with a variety of interesting, and stimulating activities. Lessons are carefully constructed to build on pupils' prior learning. Relationships are good and teachers manage pupils' behaviour effectively. In a mathematics lesson, for example, pupils learned about weighing and capacity and were highly focussed when using the balances and measuring the water to find out about the capacity of different containers. Good lessons begin with a lively introduction to stimulate pupils' interest and imagination; pupils in one class were fascinated by a box of objects that the teacher used effectively to stimulate them to write captivating speech bubbles. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to practise their skills through extended writing. In good lessons, pupils actively participate at all times as seen in a good lesson in the Reception class where the teacher used props effectively to reinforce positional language. However, a minority of lessons is no better than satisfactory, particularly in Key Stage 1, because they lack the brisk pace evident in other lessons. Pupils' work is generally marked regularly and teachers provide clear explanations about how it could be improved.

Teachers plan in detail, supported by a well-planned curriculum that enables them to teach pupils essential skills, and knowledge and understanding at an appropriate level. All staff make the most of opportunities to enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through the planned curriculum, which is designed to support pupils' natural curiosity and promote personal development. Pupils readily discuss moral and social issues as part of their work on the Green Flag and Eco-award. Teachers boost pupils' confidence and self-esteem by regularly using praise and encouragement, whilst carefully correcting errors and misconceptions to draw out important learning points. Teaching assistants and other adult helpers are well-briefed and provide excellent support for small groups and individuals.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' behaviour is good. They enjoy coming to school and have good attitudes to learning. They have a good understanding of right and wrong as well as a natural curiosity about the world around them. They are well cared for and pupils' well-being is a high priority. Pupils say that any incidents of bullying or misbehaviour that do arise are resolved successfully. They understand the different forms bullying can take. Parents and carers also feel that behaviour is generally good as the school has clear systems in place to support the promotion of good behaviour. Pupils work and play together well. Teamwork and collaborative working are encouraged throughout the school, and this has helped pupils develop useful life skills. Inspection evidence indicates that behaviour is typically good and is well-managed by all of the staff. Evidence shows that staff manage the behaviour of those who find controlling their emotions difficult skilfully and in accordance with the school's effective policies. Attendance is above average and has improved significantly owing to the school's drive to ensure that all pupils attend. The school also has good strategies to promote punctuality. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and know how to assess risk, and parents and carers feel that the school is safe and secure.

Leadership and management

The two part-time headteachers provide the school with strong and effective leadership. They are well-supported by a good team of teachers who work well together to improve the school through well-targeted, good professional development. The governing body knows the school very well through its first-hand experiences and strong links with the community. It challenges and holds the school to account in positive ways, sharing the ambition for

continued school improvement, including ensuring the good safeguarding of pupils. The school's capacity for sustained improvement is good as attainment is rising and strategies to tackle any weaknesses in teaching have been implemented to good effect. However, subject leaders don't always focus on pupil progress when evaluating lessons and pupils' work. As a result, there has not been sufficient emphasis on progress in some lessons. The school recognises the importance of sharing its own best practice in teaching to support further improvement.

The school's work to engage pupils through the planned curriculum takes account of pupils' needs and interests, with a clear focus on progressively improving basic skills. Pupils say that they enjoy the wide range of visits and visitors to the school because it makes their learning more interesting. The effective use of partnership working enhances those learning opportunities that develop pupils' imagination and experiences. An imaginative approach to curriculum planning provides many opportunities for pupils to enhance their spiritual, moral social and cultural development; for instance, in lessons teachers find interesting ways of engaging pupils to develop their spiritual understanding. The school also has good, planned opportunities for developing pupils' cultural understanding through strong links with a school in Uganda as part of a global partnership.

The school's work to promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination is good. Personalised programmes are effectively devised for pupils that need them and these have had a very positive impact on improving their achievement.

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 up 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.



9 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Tweedmouth Prior Park First School, Berwick-upon-Tweed, TD15 2DB

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed talking with you, listening to you, and watching you learn in and out of the classroom. Your school is a good one and one that is continually improving.

Here are some of the things that we thought that you, and your school, do particularly well.

- Your behaviour is good and you know how to keep yourselves safe and you learn and play well together.
- Your teachers make your lessons interesting and they help you to learn well.
- You like coming to school and you enjoy your learning.
- Everyone in the school makes sure that you are well looked after.

We have asked your headteachers and all the staff to make your school even better by:

- ensuring that everyone in Key Stage 1 makes at least good progress
- ensuring that you make quick progress in all of your lessons
- ensuring that you make better progress in your use of letters and sounds and writing
- making sure that when other adults are observing your lessons they look more closely at the progress you are making in lessons and in your books.

I am sure you can also help your school to do even better by helping all the staff to improve your school. I would also like to wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely,

David Shearsmith
Lead Inspector

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