

# Highcliffe Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	131457
<b>Local authority</b>	Redcar and Cleveland
<b>Inspection number</b>	381344
<b>Inspection dates</b>	16–17 May 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Michael Wardle

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	439
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Howard Bean
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jackie Woodhead
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 January 2007
<b>School address</b>	Hutton Lane Guisborough TS14 8AA
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## Introduction

### Inspection team

Michael Wardle

Gordon Potter

John Pattinson

Additional inspector

Additional inspector

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 20 lessons and they made shorter visits to classes to review displays and observe individual pupils and groups at work. They listened to pupils read. Inspectors also scrutinised planning, safeguarding records, talked to pupils and evaluated their work. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and school leaders. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), as well as documents provided by the school, in planning the inspection. These included the school development plan and school self-evaluation documents. They analysed survey responses from pupils and staff, as well as 159 questionnaires returned by parents and carers.

## Information about the school

The school is larger than the average-sized primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those learning English as an additional language is lower than average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. There is an average proportion of disabled students and those supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs. The school meets the current government floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress. The school has achieved Healthy School status, Activemark and the anti-bullying Charter for Action.

**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

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>

## Key Findings

- This is a satisfactory school. Achievement for all groups of pupils is satisfactory and improving. Recent strategies to increase the progress of pupils are effective and having a positive impact but the school is not good because not enough pupils are making faster and sustained progress in their learning. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged as satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- The progress of pupils currently at the school is satisfactory. It is improving strongly. The development in the way writing is taught is having a positive impact on levels of engagement and concentration. Progress in writing is therefore accelerating. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are making better progress than others because of the good support they receive. Progress for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good.
- Teaching is satisfactory and improving. In the best lessons teachers fully engage pupils through imaginative planning, good questioning and by developing pupils' independence. This is not consistent across the school, although good and outstanding teaching was observed. Sometimes more-able pupils are not challenged enough in their thinking.
- Pupils feel very safe in school and behaviour is good. Teachers care passionately for the pupils, who are polite and good ambassadors for the school. Parents, pupils and staff say that recent changes in school systems have had a striking impact on behaviour. Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning.
- Leaders and managers are making good improvements to move the school forward. All staff, supported by the headteacher and governing body, are committed to raising achievement and further improving teaching. Teaching and performance are generally managed effectively but the use of progress data by teachers is not sharp enough to raise achievement consistently across the whole school. An inclusive ethos pervades the school community, and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that pupils make more rapid and sustained progress by:
  - sharing the good practice which is in place in school
  - increasing the level of challenge for more-able pupils
  - ensuring that pupils have more opportunities to be independent, to research and to investigate concepts for themselves.
  
- Strengthen the impact of managers and leaders at all levels by:
  - ensuring that monitoring procedures have a greater focus on learning and progress
  - ensuring that teachers make effective use of data on pupils' prior achievement and progress.

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

Lessons observed and pupils' work seen confirm that pupils make satisfactory progress across the school. In some lessons pupils make good progress and make strong gains in knowledge and understanding, but this is inconsistent across the school. Progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage is particularly strong. Inspection findings are endorsed by nearly all parents, who think that their children are effectively helped to develop skills in communication, reading, writing and mathematics.

Children currently start school with skills, knowledge and understanding that are slightly below those expected for their age. This has changed in recent years from a position where children previously started school with skills, knowledge and understanding expected for their age. They develop well, especially in Reception, and make good progress, more notably in their social skills and in developing their writing. They were seen to write independently and were keen to choose books from the library. Overall, by the time they reach Year 1 their skills are at the levels expected for their age.

Pupils make satisfactory progress through Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics. The attainment of pupils in Year 2 is average, including reading. Pupils continue to make gains in line with expectations throughout Key Stage 2. Year 6 pupils are making satisfactory progress also, but because of their higher starting points, attainment is currently above average in both English and mathematics. Their attainment in reading is also above average. Additional support is provided for less-able pupils and those who have special educational needs and, as a result, these pupils make stronger progress. The school provides specific programmes for pupils whose circumstances make them more vulnerable, and these have a positive impact. The progress of more-able pupils is improving and is now satisfactory.

The school is aware of the progress different groups of pupils are making, but the use of pupil performance data by teachers when planning lessons is not sufficiently analytical to provide work that consistently enables pupils to make rapid progress.

## Quality of teaching

Teachers have worked successfully to improve the quality of their teaching and to embed new initiatives. As a result, teaching has a number of strengths and it is satisfactory overall.

Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is well organised and inspiring. As a result of careful planning and a wide variety of activities, children make good progress from beginning school through to the end of Reception. Good foundations are laid for the development of their reading skills. Pupils with special educational needs and those with disabilities make stronger progress than that of their peers due to the effective teaching they receive in small groups and by being supported by teaching assistants. They engage in tasks which are personalised to individual needs. This is having a positive impact on their understanding.

The 'Talk for Writing' programme is successful in engaging the pupils and, as a result, their writing is improving. Where teaching is good or better questioning is effectively used to assess pupils' understanding and to deepen their learning. In these lessons teachers plan well to meet the needs of different pupils, and pupils are active and fully engaged in their learning. Here, enticing themes or puzzles are used to give learning a context which is relevant and fun. In a mathematics lesson pupils were challenged to work on probability theory in the context of making their teacher keep an untenable position on a Twister mat. As a result of engaging the pupils by challenging their thinking and exciting their imaginations strong progress was made.

However, in some lessons observed planning did not ensure that more-able pupils were stretched, or did not give enough opportunities to develop independence. In these lessons there were not enough chances for pupils to think for themselves, and sometimes activities were not challenging enough. There is a lack of consistency in the way that teachers reflect on the progress made by pupils and plan lessons tailored to the needs of the group. Sometimes expectations within lessons are not high enough.

Teaching promotes the good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils. In one lesson they showed a delight in nature when measuring how far their sunflowers had grown, and were looking forward to planting them outside. Parents and carers value the quality of teaching in the school.

## Behaviour and safety of pupils

Around the school pupils are courteous and polite. Pupils endorsed inspectors' findings that behaviour is good over time. Most parents agree with these views. New systems help pupils to have positive relationships and good attitudes to learning. These have had a positive impact on behaviour. For example, the 'Respect Room' is used when pupils need time to reflect on their behaviour, and the house points system rewards pupils for ensuring that school is a harmonious place. These systems are consistently applied and well managed and, as a result, bullying is rare. When bullying does occur this is dealt with swiftly by the school. Pupils are aware of the various types of bullying, including through the use of computers or mobile telephones.

Pupils know how to stay safe and how to avoid risks. Parents and pupils agree that school is a safe place. 'My child really enjoys coming to school, and is happy and secure' typifies

feedback from the questionnaires. Behaviour in lessons is good and, when given the opportunity, pupils collaborate well in their learning. They readily take responsibility for the school community and older pupils enjoy the responsibility of being play leaders and sports leaders. They make sure that everyone is included at playtime, which is both fun and safe. Attendance is well-above average.

## **Leadership and management**

The headteacher rightly has the confidence of her staff and members of the governing body to drive improvement. She communicates high expectations and shows ambition to improve levels of achievement and consistency in teaching. She has ensured a high level of staff morale. The headteacher, together with her leadership team, have made changes in the way behaviour is managed and this has been effective. Classroom initiatives to improve writing skills have been embraced by teachers and this is having a positive impact on attainment. This is evidence of a clear capacity to improve the school further.

Procedures to monitor the quality of teaching are clear but do not focus sufficiently on outcomes for pupils. Achievement data and tracking are used well by the leadership team in order to shape intervention, for example booster classes and small group work. When teachers use this well in their planning it helps to ensure that all pupils are challenged, including the more able. However, this is not consistent and its impact on the quality of teaching and the progress of pupils is consequently variable. The school leadership recognises that the link between the performance management of teachers and pupil progress is not yet as strong as it could be. Nevertheless, teachers' professional development and reflective practice can be seen in the classroom, an example of which is the development of the writing in the school.

The curriculum is broad and well balanced, giving pupils access to interesting and enjoyable experiences. The school offers pupils the chance to participate in a wide range of clubs and after-school activities. There are many opportunities to learn outside of school through residential visits and trips. The curriculum promotes sustainability particularly well and teachers are imaginative in the way topics are presented. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own views and to understand the perspectives of others. For example, in a drama lesson pupils were given the chance to empathise with evacuees from the Second World War, which they did with maturity and confidence. As a result of these types of activity, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

All safeguarding requirements are met. The school is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for its pupils. This is seen particularly through its commitment to supporting those pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Discrimination of any form is not tolerated and the school prides itself in being a fully inclusive school where every child is welcome.

The headteacher, supported by the governing body, promotes partnership to support pupils' learning. As a result, the experience of pupils is enhanced by visiting speakers and support from outside agencies. The school's relationship with parents and carers is a strength.

## 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	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 to 31 December 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](http://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.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
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.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
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.**



18 May 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Highcliffe Primary School, Guisborough, TS14 8AA**

Thank you all very much for making my colleagues and me feel so welcome when we inspected your school. We enjoyed talking to you, reading your questionnaires, looking at the work you do in lessons and hearing some of you read. During our visit we were impressed with how polite and considerate you were to each other and to other adults. You told us how much you enjoy school, and we are pleased with your levels of attendance.

We think that your school is giving you a satisfactory education. The headteacher and all of the staff at school are making sure that it continues to improve. Overall, you are making satisfactory progress in reading, writing and mathematics, and the rate at which you are progressing is improving. Here are some of the strengths we found in your school:

- You behave well in lessons and around the school, and you take good care of one another.
- Your attendance is good and you say you feel safe in school.
- Teachers give you good opportunities to reflect about your life and that of others and you have many opportunities to take part in clubs and learning outside of school.

These are some of the things I have asked the school to do to make it even better:

- We have asked your teachers to make sure that more of your lessons are as good as the best ones we saw.
- We want you to be given more chances to work independently and to work things out by yourselves.
- We have asked your teachers to make better use of information about how you are progressing when planning lessons to help you improve more quickly.

Yours sincerely

Michael Wardle  
Lead Inspector

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