

Hemlington Hall Primary School

Briscoe Way, Hemlington, Middlesbrough, TS8 9SJ

Inspection dates

19-20 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- The school has halted the four year declining trend in pupils' achievement, which culminated in it being significantly below average in 2011. However, progress is not yet good for the majority of pupils throughout all three key stages.
- Progress is weaker in mathematics where not enough of the more able pupils are as skilled as they should be in solving practical problems.
- Pupil data are not used effectively in all classes to match planned activities to the individual needs of pupils.
- Pupils' understanding of their targets and how they are to improve their learning are patchy throughout school.
- There is scope to develop the role of middle leaders further in order to strengthen the strong ambition to improve.
- All lessons contain some features which constitute good teaching, although those most effective factors which ensure all pupils consistently make accelerated progress are not routine practice.

The school has the following strengths

- The unrelenting drive by the headteacher, the leadership team and members of the governing body in tackling the deep-seated legacy of underachievement
- Accurate, informed and honest self-evaluation, ensuring sharply-focused development planning.
- The recently introduced tracking systems and lesson observations linked to more rigorous management of performance.
- The outstanding quality of provision and care for pupils in the Infant Assessment Class, ensuring all make rapid and sustained progress in a short space of time.
- The systematic teaching of reading, which is improving levels of literacy across the school.
- The courtesy, manners and eagerness to learn of the majority of pupils.
- A vibrant and exciting curriculum which enthuses pupils to learn.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 17 lessons, two of which were joint observations with members of the senior team.
- In addition, inspectors made a number of shorter visits to lessons and heard groups of pupils in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 read.
- They held meetings with groups of pupils, the school council and spoke to some parents at the start of the day.
- Meetings were also held with both the new Chair of the Governing Body and the recently retired Chair.
- Inspectors spoke with staff, including senior and middle leaders.
- Inspectors took account of the 12 responses from parents to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and responses from the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documents, including the school improvement plan, the school's data on pupils' current achievement, records relating to behaviour, safeguarding and attendance and minutes of the governing body meetings.

Inspection team

James Kilner, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Jennifer Firth

Additional inspector

Julia Bayes

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well above the national average.
- Most pupils are from White British or other White backgrounds.
- The percentage of pupils supported at school action is above average.
- The percentage of pupils with supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- An Infant Assessment Unit for up to ten pupils aged between four and seven is accommodated in the school, providing additional support for pupils with moderate learning difficulties including speech, language and communication difficulties, behavioural, emotional and social difficulties and some who are on the autistic spectrum.
- In 2011 the school did not meet the current floor standards (the minimum standards expected by the government) for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the last inspection a new headteacher and new deputy headteacher have been appointed.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by April 2013 so that all consistently matches that of the best by:
 - ensuring the most effective practice already securely in place in the school is shared among all staff and becomes embedded as routine practice
 - ensuring that all planned learning opportunities are more accurately and consistently matched to each pupil according to their specific learning needs
 - providing more frequent opportunities for pupils to work independently of the teacher in order that they can demonstrate their understanding of the subject and develop their study skills
 - developing teachers' questioning skills so that they are able to assess during lessons and elicit full answers from pupils.
- Further raise levels of achievement, particularly in mathematics and especially for the most able, so that attainment rises and any remaining gaps close rapidly and securely by ensuring that:
 - all pupils have a thorough understanding of their current levels of achievement and are systematically and consistently guided as to how to reach the next levels in their work
 - there is a consistent, rigorous focus on problem solving opportunities in order that pupils utilise their mathematical skills across a range of subjects.
- In the school's pursuit of stronger leadership and management further develop the role played by middle leaders in monitoring and evaluating teaching, learning and progress in their subjects and key stages.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement is improving but is not yet good. Achievement is stronger for pupils with a statement of special educational needs as well as pupils supported at school action and school action plus.
- As a result of excellent provision, pupils attending the Infant Assessment Class make consistently outstanding progress in their personal development as well as in their literacy and numeracy skills.
- Children's levels of skills on entry to the Nursery class vary widely with a significant number working below their chronological age. As a result of sound teaching children make steady progress in acquiring their new skills. However, progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage is not as rapid as it could be because teaching is not yet consistently good and opportunities for children to explore their learning independently are not consistently implemented.
- The school has worked effectively to stem the decline in pupils' achievement over the past four years. Current data for 2012 indicate marked improvements in levels of reading and writing, with a significant number of pupils at both key stages achieving more favourably in line with national expectations for their age.
- Achievement is stronger in English than in mathematics where very few pupils achieve the higher levels. This is because there are too few opportunities for pupils to use their sound basic number skills to tackle more demanding problem solving which would assist in their mathematical development.
- In the past, achievement in reading for boys eligible for the pupil premium has been below that of their peers. The school has spotted this and is using targeted support through the effective use of the pupil premium funds to provide resources which more readily engage boys in reading. Results are now improving and outcomes are monitored on a half-termly basis.
- Pupils write for a variety of purposes and are increasingly confident when using their literacy skills in other subjects. However, opportunities for pupils to write independently and at length vary too much between classes.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- While the overall quality of teaching requires improvement the school has correctly identified well-established examples of good and outstanding practice which inspectors were able to observe during inspection.
- All teaching is exemplified by:
 - consistent adherence to the school's behaviour management policy
 - harmonious working relationships
 - teachers' good subject knowledge and effective deployment of skilled classroom assistants whose groups often make more accelerated progress than their peers.
- Where teaching is not yet good:
 - work is not always matched accurately to the needs of all pupils in the lesson
 - teachers do not check frequently enough during lessons to assess pupils' levels of understanding
 - when questioning pupils, teachers often take the single answer response even though there may be the opportunity to probe further and follow up or involve peers in assessing the strength of the answer given
 - while teachers mark work regularly it does not always guide pupils to their next levels and pupils are not always sure where they need to go next in their learning
 - Although pupils have acquired sound literacy and numeracy skills, opportunities to develop these skills in independent work or in more challenging problem solving in mathematics are

too infrequent; consequently, progress for all pupils is uneven and for the more able is not rapid enough as they are not able to extend their learning to the higher levels.

- The creative curriculum provides good quality opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. An interesting array of horticultural, environmental and global awareness opportunities are presented to pupils in the well-developed wild area where bees and frogs attract their attention and grasp their imagination. Also the curriculum provides opportunities for drama and artwork, such as exploring the work of Shakespeare through acting out the roles of characters in Macbeth. In these types of lessons progress becomes more rapid because pupils are able to conduct their own investigations and extend their sound basic knowledge, skills and understanding to the higher levels.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour is good and exemplified by good manners, willingness to help one another, respect for the beliefs and feelings of others and positive attitudes to learning. A scrutiny of school incident records, discussions with parents before school, as well as with pupils, indicate that this is typical over time.
- Pupils say they feel safe and that, should bullying, inappropriate name calling or racism occur, it would be dealt with successfully by adults in school. They also show a good understanding of what to do if they feel uncomfortable or threatened by an unwanted text or email and how to keep themselves safe when using the internet.
- Playtimes are harmonious occasions with plenty of opportunities for pupils to be involved in organised activities which are well-supervised by adults during break times and lunch times.
- The school's behaviour policy is consistently applied by all staff in school. Where behaviour falls below expectations, the school implements an effective strategy for ensuring those pupils reflect on the effect that their behaviour might have on the feelings of others. This has been successful in re-engaging those pupils who lack the independent skills to manage their own behaviour.
- The school is successful in reducing the persistent absence of a small number of pupils and attendance overall is average.

The leadership and management are good

- On taking up her appointment two years ago, the headteacher was swift to implement actions designed to tackle the emerging decline in pupils' achievement. In this venture she has been well supported by the governing body and leadership team.
- Following the disappointing 2011 results, which were significantly below national expectations, the headteacher willingly accepted the governors' performance management target to raise achievement significantly. A rigorous performance management process is designed to enable all to play their part in ensuring that the school improves at a rapid rate. This is now bearing fruit with unvalidated results for 2012 in Key Stage 2 indicating improved achievement all round, although there is still work to be done to ensure more reach the higher levels.
- Middle leaders demonstrate a keenness and ability to take more of a proactive role in monitoring and evaluating their areas as the school pursues their goal of stronger leadership and management.
- Data are used to good effect to ensure no pupil is now in danger of being left behind and that gaps are closing more rapidly. Policies, procedures and everyday practice successfully promote equality of opportunity with a clear determination to foster good relations amongst all in school and to be proactive in tackling discrimination.
- The Infant Assessment Class is managed in an exemplary manner with provision being outstanding and pupils making accelerated progress.
- Performance of teaching is managed effectively with the school recognising the need to ensure all matches that of the best practice.

- All combine to ensure an accurate, informed and honest self-evaluation of strengths and weaknesses of the school, which leads to accurate and sharply-focused development planning, allowing the school to demonstrate the capacity to improve.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - the transition of leadership from a long-standing Chair of the Governing Body to the new one is being managed meticulously through a strategically planned hand-over period
 - governors have an accurate and informed view of pupils' achievement and demonstrate a thorough understanding of data on pupils' progress
 - safeguarding is paramount in the school's priorities and all requirements are met
 - a recently-revised pupil tracking system, combined with half-termly pupils' progress meetings and lesson observations combine effectively to give senior leaders and members of the governing body a highly-accurate view as to the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupil's needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupil's needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	111664
Local authority	Middlesbrough
Inspection number	395429

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	324
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs L Renahan
Headteacher	Karen Edmenson
Date of previous school inspection	3 July 2008
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