

West Cornforth Primary School

High Street, West Cornforth, Ferryhill, DL17 9HP

Inspection dates 27–28 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Attainment in English and mathematics is consistently in line with the national average.
- The majority of pupils learn well and make good, or better, progress by the end of Key Stage 2.
- Teaching is good overall. Teachers have good knowledge and engage pupils' interest, which motivates them to learn.
- Pupils enjoy school. They show positive attitudes to learning and work well together because of the good relationships with their teachers and friends.
- Leadership and management are good. Self-evaluation is rigorous and teachers' professional development strongly supports the purposeful actions to improve outcomes for pupils.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although teaching is good there is none that is outstanding.
- In some lessons, activities lack appropriate challenge for pupils of differing abilities.
- Marking of books is inconsistent and does not always provide opportunities for pupils to respond to feedback and understand how to improve further.
- Not all pupils have a good enough grasp of phonic strategies (linking letters and sounds) and their use.
- Few pupils have a speedy recall of number-bonds or multiplication facts and their use in calculation.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 13 lessons of which two were joint observations with senior leaders. In addition, the inspection team made a number of other short visits to lessons and listened to reading.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, staff and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the nine responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection.
- They observed the school's work and took into account the work in pupils' books, the school's own data on pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Kate Pringle, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
John Pattinson	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- In this smaller than average sized primary school the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is considerably higher than the national average.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and some are from Gypsy/Roma/Traveller families.
- Few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is average. Their needs relate largely to moderate learning and speech and communication difficulties.
- The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- Pupil mobility is higher than national levels.
- Since the last inspection there have been a number of changes to teachers and leaders due to promotion of staff.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school holds awards for Investors in Children and is an Eco School. It holds anti-bullying accreditation and the Enhanced Healthy Schools Standard.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Secure all teaching to be good or better by:
 - ensuring that tasks are directly related to individual needs and sufficiently challenge pupils at all levels
 - ensuring consistency in marking across the school to enable pupils to respond to teachers' feedback and understand their next steps in learning
 - ensuring that all pupils have a good knowledge and application of phonic skills and strategies to enable them to enhance their skills in reading and writing
 - ensuring that all pupils have speedy recall of number-bonds and multiplication facts to enable them to quicken their responses when calculating.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills well below those expected for their age. For some children, their abilities are significantly below expectations, particularly in language and communication. Although most children demonstrate good progress through Nursery and Reception classes, their attainment as they exit to Year 1 is below average.
- Attainment across Key Stage 1 is improving and is now broadly average in writing and mathematics, although reading levels remain lower than expected.
- Pupils leave Year 6 with skills in line with those reached nationally; however, as in Key Stage 1, attainment in writing and mathematics is stronger than in reading.
- From their starting points, all pupils make good progress overall and the progress of some is outstanding. Progress in reading is curtailed by pupils' insecure understanding of the links between letters and sounds. In mathematics, a lack of rapid recall of number-bonds and multiplication slows pupils' skills in calculation.
- Those pupils who access additional support through pupil premium monies make at least good, and often outstanding, progress, with little difference from other pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs progress equally as well as others given their starting points, as they benefit from appropriate interventions to address their individual needs.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers use their good knowledge effectively to secure pupils' good progress through the school. Those with less experience work well with other staff and draw on their expertise.
- Pupils' positive attitudes to learning clearly reflect the harmonious relationships they have with their teachers. Pupils enjoy school. They behave well and are attentive as they listen carefully to their teachers, address tasks eagerly and show particular enjoyment when they engage in practical activities which challenge them to use their newly acquired skills.
- Teachers make good use of pupils' past learning employing a range of strategies to teach new concepts, including the use of interactive whiteboards. The use of information and communication technology is increasing and further encourages pupils' interaction.
- Where teaching is securely good, teachers ensure that the differing abilities of pupils are successfully addressed. Teaching assistants are well briefed and use their skills effectively to promote pupils' learning. Tasks provide the right levels of challenge and, therefore, pupils' learning progresses well.
- Where teaching is less effective, the differing needs of pupils are not so effectively addressed. This means that tasks do not successfully challenge all abilities and progress is not as good as it could be.
- Although work is marked regularly, not all teachers provide pupils with the opportunity to refer back to past work and make corrections. Marking against pupils' individual targets is rare as is information provided for pupils about what they need to learn next to progress faster.
- Across the school, the teaching of phonics and number facts is not consistently strong enough to ensure pupils develop secure knowledge in these areas. This has an impact on their reading and calculation skills.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils play and learn in a very positive climate. They are interested, polite and well-mannered as they talk enthusiastically about their school, their friendships and their learning.
- Pupils feel safe. They are knowledgeable of the different forms of bullying and who to turn to if they experience it. They say that bullying occurs rarely and, when it does, staff deal with

such cases quickly and effectively.

- Parents' views reflect pupils' feelings that school is a happy and safe place to be. Discussions with parents indicate that the school cares well for their children and provides high levels of support for pupils and their families.
- Attendance levels of those children who reside wholly in the school catchment are above average but, due to the high levels of movement into and out of school throughout the year, overall attendance is broadly in line with national levels.
- Pupils interact well with each other and with adults. The school has very strong systems to deal with inappropriate behaviour and pupils understand this fully. Where pupils persist in inappropriate behaviour the school takes firm action to assure the safety of pupils.
- The provision of a good range of additional activities, including residential visits, enables pupils to widen their skills as they experience different opportunities. This contributes to their understanding of citizenship and how to interact with others successfully.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a real strength of this school. Pupils are encouraged to respect the rights of others and to understand how having a different lifestyle contributes to the rich mix of society. Links with other schools nationally and globally further extends pupils' understanding of culture and societies.

The leadership and management are good

- Led by an aspirational headteacher, senior leaders have worked effectively together, since their fairly recent appointments, to secure good progress. There is a purposeful drive to improve teaching and learning and this is securely linked to outcomes for pupils. Staff share the high expectations of leaders and managers and are well motivated to improve their own practice.
- Pupils' progress is rigorously tracked. Teachers use this information to identify any who make insufficient progress and provide support through specific interventions and use of trained adults. Pupil premium money has been used well to ensure that pupils supported in this way achieve standards in line with all pupils. Indeed, this group, most recently, has made outstanding progress.
- School self-evaluation is rigorous. Leaders and managers have a good understanding of the school's strengths and they plan strategic developments where they identify weaknesses. Good monitoring of the quality of lessons leads to highly-focused professional development for teachers which improves the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils.
- Teachers' impact on pupils' progress is securely linked to their performance management. All teachers are supported well to progress to higher professional levels where promotion opportunities to senior management, within and without the school, are well developed.
- The school endeavours to continually move forward. Areas of improvement from the last inspection have been successfully addressed. The school has extended its provision for pupils to understand cultural differences locally, nationally and globally. It works hard to ensure that pupils make good progress across the school, as evidenced in the rising standards at Key Stage 1 and in the narrowed gap for pupils who are looked after or who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- Successful promotion of equal opportunities is demonstrated by the good progress shown by different groups of pupils. This is a highly inclusive school and all pupils access a good curriculum which is enriched through a range of visits and visitors, and residential opportunities for older pupils.
- Strong links within the local community and ever-widening links with other schools nationally and globally extend pupils' understanding of society and the opportunities available to them. Pupils' good understanding of right and wrong impacts positively upon their relationships with others.
- The local authority provides a light touch of support for this good school.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- ensures that the safeguarding of pupils meets statutory requirements
 - is fully aware of the needs of its pupils and their families and supports the school well to secure positive relationships and increase pupils' achievements
 - is fully aware of the need to continue to increase the expertise of governors to further challenge 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 pupils' 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 pupils' 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	114079
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	403223

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	175
Appropriate authority	Durham
Chair	Ernest Hurrell
Headteacher	Janet Sarsfield
Date of previous school inspection	23 June 2008
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