

Parkhead Community Primary School

Park Lane, Winlaton, Blaydon-on-Tyne, Tyne and Wear, NE21 6LT

Inspection dates 16–17 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Pupils make no more than expected progress in Key Stage 2 in writing and mathematics. Attainment in boys' writing is below average. Work is not always accurately matched to pupils' individual needs, especially for lower-ability pupils and this slows their progress.
- The quality of teaching is inconsistent. Some lessons move along too slowly, teachers do not make it clear to pupils what they need to learn or ask questions that encourage pupils to think hard. Some instructions are too difficult for pupils to read.
- The curriculum offers too few stimulating activities that help pupils to see the links between subjects.
- Some teachers offer too few opportunities for pupils to write at length in a range of subjects or to practise their skills in mathematics.
- When senior leaders give feedback on the quality of teaching they do not always point out weaknesses strongly enough.
- New targets for teachers that require pupils to make good progress have not had time to have an effect.

The school has the following strengths

- There is excellent teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage so children make outstanding progress. There are pockets of good teaching across school. Marking is well done and helps pupils to know how to improve their work.
- The school provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are good, they are keen to learn and say that they feel very safe. Attendance has improved.
- The headteacher and senior leaders have a good understanding of how to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. Their actions have improved the rates at which pupils make progress, especially for the most able.
- The governing body has a clear view of the school because it regularly checks the school's work and has taken decisive action to improve outcomes for pupils.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors had meetings with staff, groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors looked at a range of evidence including: the school’s improvement plan; the school’s data relating to pupils’ progress; monitoring reports; the work pupils were doing in their books; and the school’s documentation relating to safeguarding.
- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 22 lessons taught by 16 teachers and listened to a group of pupils read.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher conducted eight joint observations with the inspectors. The inspectors also observed senior leaders reporting back to teachers on the quality of learning and pupils’ achievement in lessons.
- The inspector met some parents informally at the start of the school day and took into account the 18 responses from parents and carers to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View).

Inspection team

Gordon Potter, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Karen Holmes	Additional inspector
Derek Sleightholme	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is well above average.
- The proportions of pupils supported at school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are well below average.
- There are on-site breakfast and after-school clubs which are managed by the governing body.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By the summer of 2013, improve the quality of teaching to at least good, in order to raise pupils' attainment and accelerate their progress, especially for boys in writing and for lower-ability pupils, by:
 - increasing the pace of learning, thereby making certain that pupils have more time to get on with their work
 - offering more opportunities for pupils to write at length in a range of subjects and to practise and apply their skills in mathematics
 - using the school's detailed information about attainment to set work which is more closely matched to pupils' individual skills and abilities
 - making it clear to pupils what they are expected to learn in lessons
 - making sure that all pupils can understand the instructions and questions they are reading
 - asking questions which give pupils the chance to explain their ideas fully and to extend their thinking
 - developing the curriculum so that it offers pupils more exciting and stimulating learning and helps them to see the links between subjects.
- Increase the impact that leaders at all levels have on pupils' attainment and progress by:
 - feeding back more clearly to teachers where there are weaknesses in their teaching
 - using performance management more robustly to give teachers more demanding targets for improving the attainment and progress of pupils in their classes.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are excellent. As a result of some outstanding teaching, they make rapid progress from their starting points, which are below national expectations. Pupils continue to build on these strong foundations so that attainment at the end of Year 2 is typically average in reading, writing and mathematics. While attainment in writing has risen since 2010, it remains below average for boys at the end of Year 2.
- Attainment at the end of Year 6 is average and the proportion of pupils who attained age-related expectations in both English and mathematics increased in 2012. Boys' writing skills are below average. In the past, too few pupils attained the higher Level 5 at the end of Key Stage 2. Inspection evidence shows that the school has tackled this underachievement by identifying the needs of the most able pupils and setting them harder work. These pupils now make good progress. Progress in reading has improved and is good in Key Stage 2.
- The needs of lower-ability pupils are not so well met. The work that is set for them is sometimes too hard because instructions and questions are too difficult for these pupils to read. Their progress is also slower than it could be because there are not always enough exciting learning experiences that motivate pupils to do better work.
- The school's own records show that in 2011 progress across Key Stage 2 was too slow. The headteacher has helped teachers to improve teaching and given them a realistic picture of how well pupils are doing. As a result, most pupils now make expected progress. Pupils who have special educational needs make expected progress overall.
- Pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium have progressed better than similar pupils nationally and their levels of attainment are rising.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is inconsistent. There are some good lessons but in other lessons the pace of learning is too slow. There are some activities which are too easy and teachers do not ask questions which make pupils think hard. In some lessons, pupils are not always clear about what they are learning, or made to work hard enough.
- While there are good examples of teachers making sure that work set is at the right level, work is not always well matched to the skills and abilities of all pupils. In some lessons, questions and instructions are difficult to read so pupils who find learning hard struggle to make progress.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, there is excellent teaching of linking sounds and letters (phonics), writing and number. There is a wide range of engaging activities, both indoors and outdoors, which help children to thrive in all aspects of learning. This includes the use of the Forest School, which excites children and pupils in all year groups. It develops their love of the beauty of the natural world and their skills in science.
- Where teaching is good, teachers make lessons interesting, allowing pupils' opportunities to explore, experiment and learn through practical, problem-solving activities. In a successful science lesson with Year 3 pupils, pupils were excited when they did an experiment together to explore the properties of rocks and to write a letter of advice to a building company.
- Pupils' work is regularly marked and this marking helpfully tells pupils how successful they have been in their work. Pupils are given time to act on advice about how to improve their work. Pupils have targets, and are clear about the level of their work and how to take the next steps in their learning. They say this is clearer in English than mathematics. Senior leaders are reviewing targets so that pupils will be able to have higher aspirations.
- A clear successful strategy to improve reading is to use fiction as a stimulus to topic work. For example, the reading of Roald Dahl's *Boy* in Year 6 was used to encourage pupils to write about their own lives and the lives of others. Work on topics such as the Second World War, including trips to Eden Camp, develops pupils' understanding of history.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are happy in school and enjoy their lessons when they are fully involved in their learning. Occasionally, there is some restlessness when their work is less stimulating or they have to listen to their teachers for too long. They respect one another, work and play well together and are very polite to adults.
- Pupils say that behaviour is good in their lessons and any disruptions are quickly dealt with by their teachers. Indeed, much excellent behaviour was evident in lessons observed during the inspection and around the school.
- Inspectors analysed the school's records of behaviour over time which confirmed that behaviour is consistently good as a result of the successful use of rewards and behaviour management strategies. The few pupils who find it hard to behave well are helped by clear rules. As a result, there were only two exclusions last year.
- Pupils feel very safe and are aware of different forms of bullying. They say that any form of bullying, including cyber-bullying, is rare and when it does happen they are confident that it will be quickly dealt with. They know that older pupils, as well as the teachers and other adults in school, will help with any problems.
- Playground 'buddies' help pupils play safely and enjoyably together and they develop social skills in the breakfast and after-school clubs. Pupils say that the school council listens to pupils' concerns and ideas. It has agreed school rules with teachers, has been consulted about teaching appointments and advises school leaders on safety issues that worry pupils.
- Attendance is average. It has improved rapidly as the result of a strong effort by the school to work with parents and pupils.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The headteacher has had a significant impact on improving the school. She been successful in ensuring that pupils now make expected progress. This is largely a result of her clear understanding of how to use data to check pupils' attainment and progress. However, pupils' attainment and progress and the quality of teaching still require improvement. This is because the school's lesson observations are not rigorous enough and there is not enough clear advice about how to improve teaching.
- In the past, staff have been rewarded even when their pupils have underachieved. The headteacher has ensured that performance management is now clearly about raising attainment and improving the quality of teaching. Expectations of progress have been raised.
- Members of the leadership team are clear about their responsibilities and know that they have to improve teaching. They are committed to making the school the best it can be. However, they are over-optimistic about the school's strengths. While continuing professional development has a strong focus on improving the quality of teaching, teachers are not always clear enough about how well their teaching impacts on the amount of progress made by pupils in their class.
- Funding has been used to improve the basic skills of those pupils eligible for the pupil premium. Extra teachers have helped to make classes smaller so that pupils get more attention. However, there are some remaining weaknesses in teaching which stop lower-ability pupils making good progress. Programmes which have been introduced to improve reading are making sure that pupils read every day. This is helping pupils read better. All this illustrates the school's commitment to promoting equal opportunities and tackling discrimination. However, the school needs to do more to improve boys' writing skills.
- At times, the curriculum is relatively uninspiring because it lacks activities which excite pupils and help them to see the links between subjects. Pupils do not always get enough opportunities to practise their writing and mathematics by being involved in longer and more demanding tasks. Additionally, there are too few opportunities for them to appreciate the wonderful things humans have created.

- The local authority has provided support for the teaching of mathematics and English and has helped the school to gain a clearer view of strengths and weaknesses in teaching. Such advice has started to improve teaching and pupils' attainment and progress.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - At the Chair of Governors' own admission, the governing body in the past took too much on trust in relation to the progress pupils were making. It has acted robustly to improve its skills and has introduced much better procedures to hold the school to account.
 - While governors understand that pupils' progress has increased, they are acutely aware that it must improve further.
 - Governors carry out routine monitoring to evaluate the impact of the pupil premium funding on pupils' performance. The governors ensure that the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities as regards safeguarding. All staff have been vetted and are trained appropriately to keep pupils safe and free from harm.
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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	131466
Local authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	406433

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	360
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tony Stevens
Headteacher	Paula Bailey
Date of previous school inspection	9 December 2010
Telephone number	0191 4335618
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