

Forest Hall Primary School

Delaval Road, Forest Hall, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear, NE12 9BA

Inspection dates

21–22 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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.

- Pupils make good progress which is better than that expected nationally.
- The small numbers of pupils who speak English as an additional language make particularly good progress because they are well supported.
- The quality of teaching is good because teachers plan activities, which make learning fun. Teachers make sure that their pupils get on with their work quickly, making good use of learning time.
- In the best lessons, pupils are given work which makes them think and that enables them to get on independently of the teacher.
- Pupils behave well and they say that incidents of misbehaviour in class are infrequent and minor. When outside or around school, such as during 'wet breaks', they are friendly and cooperate well with each other.
- The performance of teachers is well managed by the headteacher. They are observed regularly and senior leaders look at the pupils' work to check on their progress. The improved quality of teaching is a key factor in pupils' improved achievement since the previous inspection.
- The leadership of the school is good. There is an excellent team spirit among those teachers who are in charge of key stages and key subjects.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' attainment in writing is not high enough. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to practise their writing skills when completing work in other subjects.
- Only a small proportion of teaching is outstanding.
- Although pupils are given targets showing what they are expected to achieve, they are not given enough information on how to achieve them or time to respond to their teachers' marking advice.
- Communication between parents and school for a small proportion of parents is not good enough. As a result, a few parents are of the view that the school needs to make further improvements.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 18 lessons or parts of lessons taught by 10 different teachers. Two were joint observations with the headteacher.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and talked to them about how much reading they do, as well as looking at their work in class.
- Discussions took place with members of the governing body, staff, groups of pupils and a representative from the local authority.
- Documents were examined, including those relating to safeguarding, the school’s improvement plan and records which show the school’s procedures for gaining an accurate view of its own performance, as well as the school’s own assessment data.
- The views of 44 parents who responded to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) were also taken into account. Ten parents were spoken to directly and were asked about the school.
- Twenty-one staff also completed questionnaires about their views of the school.

Inspection team

Frank Cain, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jane Beckett

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Forest Hall Primary School is an average sized school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is average, but the proportion at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is average.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. A very small number speak English as an additional language.
- The senior management has been reorganised in the last two years.
- Government floor standards, which relate to pupils' attainment and progress, have been met in 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching further so that more is outstanding in order to raise attainment, particularly in writing by:
 - giving pupils time to respond to teachers' marking so that they learn from their mistakes
 - making sure that pupils know exactly what they need to do in order to move from one level to the next in all subjects
 - provide more opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills when completing work in other subjects of the curriculum.
- Improve communication between the school and parents by:
 - gathering parents views about the school
 - providing parents with appropriate information on their children's attainment and progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children begin school with skills that are below those typically expected for their age. By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6, they attain levels that are similar to the national average. Although there are some variations, most pupils across the school make good progress. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection.
- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because they have access to a good range of facilities and receive effective guidance from adults. When making bread in the Nursery, for example, children were counting out tablespoons of flour and weighing butter by themselves, under a teacher's guidance, and so developing their independence.
- Pupils achieve well because they are given tasks that make them think and discover things for themselves. In a Year 6 English lesson, for example, pupils made comparisons between how an event might be reported in writing, over the radio or on the television. They used computers to research information and to compare different texts on the exploits of skydiving from space.
- Pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium make the same good progress as other pupils because the school has used the pupil premium budget wisely on extra resources.
- By the end of Year 6, the attainment of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is similar to that expected nationally. These pupils make good progress, particularly through Key Stage 1.
- The very small group of pupils who speak English as an additional language make very good progress from the time they start at the school. They receive effective support from teachers and teaching assistants.
- Pupils present their work to a good standard. Their good progress in their punctuation skills, for example, is clearly seen in their books. Pupils cover a good amount of work and their handwriting is normally of a good standard. Even so, pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise their writing in subjects like science or history.
- Year 2 pupils are helped to read by breaking down each word into letters and the sounds they make. Weaker readers sometimes find it more difficult to say the whole word out loud. Year 6 pupils are keen readers. They use the local library as well as the school library. They say that reading helps them to improve their writing and many read for pleasure at home.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good because lessons are adapted for the different abilities of the pupils. The quality of the work in pupils' books shows that teaching and pupils' progress over time are good.
- All teachers begin their lessons by giving pupils clear instructions on what they are expecting to learn and make sure they understood what they have to do to succeed. Teachers swap ideas about good teaching practices. They question pupils closely in lessons in order to find out how well they are learning, such as in a history lesson, when the teacher made sure that pupils were very clear about the difference between a fact and an opinion.
- Teachers usually make sure that they plan into lessons good opportunities for pupils to develop their teamwork and cooperation skills. At the end of the lessons, they ask pupils to consider how well they think they are learning.
- Teachers make learning fun. In a Year 1 science lesson, for example, the teacher asked some pupils to demonstrate to their classmates what materials could be bent, squashed or stretched. The pupils bubbled with delight and were keen to start to experiment themselves.
- Bright welcoming classrooms, with attractive displays, including advice about how pupils can improve their work, are consistent features throughout the school.
- Although teachers place a good emphasis on developing pupils' literacy skills, including writing, not all staff consistently give pupils enough chances to practise their writing skills, such as when

completing work in science or topic lessons. Homework is regularly used to help pupils to develop the skill of finding out things for themselves, such as on space travel.

- Pupils across the school are given targets showing what they are expected to achieve. Many of the older pupils, for example, know what level they are expected to reach in Key Stage 2 tests. However, pupils are not as well informed about what precisely they have to do to reach them.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' work is detailed, which offers some helpful guidance on how to improve their work. Some pupils follow up teachers' comments, making corrections to their work in order to develop their understanding. This good practice is not always seen across the school.
- Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' achievement. In a mixed Year 1 and 2 reading lesson, a teaching assistant ensured that the pupils worked hard so that they were able to accurately write a long sentence with very little help. In a numeracy lesson in the Reception class, the teaching assistant made sure that lower-attaining children made as much progress as other children in the class.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils said that behaviour was good and all are aware of the consequences of poor behaviour. Staff are skilful in dealing with any incidents of misbehaviour and so that time for learning is not missed.
- Pupils enjoy school and a wide range of subjects are popular, especially mathematics.
- There have been no exclusions for over three years and there are no recorded racist incidents.
- Pupils' attendance has been above average for over three years and very few pupils arrive late.
- Pupils are aware of the different forms that bullying can take, for example, they know about the possible dangers linked to texting and computers, such as sharing passwords.
- The school has a 'buddy' system so that pupils who have problems can speak to another pupil about it. Older pupils particularly enjoy sitting alongside Reception children at lunchtime and listening to them read on Friday afternoons. The older pupils see this as an honour and are proud of the contribution they make as good role models.
- In some lessons, such as in science and physical education, pupils are made aware of any possible dangers, such as tripping and falling. As a result, pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe.
- Children in the Nursery are well behaved even when the weather outside is poor. They enjoy playing in the rain with their waterproof clothes on. When children in the Reception class came into assembly with their raincoats on, they sat down in an orderly way without any fuss.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has an accurate view of what makes a good lesson and manages teachers' performance well. School records show that the quality of teaching over time has improved and is now good.
- Teachers who are in charge of English and mathematics, as well as the leaders of the different key stages, review teachers' planning to check that pupils' work is of a high standard. They also talk to pupils about their work and observe lessons so that they can suggest where the quality of teaching might improve further.
- The school frequently checks whether pupils, including those of different pupil groups are achieving equally well. Senior leaders carefully review the information that tracks pupils' attainment and progress well. The school adapts what is on offer to meet pupils' specific needs. This shows the school's commitment to providing equal opportunities. Their successes are evident, for example, in pupils' improved achievement since the previous inspection and the particularly good progress of the very small group of pupils who speak English as an additional

language.

- The curriculum is designed around themes. These themes are used well to stimulate pupils' interest, such as on the Olympic Games. Visits, for example, to Killhope Wheel, are used to enhance pupils' experiences even further. The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. A visit to Holy Island was used in order to develop pupils' understanding of what it might be like to live in an isolated community.
- A small minority of parents who responded to the on-line questionnaire indicated that they were not completely happy about the quality of communication between home and school. All of the parents spoken to directly by inspectors were happy with the school, but a small minority expressed a view that communication of information about how well their children are doing could be better. However, the school does not regularly seek parents' views.
- The local authority has provided some very helpful support for this school to confirm how well it is doing, as well as by checking the standards of pupils' work.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governors are well aware of the areas for development for the school and know its strengths. Subject leaders give talks to the governors so that they have a good understanding of how the school works. The governors understand the importance of the link of salary progression to how well teachers perform.

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	108605
Local authority	North Tyneside
Inspection number	405182

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	226
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Robert Snedden
Headteacher	Carmel Parker
Date of previous school inspection	25 January 2011
Telephone number	0191 200 8341
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