

Sedgefield Hardwick Primary School

Hawthorn Road, Sedgefield, Stockton on Tees, Co Durham, TS21 3DA

Inspection dates 27–28 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

- Sedgefield Hardwick Primary School is a good and improving school.
- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics from their individual starting points, regardless of ability or background.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, because teachers have high expectations and teach interesting lessons. Some teaching is outstanding.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy being at school, have positive attitudes to learning and they justifiably feel safe and well looked after. They feel that if they have any problems then these will be addressed.
- The school provides pupils with a wide range of stimulating and interesting opportunities to learn. Such high-quality experiences contribute very well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The leadership team, including governors, under the clear direction and guidance of the new headteacher, is sharply focused on continuous school improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some teachers do not always make sufficient use of their knowledge about what pupils already know, to plan new learning to challenge them and move them on quickly.
- Children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage is not as rapid as pupils' progress elsewhere in the school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 19 lessons taught by eight different teachers. One lesson was jointly observed with the headteacher.
- Inspectors also observed pupils at playtime and lunchtime, listened to pupils from Years 2, 4 and 6 read and spoke to two different groups of pupils. They also carried out a pupil work scrutiny.
- Meetings were held with staff, the senior leadership team and governors. The lead inspector also had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at assessment information, the school’s improvement plan, the school’s monitoring information, a wide range of policies including safeguarding policies and governing body documentation. The lead inspector examined 16 staff questionnaires.
- There were 40 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) at the time of the inspection. These views were taken into account by inspectors along with letters sent in to the school marked for the attention of the inspection team.

Inspection team

Alan Sergison, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Graeme Clarke

Additional Inspector

Information about this school

- This is a slightly smaller than average primary school.
- A new headteacher was appointed in September 2012 following a period of instability in the senior leadership team. Since the last inspection there have also been a number of other changes in staffing.
- The vast majority of pupils come from White British backgrounds. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported at school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above average.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding available to the school to support pupils eligible for free school meals, those looked after by the local authority or who are the children of members of the armed forces) is below average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- The school has external awards such as Healthy School and International School (Silver Award).

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better in all classes by:
 - sharing more widely the outstanding skills, expertise and best practice found in the school
 - embedding arrangements for teachers' marking that support pupils to take the next steps in improving their work
 - ensuring expectations are consistently clear and learning proceeds at a brisk pace
 - ensuring activities are stimulating and always carefully matched to children's needs.
- Increase the rates of children's progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, particularly in the first year of this stage, by:
 - ensuring accurate assessment information is used to match teaching to the learning needs of all children
 - consistently providing imaginative and stimulating learning activities both inside and outdoors.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' achievement in Key Stages 1 and 2 has improved since the time of the last inspection and is now good. In 2012, Year 6 pupils achieved above average test results in English and mathematics. Higher-attaining pupils did particularly well.
- The majority of children start school with skill levels that are broadly in line with those expected for their age. Although there are signs that progress is beginning to speed up across the Early Years Foundation Stage, particularly in children's communication skills, it is not yet as strong as pupils' progress in other parts of the school. This means that pupils join Year 1 with skills which remain broadly in line with national averages in all areas of learning.
- Pupils' progress accelerates throughout Key Stages 1 and 2 as the result of consistently good teaching over time. In a typical Key Stage 1 literacy lesson pupils made very good progress with their language skills, completing activities based around their practical experiences on a visit to the Sea Life Centre
- In most lessons, pupils make at least good progress and, in a few, they make outstanding progress. However, in a few lessons, pupils' progress slows because they are insufficiently challenged. On rare occasions, activities do not gain pupils' interest and so fail to motivate them to learn as well as they might.
- The school has narrowed the gaps in achievement between all pupils and those for whom it receives extra funding (the pupil premium). It does this by carefully providing extra adult support where necessary to improve their literacy and numeracy skills.
- The majority of Year 1 pupils demonstrated or exceeded the expected skills in linking letters and sounds in the most recent test, showing good progress. The school promotes reading well. Pupils develop a range of reading skills which they use well. They say that they enjoy reading and they can discuss and give opinions about what they have read.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. This is because teachers and other adults support them very well in lessons and provide work and learning materials best suited to their learning needs.

The quality of teaching is good

- The teaching observed during the inspection was consistently good, and some was outstanding. Pupils' workbooks and their progress records confirm good teaching over time.
- Where the teaching is of good or outstanding quality, teachers skilfully use their knowledge of where pupils are in their learning to plan their next steps. In exceptionally well-planned and resourced lessons in Key Stage 2, all pupils made outstanding progress in their writing and problem-solving skills because what they were expected to do exactly matched their learning needs.
- Sometimes teachers miss opportunities to use their assessment of what pupils already know and can do in order to plan activities that accelerate their learning. Occasionally, teachers take too long explaining what pupils need to do when they move from one activity to another. This slows learning.
- Most pupils receive very good feedback on how to improve their work which helps to speed up their learning. Teachers provide pupils with clear improvement points and time each day to respond to these. Pupils say that they really appreciate these opportunities to consolidate their understanding. However, such high quality marking is not yet consistently applied across the school.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage benefit from a good balance between activities led by adults and those they choose themselves, both outside and indoors. Interesting opportunities for speaking and listening, and play areas that encourage hands-on learning enable them to make at least expected progress in all areas. On occasion, progress slows as learning activities

are not always inspiring and teacher-led activities are too long, particularly in the Nursery.

- Teachers make very good links across different subjects so that pupils are often excited and stimulated by what they are learning. In a Year 6 history lesson related to how childhood toys have changed since Victorian times, pupils developed data-handling, literacy and research skills at an exceptional rate. They were able to apply their basic skills in a meaningful context.
- The teaching of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good. Skilled teachers and teaching assistants have high expectations and set work that is suitable for their needs, so that they make good progress.
- Early reading skills are taught well and as a result, children make good progress in recognising letters and sounds. For example, in a successful, well-paced Year 2 phonics session, pupils were placed in ability groups to ensure activities were closely matched to their needs. They responded very enthusiastically to the support from their teachers and made good gains in their learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The school is a happy, harmonious community where pupils say they feel safe. They have very good attitudes in lessons and display an eagerness to learn. Most parents, pupils and staff agree that behaviour is good. Pupils are very polite and courteous and they get on well together.
- Pupils engage enthusiastically with learning in almost all lessons. Their behaviour in lessons is almost always at least good and, at times, it is outstanding. Only on rare occasions, when activities lack challenge, does pupils' concentration wane.
- Pupils are proud of their school and they carry out responsibilities and tasks eagerly and sensibly. This pride was clearly illustrated in one school assembly when they and their teachers very enthusiastically sang a rap song celebrating their school with a chorus '... learning together and having fun'. The school council is increasingly involved in school development and its members take their responsibilities very seriously.
- Pupils are aware of the different types of bullying, such as emotional and internet bullying, and know how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations. Pupils trust staff and are confident that they will listen to their problems and act on their concerns.
- Attendance is above average and improving. This is as a result of the high priority given by the school to encouraging good attendance and reflects the fact that pupils enjoy coming to school.

The leadership and management are good

- Now that the period of turbulence in the leadership is ended, the senior team is united and determined to continue to move the school forward. The new headteacher has brought determination, energy and a clear vision and direction for the school and, in a short period of time, has driven through significant improvements, particularly in the quality of teaching.
- The changes mean that pupils now make at least good progress during their time at the school. Any deficiencies in teaching identified through leaders' monitoring, are swiftly tackled. Targets set for teachers are closely linked to pupils' achievement. Those who do not consistently provide good quality cannot move up the pay scale until their teaching improves.
- The headteacher makes good use of information from these checks to develop teachers' skills and improve teaching. However, there has not yet been time to share the very best practice across the school.
- Very good procedures for checking the progress and attainment of individuals and groups of pupils help to ensure that they all perform equally well. A detailed school improvement plan, based on rigorous and accurate self-assessment, outlines the correct areas to improve, and what needs to be done to achieve this.
- Pupils talk enthusiastically about the content of topics they are studying, such as the high profile focus on Sedgefield, its culture and traditions. Many opportunities to visit places of interest combined with the growing range of extra activities such as choir and the eco-club bring learning

to life for pupils and promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

- The vast majority of parents greatly appreciate the good quality care that the school gives their children. Leaders have tackled the concerns some expressed about the lack of information about their children's progress. The school now provides many opportunities for parents to become involved in their children's education.
- Recent support for the school from the local authority has been highly effective. It monitors the school's performance rigorously and gives high-quality support, particularly in respect of staffing issues and professional development.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors ensure that all required policies and procedures are in place and that the school runs smoothly. They are well informed by reports from senior leaders, including detailed feedback on pupil performance and progress. They analyse this information carefully, pose challenging questions and take tough, decisive actions, for example in relation to salary increments. Governors ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet requirements and that pupil premium funding is spent effectively.

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	114161
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	401412

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	230
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Robinson
Headteacher	Sally Newton
Date of previous school inspection	9 March 2010
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