

The Village Primary

Windsor Road, Thornaby, Stockton-on-Tees, County Durham, TS17 8PW

Inspection dates 28–29 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.

- The Nursery class gives children a really good start to their time in school. They enter with skills that are well below what is typical for their age and make good progress due to good quality teaching and excellent outdoor learning and play.
- Pupils make good progress. By the time they move on to Year 2 standards are below average overall but rapidly improving.
- They make good and often outstanding progress across Key Stage 2 and leave Year 6 with standards that are average overall and continuing to improve.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are beginning to make better progress as the school increasingly meets those needs.
- Pupils entitled to extra money to support their needs are also making better progress as the school's support for their specific needs improves.
- Teaching is good and is continuing to improve, with some that is outstanding. Teachers' good relationship with pupils and a positive approach to learning ensure that pupils make good and sometimes outstanding progress.
- Pupils behave well both in and out of lessons. They have a real love of learning and respond well to all staff in lessons. They have a good understanding of how to keep safe both in and out of school and said that they felt safe in school.
- The new headteacher has formed a strong partnership with the new deputy headteacher and this is helping them implement a range of improvements. A developing leadership team is having a positive impact on improving teaching and raising standards.
- Governors have an increasing understanding of the school and have taken an active part in appointing new staff and supporting the drive for improvements.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Standards in reading and writing in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 need to improve. The teaching of letters and the sounds they make, and the marking of writing do not always reflect the newly introduced effective methods.
- More teaching needs to be outstanding with pupils involved in more independent learning and investigations to accelerate their progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 28 lessons or parts of lessons and looked at the schools and local authority’s monitoring of teaching. In addition inspectors observed groups of pupils working with teaching assistants and listened to some pupils read in Year 2.
- Inspectors talked to a range of pupils including the school council about the school.
- They met with three governors as well as teaching staff, including senior and middle leaders.
- The lead inspector met with a local authority representative about the school’s improvement.
- Inspectors took account of 10 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection.
- They observed the overall work of the school and looked at a number of documents including the school’s data about pupils’ current progress. They looked at documents relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance and records of how funds are spent to support pupils entitled to the pupil premium.
- Inspectors also looked at a range of other evidence including school displays, its website and completed an analysis of work in books. They also looked at evidence representing the school’s wider achievements.

Inspection team

David Shearsmith, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Debra De Muschamp

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an average sized primary school.
- A well above average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium.
- A well above average number of pupils are supported at school action. A well above average number of pupils are supported at school action plus and have a statement of special educational need.
- Almost all pupils are of White British Heritage.
- The school has the Arts Mark Gold, National Healthy School and Investors in People awards.
- The school meets the current government floor standards which sets the minimum standards for schools in terms of attainment and progress.
- The school has a breakfast club managed by the governing body.
- Since the last inspection there have been a number of staffing changes including a new headteacher and deputy-headteacher.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve standards in reading and writing in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 by:
 - securing the teaching of sounds that letters make (phonics) and applying them to reading and writing effectively
 - improving the marking of writing to enable progress to be accelerated
 - improving opportunities for writing through play.
- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching by:
 - improving opportunities for pupils to be involved in investigations so they are more independent in their learning and provided with greater challenge
 - using existing outstanding practice in the school to increase the amount of outstanding teaching
 - ensuring pupils know consistently how to be successful in their lessons.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils achieve well in this close knit school community as children get a very good start to their time in school in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They enter the Nursery class with skills that are well below what is typical for their age. They have access to an outstanding outdoor play area and good support for their speaking and listening skills. They make good progress overall although there are insufficient opportunities for them to write when playing.
- Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 and leave with standards that are below average. Due to good teaching in Year 2 pupils' progress is rapidly improving. The school has implemented a new approach to reading and writing that is having a positive impact on progress but is not yet sufficiently secure to impact on standards.
- Pupils make good and sometimes better progress by the end of Key Stage 2. They reach levels in English and mathematics that are average overall due to the school's drive to raise standards. Good quality teaching particularly in Year 6 has accelerated pupils' progress.
- Pupils make good progress overall in their reading. Standards in reading are below average in Key Stage 1. The teaching of sounds that letters make (phonics) is improving, but is not yet sufficiently secure in order to ensure an improvement in standards.
- Standards in reading are average by the time pupils leave the school in Year 6. Good and sometimes better teaching of reading coupled with a new library and a range of reading activities is rapidly improving progress and raising standards.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those entitled to the pupil premium are making increasingly good progress. Teaching assistants and staff are becoming better at meeting these pupils' needs both in and out of lessons and they are beginning to achieve well. Specific support to meet the needs of groups of pupils, such as the 'school nurture group', is having a positive impact.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good overall and improving rapidly across the school so that some teaching is now outstanding. The school has recently appointed some new teachers and they are having a very positive impact on learning and progress. Other teaching has improved owing to good support, guidance and focussed professional development. The school needs to develop its use of existing outstanding teaching to support other teachers.
- Teachers and teaching assistants use questioning really well to promote pupils' understanding. In a lesson in Year 6, pupils developed their understanding of journalistic writing through high quality discussion and feedback to the teacher. The lesson did not allow them, however, to accelerate their own learning further because the teacher led the direction of pupils' learning too much. A more investigative approach would have allowed for greater independence.
- Very effective use of information and communication technology (ICT) inspired pupils to learn in a Year 4 lesson about Egypt. The teacher developed their historical understanding as well as developing their writing skills. This resulted in pupils making at least good, and sometimes outstanding progress.
- Teachers effectively share with pupils what they are learning about in their lessons. They are less effective in ensuring they know how to be successful. This affects some pupils' progress as they do not have a clear enough idea of the key things to do to ensure they accelerate their own learning.
- Teachers' lesson planning is now more robust and meets the needs of the majority of pupils. In some lessons, more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged through the activities provided.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage pupils get creative and exciting opportunities to explore the world around them outside. They have insufficient opportunities to explore writing through play

both in and out of doors to improve their progress in writing.

- Marking is already making a positive impact on pupils' progress. In Key Stage 1 and the Early Years Foundation Stage points for improvement in writing are not precise enough to ensure pupils know exactly what to do to improve. Some teachers do this effectively and on these occasions pupils' progress is accelerated.
- Pupils who are disabled or have a special educational need are increasingly well supported across the school. Most teaching assistants are highly skilled and provide good support both in and out of lessons as the school increasingly meets these pupils' needs. They complement the teachers' work and are a valuable asset to the school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils love coming to school and really want to learn, as the school is good at engaging pupils in lessons through well structured activities and a more engaging curriculum.
- Pupils work and play together well. They value and respect their peers and staff. As a result, pupils are well mannered and polite to everyone including visitors to the school.
- The school has good systems in place to support anti-bullying. Pupils said that they felt confident that such behaviour would be dealt with and that there was generally less bullying now. Pupils were aware of how to deal with bullying including how to use the internet and mobile phones safely.
- Attendance is now broadly average. The school has put a range of systems in place to support the improvement of attendance and punctuality and these have had a positive impact. A small minority of pupils are still late for school and this sometimes affects their learning and progress.
- The school council makes good suggestions to leaders in school. The school has just acted upon their request to put in place 'playground buddies', to support pupils at playtime. They have also requested more playground equipment and this request is well underway.
- Pupils said that they feel safe in school as the school has new fences in place and better security. They also know about how to keep safe both in and out of school. For example, in Year 2 pupils have been learning about fire and fire engines and they are now very aware of fire safety.
- The school's curriculum promotes pupils' self esteem well. Pupils take part in singing and other enrichment activities that promote their personal development and give them confidence in their learning. Inspectors observed a singing session that significantly promoted pupils' performance skills.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has a clear vision for the future of the school. He has high expectations and is well supported by staff in his aim of giving pupils the best the school has to offer. He has restructured staffing and now has a strong leadership team.
- He is well supported by the new deputy headteacher who has been strategically placed in Year 2 to raise standards and promote the teaching of literacy across the school. A significant amount of changes have already taken place and these are improving progress and driving up standards.
- The school knows itself well, through planned opportunities to observe teaching and by looking at pupils' work. It has identified the key areas that need improvement and is rapidly making progress in these areas.
- The headteacher uses performance management effectively to drive up standards by setting appropriate targets for teachers. This is supported by good quality professional development to ensure staff members have the skills to achieve their targets.
- The school has a strong commitment to ensuring all pupils achieve well and uses its extra

funding effectively to speed the progress of pupils entitled to the pupil premium.

- The school's curriculum is increasingly providing exciting and stimulating experiences for pupils. Topics such as 'Fire and Light', 'Victorians' and 'Egyptians' are inspiring pupils to learn. These well taught experiences are instrumental in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural experiences.
 - The school is increasingly working with a range of partners to provide extra opportunities for pupils' learning. They have links with a local library to help them develop the school's new library. Working with a local table tennis club has provided coaching to promote pupils' sports' development.
 - The local authority has provided good support to the school during a period of transition to the new leadership team.
 - Parents are positive about the school and the school has further developed its links with parents to support pupils' learning. Fortnightly newsletters and instant texting inform parents of school events. Providing a 'teaching of reading evening' for parents shows the school's commitment to encouraging parents to take part in school activities.
 - The school's procedures for safeguarding meet requirements particularly in terms of the school site being safe and secure.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors provide good challenge and support to the senior leadership of the school. They have been instrumental in making suitable new appointments to strengthen the school's leadership and the quality of teaching and learning. They understand the school well. They are able to identify its key strengths and areas for development through their involvement in the school's review of itself. They have a good overview of the school's budget and particularly how the pupil premium is spent.
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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	111559
Local authority	Stockton-on-Tees
Inspection number	405340

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	220
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stephen Davies
Headteacher	Simon Lidgard
Date of previous school inspection	10 November 2010
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