

Rowlands Gill Community Primary School

Dominines Close, Rowlands Gill, Tyne and Wear, NE39 2PP

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		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Improvements since the last inspection have been quick and effective so that the standards pupils reach at the end of each key stage are improving year on year.
- Pupils achieve well in their time at school. From starting points in Nursery that are similar to those expected for their age, pupils make good progress to reach above-average standards by the end of Year 6.
- Teachers know their pupils well so that they usually provide activities with just the right amount of challenge. Skilled questioning allows staff to check on what their pupils are learning and quickly make changes to their teaching to correct any misunderstandings.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, including those pupils who are taught in the specialist classroom, make equally good progress to their classmates.
- The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding. They behave exceptionally well in their lessons, around the school and when at play. They are extremely considerate of each other and their teachers. Attendance is consistently above average because pupils thoroughly enjoy their experiences at school.
- Leaders know their school well and are dedicated to making it the best it can be. Regular checking of the school's work and a focus on improving the quality of teaching have led to increases in what all pupils achieve.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A small minority of teaching is not yet good and only a few lessons are outstanding.
- Some pupils do not get enough time to work on their own and practise new skills, especially in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Teachers do not always give pupils work which is set at exactly the right level for them to make faster progress.
- Governors and some leaders with responsibility for different subjects do not always keep a close enough eye on the quality of teaching in classrooms.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 25 lessons or parts of lessons delivered by 12 different teachers. Three were jointly observed with the headteacher. A number of short visits were also made to guided reading and phonics (linking letters and the sounds they make) sessions.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, seven governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, senior leaders and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 30 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) that were submitted during the course of the inspection. They also spoke to groups of parents at the beginning of the school day and took account of feedback from five staff questionnaires.
- The inspection team observed the school's work and examined a range of documentation including the school's own records of pupils' learning and progress, the checks made on the quality of teaching and those relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Lee Owston, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Lesley Richardson

Additional Inspector

Janice Gorch

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Rowlands Gill Primary is larger than the average-sized school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is lower than that found nationally at nearly half the national figure.
- Fewer pupils than found nationally are supported through school action although the proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above the national average.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Of the few pupils from other ethnic backgrounds, none is at the early stages of learning to speak English.
- The school is currently working towards achieving the 'Rights Respecting School' award for its work in celebrating difference and promoting respect and tolerance.
- The school meets the current floor standards, which set out the government's minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school provides a specialist classroom to support Key Stage 2 pupils from across the local authority who have additional, complex learning needs.
- A private provider currently operates a playgroup, additional care for Nursery children before and after school and an after-school club for older pupils. These arrangements will be inspected separately. The most recent reports of their quality can be found on the Ofsted website.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good and a greater proportion is outstanding by:
 - planning activities that always fully meet pupils' needs and provide just the right amount of challenge to move their learning forward at a rapid pace
 - giving pupils more time to work independently and practise their new learning
 - providing more chances for pupils to develop their reading, writing, communication and mathematics skills when completing work in other subjects
 - ensuring pupils are given enough time to return to their teacher's comments about their work and make any necessary improvements.
- Ensure that governors and leaders with responsibility for different subjects are given enough time to check on the quality of work in classrooms so that they have a better understanding of the next steps for improvement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils achieve well across the school. They show a good level of interest in their learning, take pride in the presentation of their work and, as many pupils commented during discussion, learn best when they are 'doing' rather than just 'listening'. Parents are accurate in their view that pupils make good progress.
- Children arrive in Nursery with skills and abilities that are similar to those expected for their age. They make good, and sometimes outstanding, progress across the Early Years Foundation Stage so that by the time they enter Year 1 their standards are above those found typically. Children make particularly good progress in learning to read because the teaching of letters and linking them to the sounds they make (phonics) is particularly effective.
- This effective start to school is continued across Key Stage 1. Over the last three years, pupils have reached above-average attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. A consistent focus on the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics ensures that the vast majority of pupils are confident readers and writers and demonstrate quick mental recall of number facts by the time they start Key Stage 2. Opportunities to develop these skills across other subjects are sometimes overlooked and this prevents pupils from making even greater progress in their learning.
- Across Key Stage 2, the majority of pupils now make good progress to reach above-average standards by the end of Year 6. The outstanding teaching of mathematics in Year 6 leads to a substantial proportion of pupils reaching the highest levels in this subject. In 2012, the school had over double the proportion of pupils reaching Level 5 than found nationally and some pupils achieved exceptionally well to reach Level 6.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, including those pupils who are taught within the school's specialist classroom, achieve just as well as their classmates from their different starting points. This is due to the strong relationships that are developed between adults and pupils and the detailed assessments that are made to identify what small steps need to be taught next.
- Pupil premium funding, which is provided to support those pupils in the care of the local authority or known to be eligible for free school meals, is used effectively. Skilled teaching assistants deliver specific programmes to improve writing and staff provide additional sessions, often after school, to enable pupils to catch up and keep up with their classmates.

The quality of teaching

is good

- In the vast majority of lessons, and over time, teaching is typically good; some is outstanding. As a result, pupils achieve well and develop highly positive attitudes to learning. Parents overwhelmingly agree that the quality of teaching their children receive is good.
- Where pupils make good progress and achieve well, teaching is typically characterised by:
 - accurate assessment of pupils' work so that activities offer just the right amount of challenge and allow pupils to work on what they need to do to improve
 - effective questioning of pupils to find out what they have learned and allow further explanations or examples to be given to those who have misunderstood
 - regular opportunities for pupils to practise their reading, writing and mathematics skills
 - good use of pupils' work to show to the class where learning has been successful and where further improvements could be made
 - high-quality support from teaching assistants so that all pupils take part in the lesson and offer their own ideas
 - strong relationships between teachers and pupils and exemplary attitudes to learning.
- In the very few lessons where teaching is not yet always good, activities are sometimes too easy

or too hard and pupils do not have enough time to practise their new learning on their own. As a result, pupils do not make as much progress.

- Where teaching is outstanding, teachers plan lessons that build precisely on what pupils already know and give them more challenging work for them to complete on their own. For example, in one Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils used their quick recall of multiplication facts and confident approaches to calculation to help them solve more complex algebraic equations. Through the teacher's skilful questioning and explanations, pupils relished the opportunity to work independently and use their well-developed skills to solve problems.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make good progress in reading because it is given priority from the very beginning of Nursery. Daily teaching of the sounds that letters make are effective because teachers make these sessions fun and practical. Teachers use books that only include words that children can sound out themselves. This ensures that children quickly see themselves as readers and develop a real love of books.
- The quality of teaching within the specialist classroom is good. Staff know their pupils well so that they provide activities that match the smaller steps in learning that each pupil needs to take. Regular opportunities for the pupils to work in small groups and talk about their work build their confidence and levels of independence.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly across the school using a system of green and pink highlighting. This visual approach ensures that pupils know where their learning has been most successful and where it could be even better. However, pupils do not always get enough time to return to their teacher's comments and make the necessary changes so that they make even greater progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils are caring, exceptionally polite and treat others, whether friends or adults, with high levels of respect and courtesy. This allows all pupils, including those within the specialist classroom, to get on well together. They take a visible pride in their school, as shown through their contributions as school councillors and responsibilities as head boy or girl, and thoroughly enjoy school. This is shown in their frequent arrival at school on time and their consistently above-average attendance.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the quality of care their children receive so that they are happy, safe and free from bullying. This allows pupils to focus fully on their learning and develop exemplary attitudes to all that they experience at school.
- Parents and pupils believe that bullying is rare and that, should it ever occur, it would be dealt with quickly. Pupils understand the nature of bullying, including that related to different forms of prejudice. They are extremely knowledgeable about the dangers and risks they may encounter, including how to keep safe when using modern technology such as mobile phones and the internet.
- Pupils behave impeccably at all times, whether in lessons, around the school or at play. This is because all adults have high expectations of how pupils should conduct themselves and lead by example. This has allowed pupils to learn how to manage their own behaviour extremely well. For example, older pupils are trained as 'friends again counsellors' to help resolve any issues that may arise during play and lunchtimes. This has also proved a successful way of enhancing pupils' moral and social development.

The leadership and management are good

- The dedicated headteacher, well-supported by the senior leadership team, has ensured that improvement since the previous inspection has been quick and effective. The entire staff team is committed to the school's drive to be even better and readily undertakes additional training to

improve its practice.

- School systems to check on the quality of teaching and the progress that pupils make are effective. This has supported senior leaders to know what has worked well and what needs further improvement. This has led to a better quality of teaching across the school and standards of work from pupils that are now above average at each key stage. The school has good capacity to make further improvements.
 - Leadership of teaching is strong. Teachers' performance is well managed and is closely linked to staff training. Senior leaders check on the quality of teaching to find ways of making their work even better. This is through looking at the progress pupils have made each term, the standards of work in pupils' books and by conducting short 'drop-in' sessions to teachers' classrooms. While the headteacher regularly observes teachers for longer periods of time, other leaders, including governors, do not have enough opportunities, and dedicated time, to check the quality of teaching for themselves. As a result, they do not yet make a fully effective contribution to ensuring the quality of teaching is consistently good or better.
 - The school's curriculum has strengths in the range of visits and visitors that are planned to engage pupils and strengthen their learning. The essential skills of reading, writing, communication and mathematics are well-taught from the very start of Nursery and continue throughout each key stage. Pupils do not yet get enough chances to use these skills for real reasons and in a range of different subjects to ensure even greater progress.
 - Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated and there is no significant variation in the achievement of different groups of pupils. The school's promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong because it is included in all aspects of the school's work. This creates a supportive environment where all pupils develop into confident, well-rounded individuals, including those with additional, complex learning needs.
 - The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements with much best practice adopted in the high quality care provided.
 - The local authority has provided effective and timely support to this good and improving school. Perceptive advice to senior leaders and the governing body has ensured that improvements have been quick and effective.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are committed, experienced in their role and bring a range of professional expertise to the school. They regularly challenge the headteacher and senior leaders to improve further through a good knowledge of pupil progress data and by asking very pertinent questions about the use of school funds, including the pupil premium, and the effectiveness of chosen strategies or resources. They rightly acknowledge that they do not yet have enough first-hand experiences of the quality of teaching in order to contribute more fully to where the school needs to go next.
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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	131081
Local authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	406411

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	340
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cllr John Hamilton
Headteacher	Miss Hannah Martin
Date of previous school inspection	3 February 2011
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