

Frosterley Community Primary School

Bridge End, Frosterley, Weardale, Bishop Auckland, County Durham, DL13 2SN

Inspection dates 4 December 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. Their attainment is above average at the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is good. Work is well planned to be hard enough for all pupils and helps pupils enjoy learning. As a result, they make rapid progress in reading and mathematics.
- The curriculum helps pupils see how subjects link together and how their learning is used in real-life situations.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is good.
- The headteacher has a clear view of what is good about the school and what needs to be improved further. She is well supported by the deputy headteacher and the governing body who make sure that everyone knows that high standards are expected.
- Procedures to check the quality of teaching and to provide training to help teachers improve their teaching are accurate and successful. As a result, teaching has improved.
- Pupils' behaviour is good; they say they feel very safe. They play a large part in helping all pupils to play and behave well together. Attendance is above average.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Information about pupils' progress is not used well enough to provide leaders with a clear understanding of how much progress pupils are making in different classes.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to use their writing skills in English and in different subjects. As a result, there is slower progress in writing.
- Marking and target-setting do not tell pupils clearly how to take the next steps in their learning. Pupils are not given time to act upon any advice that is given by their teachers.
- Presentation and handwriting are not neat enough.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors had meetings with staff, groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, a community governor 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 six lessons taught by three teachers and listened to a group of pupils read. In addition, the inspection team made a number of short visits to lessons.
- The headteacher conducted three joint observations of lessons with the inspectors. The inspectors also observed the headteacher reporting back to teachers on their findings regarding the quality of learning and pupils' achievement in lessons.
- The inspectors met some parents informally at the start of the school day. They took into account the 13 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and those in the school's own survey of parents. They also considered letters and e-mails sent by parents.
- Fourteen staff completed questionnaires and the responses were analysed.

Inspection team

Gordon Potter, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
June Foster	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is much smaller than the average sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is average.
- The proportions of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are above average.
- There is a breakfast club and many after-school clubs which are managed by the governing body and run voluntarily by staff.
- A private, voluntary, pre-school group managed by the governing body and monitored by the local authority has operated on the school site since September 2012.
- The schools meet the current government floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment.
- There have been significant changes to staffing since the last inspection. There is now stability in staffing arrangements and continuity of teaching for all pupils.
- There are three classes or teams for pupils in Reception and Year 1; Years 2, 3 and some Year 4; some Year 4 Year 5 and 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to outstanding, to further raise attainment and rates of pupils' progress, especially in writing, by:
 - offering more opportunities for pupils to improve their writing skills by practising them more regularly in English and in different subjects
 - improving marking and target-setting so that pupils know clearly how to take the next steps in their learning and have time to act upon advice
 - improving pupils' handwriting and the presentation of their work
 - making better use of the school's information about how well pupils are working so that leaders can accurately measure pupils' progress in different classes and set targets for teachers and pupils to ensure even faster progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Cohorts vary in this small school. Most children start school with skills that are in line with those typically expected for their age. As a result of improvements in provision and the quality of teaching, children now do well in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. They make good progress regardless of their starting points. As a result, attainment at the end of Year 2 is now above average in mathematics. It has improved since 2010 in reading and writing and is average. At the end of Year 6 attainment is typically above average, although too few pupils achieve the highest levels in writing. One pupil attained Level 6 in mathematics. In 2011, pupils in Year 6 attained standards that were well above average.
- Leaders have acted decisively to improve the quality of teaching. Improvements in teaching across the school ensure that progress is good.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs attain higher standards than similar pupils across the country and make good progress from their starting points.
- Pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium attain standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 which are above similar pupils across the country and in line with all pupils.
- Inspection evidence shows that progress in reading is good. This is a result of good teaching of how to link sounds and letters to help pupils read words they are not used to and a drive to help pupils enjoy books and read more in school and at home.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers make lessons interesting and pupils learn quickly. They set work which is hard enough for all pupils. Teachers ask questions which encourage pupils to explain their ideas and use their answers to reshape work during lessons when necessary.
- In Team 2 (Years 2, 3 and 4) the teacher's enthusiasm for the work and her lively teaching style made pupils very keen to learn. They were excited and interested to find the golden egg of the emperor penguin. There were clear links to develop pupils' skills in science and geography, as well as in speaking and listening and writing.
- Teachers use exciting topics, allow pupils the chance to talk together to plan their ideas and give them the time to concentrate on developing their skills. Pupils in Team 3 (some Year 4, Year 5 and 6) were encouraged to think about how Christians see God and to develop their understanding of similes and metaphors. This helped them to develop their awareness of religious matters and practise their higher-level writing skills.
- However, good approaches of this nature are not consistently used across the school and pupils do not do enough writing across a range of subjects or develop the stamina to write a lot in English lessons. Handwriting is not consistently neat enough and the presentation of work is often untidy. Teachers do not always make it clear to pupils what they are expected to learn by the end of the lesson, as opposed to what they are to do.
- A clear strategy, which has improved standards in mathematics, is to give pupils chances to solve problems together and see how their work links to real-life situations. For example, in Team 1 (Reception class and Year 1), pupils developed their calculation and multiplication skills and understanding of sets and arrays by shopping for items for a party.
- Pupils' work is regularly marked and this marking helpfully tells pupils how successful they have been in their work. It is used less well to tell pupils how to improve their work and teachers give pupils too little time to act upon any advice they give. While pupils in Year 6 know the level of their work, in all classes pupils do not have clear targets that will help them take the next steps in their learning and reach the next level.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are happy in school and enjoy their lessons because they are excited by their learning. As a result, attendance is above average. They respect one another, work and play well together and are very polite to adults. They are very keen to talk about their school, show their work and their excellent singing in assembly.
- Pupils say that behaviour is good in their lessons and any minor misbehaviour is quickly dealt with by their teachers. Indeed, much excellent behaviour was evident in lessons observed during the inspection as well as around the school.
- Inspectors analysed the school's records of behaviour, which showed that behaviour is consistently good. This is as a result of the successful use of clear expectations. The few pupils who find it hard to behave well are helped by clear rules and the intervention of appropriate agencies that support pupils and their families. As a result, there have been no exclusions in recent years.
- Pupils feel very safe and they 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 their concerns and ideas. It discusses school rules with teachers and members talk to school leaders on safety issues that worry pupils. It has helped to plan and raise funds to make the playground better.

The leadership and management are good

- After a period when there were rapid changes to staffing and some classes had more than one teacher, the headteacher has established a stable staffing structure. Along with more regular and increasingly rigorous observations of teachers, this has had a significant impact on improving the quality of teaching and is helping pupils make faster progress. The headteacher gives clear advice about how teachers can improve and this advice is clearly linked to training programmes that help teachers to become better.
- The headteacher has a clear picture of the school's strengths and relative weaknesses, has developed high expectations among all staff and strengthened the staff team. Leaders are clear about what needs to be done to make the school better and have well developed skills in planning improvements and checking that they are successful. The school's view about its own performance is therefore accurate and offers clear and appropriate areas for development.
- Performance management of staff is clearly focussed on raising attainment and improving the quality of teaching. Staff have only been rewarded when their pupils have done as well as they should have done. However, information about pupils' progress is not used well enough to provide leaders with a clear understanding of how much progress pupils are making in different classes. As a result, leaders do not set targets for teachers and pupils which are demanding enough to ensure pupils' progress becomes even more rapid.
- Funding has been used to improve the basic skills of those pupils eligible for the pupil premium. The gap between them and all pupils across the country has closed. This shows the school's commitment to promoting equal opportunities and tackling discrimination.
- At its best, the curriculum catches pupils' interest. There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual awareness and to appreciate the natural world, especially through the school's Forest School. They also learn to appreciate the wonderful things such as music, art and literature that humans have created. There are many opportunities across school which help pupils to see the links which can be made in learning in different subjects.
- The local authority has provided successful support for the teaching of mathematics and English and developments in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Such advice has helped to improve teaching and pupils' attainment and progress.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body has acted strongly to improve its skills through training and has introduced clear procedures to hold the school to account. It has a clear view of the school's overall provision. Governors carry out routine assessments to check how the pupil-premium funding is helping pupils to achieve better. They are very involved in the life of the school, helping pupils in their learning and running out-of-school clubs. They ensure that the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities for safeguarding. All staff have been vetted and are trained appropriately to keep pupils safe and free from harm. The governing body understands data, has rigorous procedures to check on pupils' achievement and on the school budget. As a result, it has effectively removed a deficit. With the headteacher, governors have taken decisive action to re-structure staffing levels to establish a core of good teachers, whose performance is clearly assessed and whose training needs are effectively met. As a result there have been improvements in teaching, pupils' progress and leadership in recent years.

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	114062
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	401407

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	57
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Judith Bainbridge
Headteacher	Andrea Hartley
Date of previous school inspection	4 May 2010
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