

Applegarth Primary School

Upwell Road, Northallerton, North Yorkshire, DL7 8QF

Inspection dates

5–6 December 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement.

- Pupils' progress in reading and writing has not been sufficiently rapid enough to raise attainment in English across the school. This is because the tasks teachers set, especially for boys are not always sufficiently challenging, so pupils can do their best.
- Leaders' checks made on the quality of lessons and that of the work in pupils' books do not sufficiently focus on how much progress pupils' are making, particularly, in English.
- Although improving, teaching is not yet consistently good or better across the school. Time is not always used effectively enough to accelerate pupils' progress. Pupils do not always clearly know how to improve their work. The needs of the more able pupils are not sufficiently well met in all lessons.

The school has the following strengths.

- Teaching is good and sometimes outstanding in some classes in Key Stage 2.
- Pupils behave well both in and out of lessons due to the school's strong commitment to pupils' personal development and well-being.
- The school's curriculum provides creative opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of the world around them. Outdoor learning is a strength of the school particularly in the Reception classes and Year 1.
- The school has good relationships and communication with parents, who support pupils well in their learning and progress.
- The headteacher and a strong leadership team have helped to improve pupils' behaviour significantly, and have ensured accelerated progress in mathematics. They have also improved the quality of teaching since the last inspection.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 25 lessons or parts of lessons of which four were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, inspectors observed pupils working with teaching assistants. They listened to a group of Year 2 pupils read and also to a sample of pupils across the school, both in and out of class.
- Inspectors talked to a range of pupils about the school.
- They met with governors as well as teaching staff, including senior and middle leaders. They also met with a local authority and a community representative.
- Inspectors took account of 39 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They also looked at the school's parent and pupil questionnaires and had a discussion with some parents, including those who support pupils' learning in school.
- 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 also the school's use of the pupil premium funding.
- Inspectors looked at a range of other evidence including school displays, website and work in pupils' books, including evidence representing the school's wider achievements.

Inspection team

David Shearsmith, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Philip Scott

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an average sized primary school.
- A below average, but growing number of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium.
- A well above average number of pupils are supported at school action. An average number of pupils are supported at school action plus and have a statement of special educational needs.
- Almost all pupils are of White British Heritage with a small number who have English as an additional language.
- The school has the School Sports Active Mark and Financial Management Standard award.
- The school meets government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage children are taught in two classes shared with some Year 1 pupils.
- The school has a before- and after-school club managed by a private provider that is subject to a separate inspection by Ofsted. The report will be available on the Ofsted website.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensuring that pupils make at least good overall progress, and attain higher standards in English by:
 - making sure that the support pupils, and especially boys, receive to improve their reading and writing skills meets their needs more fully
 - ensuring that the systematic and rigorous approach relatively recently introduced to the teaching of reading and phonics impacts more significantly on pupils' attainment in reading, especially boys
 - ensuring that teachers' marking of writing consistently helps pupils to make better progress.
- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good or better in all classes by:
 - ensuring all adults have the same high expectations for all pupils
 - setting tasks in lessons that challenge pupils, especially the more able, to always do their best and to work more independently
 - ensuring pupils always know what they are learning about and what they need to do to improve so they can gauge their own learning and progress
 - organising lessons so that pupils always work at a fast pace and make the best possible progress using existing outstanding practice in the school to further improve teaching.
- Improve the effectiveness of checks on pupils' progress in lessons across the school by
 - ensuring leaders at all levels more rigorously evaluate how much progress pupils make in lessons when they check on the quality of teaching and that of pupils' work in their books.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' overall achievement has shown steady improvement over the past three years. Achievement is not yet good because progress is variable across the school, particularly in English. Different groups of pupils across the school make variable progress because teaching, especially in English, does not always meet their needs, particularly those of boys.
- Children enter the Reception classes with skills that are typical for their age. Some have relative weaknesses in reading, writing and mathematical skills. They make expected and sometimes better progress overall. The school's strong commitment to developing outdoor learning is evident as pupils have an increasing understanding of the world around them.
- Attainment is average overall in English and mathematics at Key Stages 1 and 2. It is steadily rising, but is better in mathematics than in English. An increasing number of pupils in mathematics are exceeding national expectations, although there are still pupils who are underachieving, particularly boys, in English.
- Pupils who are supported by school action and by school action plus make expected progress due to improved support and better identification of their needs so that the work they are set can help them to make better progress.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium are also making expected and sometimes better progress because the school has used its funding to improve their learning and progress.
- The school has put in place a systematic and rigorous approach to teaching phonics (letters and the sounds they make) but this has not yet had sufficient time to fully impact on improving reading across the school. Targeted support for those pupils who need it is, beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' skills.
- Pupils who are learning English as an additional language make expected and sometimes better progress particularly in mathematics because the school is increasingly meeting their needs.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Although an increasing proportion of teaching is good, there are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching across the school, which slows pupils' progress in some classes and in English lessons. Where teaching requires improvement, expectations are not high enough and work set is not sufficiently challenging to meet the needs of the more able pupils, in order to accelerate their progress, especially by giving them more tasks for them to work on independently.
- Where teaching is best, pupils respond well to teachers' questions and their speaking and listening skills are good. Teachers are effective at ascertaining what pupils know, understand and can do. They generally plan lessons well although the structure of some lessons does not ensure that all pupils' progress accelerates. Pupils do not always know how to improve their own work because they are not always given clear steps for success.
- In some lessons, teachers use time well and there is good pace and urgency to learning. This was seen to good effect in an outstanding lesson in a class for Year 3 and 4 pupils where the teacher was very effective in accelerating pupils' progress through 'historical writing'. There were clear steps for the pupils to be successful and the teacher had high expectations of pupils. High quality marking and feedback also made sure that pupils made rapid progress.
- The school has a system in place for marking pupils' written work. Pupils' work is marked regularly and they are given points for improvement. However, it is not always used consistently well across the school to ensure progress in writing is accelerated.
- Teachers use data in Key Stage 2 to ensure that pupils in their classes are making progress. This is not as established in Key Stage 1, but is gradually having an impact on progress in some lessons.
- Teachers use talk partners in the majority of lessons. This increases the rate of progress as

pupils work more independently. Sometimes pupils make better progress as they discuss their work, particularly when set tight timescales to complete tasks. Time is not always used effectively in this way to ensure pupils' good progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well in this harmonious school community that sincerely cares for its pupils' safety and well-being. The school has been unrelenting in its drive to improve behaviour and pupils now behave well both in and out of lessons.
- Pupils say they really enjoy school and they have positive attitudes to learning. This is due to the school's curriculum that creates exciting opportunities to interest them. Pupils relate well to all staff and to each other and say they enjoy coming to school to be with their friends.
- Pupils said they are confident that there is no bullying in school. If there is a problem it is usually due to a falling out with someone and they often resolve the problem themselves. They said that if a problem could not be resolved, they were confident that staff would help them sort it out.
- Pupils had very good knowledge of how to stay safe, particularly pupils in Year 6. This is because each year they attend a special event on safety and as a result, they were able to talk with confidence and in detail about all aspects of keeping safe. They were also very knowledgeable about how to keep safe when using the internet because they have lessons about e-safety.
- Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in their above average attendance. They said there was nothing that needed improving because the staff listen to what they would like in the school. They said that they had good playground equipment because the school council had asked for extra equipment and it had been provided.
- The school has a very strong commitment to pupils' personal development through the curriculum. Pupils readily take on responsibility around the school and say they enjoy supporting younger pupils with their play.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides strong and determined leadership and has successfully ensured pupils' improved behaviour and better progress in mathematics. She is well supported by a developing leadership team and teachers who are keen to improve their skills to accelerate further pupils' progress. Leaders acknowledge the need to extend its use of existing outstanding practice to improve teaching overall.
- The leaders' checks on how well the school is performing are mainly accurate and they have astutely identified the key priorities that will enable the school to improve further. Performance management and professional development have been used to address the key issues from the last inspection. The headteacher and senior leaders are currently focussed on accelerating pupils' progress and raising standards further, particularly in English.
- Leaders are using the information they have about how well pupils are getting on increasingly effectively to enable more pupils to achieve better. This is especially so for those pupils who are disabled, those with special educational needs, those who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium and those who speak English as an additional language.
- The school has focussed on improving the key areas for development highlighted in the last inspection report and has been effective in making improvements in pupils' behaviour and their attainment and progress in mathematics. There are systems in place to check on pupils' work and progress in lessons. These are not being used rigorously enough to impact on standards and accelerate pupils' progress in English.
- The school's curriculum provides many opportunities for pupils to use skills gained in English and mathematics in other subjects and this is helping to improve standards in English. The fruits of this have yet to be reflected in the national test results. The curriculum gives pupils creative

opportunities to explore and understand the world around them. The 'Forest School' work is particularly successful and pupils talk about it with enthusiasm.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong across the school because the school promotes this through a wide range of activities including the creative and performing arts. Pupils sing with enthusiasm during assembly and play their musical instruments skilfully. Displays around the school show quality artwork and a range of cultural activities.
 - Parents are very positive about the work of the school. The school has a wide range of strategies to communicate with parents and this is effective in supporting pupils' learning. A number of parents help pupils with their learning in school. Some parents are very appreciative of the support given to them by the school, particularly for pupils with specific needs.
 - The school is increasingly working with a range of partners to support pupils' learning and progress. The local authority has provided good support to help the school improve.
 - The school has a strong commitment to ensuring the welfare and safety of all pupils and safeguarding procedures meet requirements.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - is good because governors have a wide range of skills and are well trained to support and challenge the school appropriately. They ensure that the school uses its finances well, particularly the pupil premium funding. They understand the school's strengths and areas for development and make checks through regular visits to the school to gauge how well the school is progressing. Governors have a good understanding of the quality of teaching across the school and know that it is improving. They have a good understanding of the school's data and have regular up-dates at the pupils' progress committee meetings, set up to monitor improvements.
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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	121308
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	402018

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	246
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sharon Fyfe
Headteacher	Alison Goodwin
Date of previous school inspection	22 March 2010
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