

# West Rainton Primary School

Houghton le Spring, Tyne and Wear, DH4 6RN

**Inspection dates** 22–23 January 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- Teaching is at least good and sometimes it is outstanding.
- Regardless of their individual starting points, pupils make good progress throughout the school and achieve well. By the time they leave the school in Year 6, standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils state that they feel happy, safe and well cared for by staff. They enjoy learning and really appreciate the good range of extra-curricular activities available to them.
- The overwhelming majority of parents also feel that the school takes good care of their children and are supportive of the work of the school.
- Pupils' good, and sometimes exemplary, behaviour in lessons helps them to make good progress. They are eager to learn and try their very best to succeed. Around the school, pupils are welcoming, considerate and polite.
- The school has improved both teaching and achievement since the previous inspection. This has been led strongly by the headteacher and the governing body.
- Improvement is driven by a relentless focus on what is going on in classrooms and how it can be made even better. Support for pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable and for those with special educational needs, is highly effective.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not yet sufficient outstanding teaching to lead to pupils' even higher achievement.
- Whilst pupils' progress in writing is good, it is not yet as strong as it is in reading and mathematics.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching and learning in 10 lessons. Four of these observations were undertaken jointly with the headteacher. The inspector also listened to pupils read.
- Discussions were held with pupils, the headteacher and senior managers, staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at pupils' books, pupils' progress data, the school improvement plan, safeguarding information and other documentation.
- Seven responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were considered as well as those from the school's own parental survey and from school staff.

## Inspection team

Alan Sergison, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in the care of the local authority and the children of service families, is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action is above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The proportion of pupils from Traveller and Gypsy/Roma families is above average.
- The school runs a Breakfast Club and provides after-school care for pupils.
- The school has a number of awards, including the Arts Mark Gold, Eco-School Silver Award and the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
  - sharing more widely the existing very good practice within the school
  - giving pupils more regular opportunities to improve their work after teachers have shown them how to improve through their marking, especially in writing
  - ensuring that all lessons are taught at a brisk pace
  - refining teachers' questioning skills so that in all lessons they can regularly check pupils' understanding in order to finely adjust their teaching to meet pupils' different needs.
- Further improve pupils' achievement in writing to match that in reading and mathematics, by ensuring pupils are given more regular opportunities to practise and consolidate their new knowledge and skills in writing in a range of contexts.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' achievement has improved since the last inspection. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills, knowledge and understanding below and sometimes well below, those expected for their age. They make good progress to reach standards that are close to those seen nationally by the end of the Reception Year. Children eagerly explore the exciting activities available, such as building a giant snowman, and they enjoy learning. They make particularly good progress in their personal development and confidently settle into Year 1.
- Good progress continues across Key Stage 1, where pupils show very positive attitudes to learning in lessons. They are eager to learn and keen to cooperate. Standards have gradually improved in recent years and are now broadly in line with national averages by the end of Year 2.
- They make at least good and sometimes outstanding progress in lessons, as demonstrated in a particularly successful music lesson where pupils were well supported to write and perform their own musical pieces using basic notation.
- This good progress continues across Key Stage 2, so that by the time they leave the school in Year 6, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above national averages. This is a significant improvement in performance since the last inspection. However, performance in writing is not yet as strong as it is in the other two subjects.
- Pupils read fluently and with confidence. They clearly enjoy reading. High quality teaching by teachers and teaching assistants of the youngest pupils, and older pupils who require additional support, ensures they quickly become familiar with the sounds that letters make (phonics). Pupils' progress in reading is accelerating rapidly as the result of this regular, focused, systematic teaching. The school has its own pupils' reading council. It has been very successful in one of its key aims which is, 'to promote the joy of reading across the school'.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress. Staff identify their needs accurately and give those pupils the support they need to achieve well.
- Pupils eligible for pupil premium funding receive additional support if it is needed. It is testament to the school's good promotion of equality of opportunity that the gap between the attainment of those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those pupils who are not is narrowing quickly. In addition, the progress made by pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and that made by pupils from Traveller/Gypsy Roma families is equally as good as all other pupils. The work in pupils' books and that displayed around the school, together with the school's own tracking data, all confirm the overall good progress pupils are making. Pupils from Traveller and Gypsy/Roma families make good progress and attain well.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Consistently good teaching is supporting pupils' good progress in learning. Teachers expect a great deal of pupils and they plan activities that interest and get the most out of them whatever their age or capabilities. In the best lessons, learning moves at a good pace but on occasion, when teaching is less effective, the pace of the lesson slows and so does the rate of learning.
- Relationships between pupils and staff are very positive and supportive. Pupils say that their teachers are always there to help if they get stuck or do not understand. This school really lives up to its motto 'Working Together for Success'.
- Pupils are very clear about what they are trying to achieve in every lesson and are aware of the improvements they are aiming for in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers give pupils good encouragement and useful guidance when they mark their work. However, pupils do not always have the opportunity to respond to their teacher's guidance and make improvements to their work. This is particularly evident in pupils' writing.
- Teaching assistants and other adults make a strong contribution to pupils' good learning across

the school. They plan topics well with teachers, work well with individuals and small groups of pupils and are particularly effective in supporting those who are at risk of falling behind.

- Small group teaching is very effective in giving pupils a boost to their learning. The impact of this work is closely monitored and progress data shows that it is helping pupils, including those with disabilities, those with special educational needs and those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, to make equally good progress. It ensures that no pupils fall behind and all are given equality of opportunity to achieve their best. This includes pupils from Traveller and Gypsy/Roma families.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and explain ideas clearly and confidently. This was particularly evident in a successful English lesson for pupils in Year 6 in which they were asked to write a story with the theme of 'mystery'. Sharp questioning by the teacher was used very well to probe and assess pupils' understanding and to develop and consolidate learning. However, these skilful questioning techniques are not used consistently by teachers to support learning in all lessons.
- In lessons, pupils make the best progress when they are given the opportunity to work things out for themselves or to collaborate with a partner to explore ideas and solve problems. This was exemplified in a successful Year 4 mathematics lesson where pupils were challenged to solve simple problems in three steps. The teacher's high expectations, clear guidance and the very good use of cross-curricular links to work in history, all ensured that pupils were interested and well-motivated to complete the activity. Such good practice is not always evident in relation to giving pupils plentiful opportunities to practise their writing skills in a range of contexts.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- Pupils are polite, considerate and friendly at all times. In lessons, they have very positive attitudes to learning and to each other. This makes a strong contribution to the friendly and welcoming atmosphere that pervades the school.
- Pupils all stated that they felt happy and safe in school. As one child commented, 'Coming to school makes your day. You cannot be sad here, you meet new friends and, if you are upset, there is always someone there for you.'
- Staff know pupils well in this small school. Pupils feel confident and secure and this is reflected in their improving attendance. Good use is made of rewards and praise to reinforce good manners, behaviour, regular attendance and punctuality.
- Pupils enjoy taking responsibility for themselves and others. This is exemplified in the work of the school council, the reading council and the eco council. Older pupils very much appreciate the opportunity to support the youngest pupils in the school, because they see the school helping them to learn the importance of caring for one another.
- Parents are supportive of the school. The majority of parents, who responded to Parent View and to the school's own survey, indicated that the school makes sure children are well behaved and deals with bullying effectively.
- At lunchtime, pupils are well mannered and chat sensibly at the dining tables. At playtimes, they behave very well and are appropriately supervised by a range of adults. They respond very well to opportunities to work in the computer suite and in classrooms during playtimes when the weather makes it inappropriate to go outside. They take responsibility for their own behaviour very well.
- Pupils themselves consider behaviour to be good and are confident that any rare instances of bullying are effectively dealt with by adults. They are well aware of what constitutes bullying, including cyber bullying. They know how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations, including when using the internet.

**The leadership and management are good**

- The headteacher and the governing body have successfully improved pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching and leadership since the previous inspection. It is clear that morale is good and all staff share the determination to improve further.
  - The headteacher ensures that there are frequent checks on the quality of teaching and the progress of pupils. Any areas of underperformance are quickly identified and challenged.
  - Senior leaders now make a significant contribution to school improvement. They are well aware of the school's strengths and areas for further development and they also challenge and hold colleagues to account for the progress pupils make. They have not yet ensured that the very best practice in teaching is shared across the school.
  - Training for staff is closely linked to the school's priorities and also takes account of individual needs. Staff performance is managed well and progression in salary is linked to the effectiveness of teaching.
  - The curriculum is good. Pupils enjoy the wide range of learning activities available to them. These are enhanced by a good range of extra-curricular activities and visits to places of educational interest. Older pupils have the opportunity to experience a residential visit to Robin's Wood Outdoor Pursuits Centre. These experiences all make a significant contribution to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
  - Leaders acknowledge, however, that the curriculum is not outstanding because pupils currently have too few opportunities to practise and apply their writing skills in a range of contexts, and that this contributes to them not making as rapid progress in writing as they do in reading and mathematics.
  - This good school works well in partnership with the local authority, which offers effective light touch support.
  - Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - Governance is good. Governors are well informed about the quality of teaching and are fully committed to its continuous improvement. They ensure that performance management procedures are fully implemented and linked closely to staff development and salary progression. They are given good information about how the school is performing compared to schools nationally and they know the school's strengths and weaknesses well. They hold leaders to account appropriately for the school's performance and help shape the strategic direction of the school. Finances are managed well and the governing body holds the school to account for the way in which the pupil premium funding 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	114128
<b>Local authority</b>	Durham
<b>Inspection number</b>	405501

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	123
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Rev Michael Beck
<b>Headteacher</b>	Dean Marshall
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 November 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 5843805
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