

Golden Flatts Primary School

Seaton Lane, Hartlepool, County Durham, TS25 1HN

Inspection dates 23–24 January 2013

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 achieve well in this rapidly improving school. Standards are rising and teaching is continuing to improve due to the school's commitment to ensuring every pupil does the very best that they can.
- Children get a really good start to their learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They make good progress from a starting point that is well below what is typical for their age. This is due to good teaching that improves their language skills.
- Pupils continue to make good progress across the school. They leave the school in Year 6 with standards that are similar to what pupils achieve nationally, particularly in mathematics and reading.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well due to good teaching, both in and out of lessons, and support from skilled teaching assistants.
- Teaching is good and sometimes it is outstanding. Teachers use questioning well to promote pupils' progress. Lessons have good pace and pupils are inspired to learn by enthusiastic teaching.
- Pupils' behaviour is good as the school has worked hard to improve pupils' attitudes to learning. They are polite and well-mannered and are a credit to their school. Pupils have a very good understanding of how to keep safe and spoke about this with confidence.
- The headteacher provides a clear vision and strong leadership. She is well supported by a skilful deputy headteacher and a committed team of teachers and governors. Together, they have successfully improved the quality of teaching and raised standards since the last inspection.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Standards in writing are not as good as in reading and mathematics. Pupils' handwriting and grammar skills are not fully developed. In the marking of writing, points for improvement do not always make it clear enough what pupils need to do to improve.
- Not enough teaching is outstanding. It does not always meet the needs of all pupils, particularly the more able. Pupils are not always clear about how to successfully achieve the objective of the lesson or how to improve their own learning and progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 25 lessons or parts of lessons, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher and three with the deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors observed groups of pupils working with teaching assistants and listened to pupils from different year groups read.
- Inspectors talked to a range of pupils, including those on the school council, about their work and play in the school.
- Meetings were held with four governors as well as teaching staff, including senior and subject leaders. Discussions were held with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of four responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) when planning the inspection and also considered staff questionnaires.
- Inspectors observed the overall work of the school and looked at a number of documents including the school's data about pupils' current progress. They also looked at documents relating to safeguarding, governance, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors looked at a range of other evidence including school displays, its website and evidence representing the school's wider achievements beyond the classroom.

Inspection team

David Shearsmith, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jane Beckett

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- A well-above-average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is well above average. The proportion who are supported at school action plus is average and there are no statements of special educational needs.
- The school has achieved the International School Foundation Level, British Heart Foundation, and Sing Up Silver awards.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school has a breakfast club and wrap-around care managed by the governing body.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is taught in one Reception class and a separate Nursery, sharing the same outdoor learning area.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in writing by:
 - improving pupils' handwriting skills so that they are more efficient when writing
 - giving pupils more challenging writing targets so that they reach higher standards
 - improving the teaching of grammar, punctuation and spelling
 - ensuring that the points for improvement made in teachers' marking make it clear to pupils exactly what they need to do to improve.
- Improve teaching so that it is more consistently outstanding by:
 - making sure that work always meets pupils' varying needs, particularly to challenge the more able pupils
 - ensuring pupils are clear about how to successfully achieve the objective of the lesson
 - making sure that pupils know how to assess their own progress in lessons so they can improve their own work
 - sharing the existing outstanding practice among staff to improve the quality of teaching overall.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are well below what is typical for their age. They are provided with a warm, friendly and welcoming environment that settles them into school well. Teaching, that is at least good, promotes children's skills well, particularly their speaking and listening skills. As a result, they make good progress overall.
- Between Years 1 and 6 pupils continue to make good progress and standards across the school continue to rise, particularly in reading and mathematics. As a result, by the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6 they now reach standards similar to those expected nationally. Standards in writing, however, are not as high, both at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is because the teaching of grammar, spelling and punctuation is not always good. There are missed opportunities to improve pupils' writing when teachers mark pupils' work and set them targets that are not challenging enough.
- Pupils' progress in reading has increased considerably as the school has improved its teaching of reading and phonics (the sounds that letters make). This has had a very positive impact on standards.
- Pupils' achievement in mathematics has also improved through strengthening the quality of teaching and by making sure that that pupils are taught mathematical skills that build effectively on what they already know and can do. As a result, standards in mathematics by the end of Year 6 are now above average.
- Pupils known to be eligible to receive support through pupil premium funding make progress at the same good rate as other pupils and achieve well. This is because the school has used its money well to meet their needs through well-tailored support. The progress of pupils entitled to free school meals is better than that of similar pupils nationally, except in writing. The school has been particularly successful in raising standards for these pupils in reading and mathematics by meeting their needs well in lessons and providing good, effective support.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs also make good progress as they are well supported by skilful teaching assistants, either individually or in small groups.
- Although, overall, more-able pupils also achieve well, in some lessons they are not always challenged to make the progress they are capable of.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good and some is outstanding. Teachers successfully ensure pupils make good progress. Effective questioning and good pace in lessons are instrumental in ensuring pupils' progress is better than expected nationally.
- All staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage provide good opportunities for children to develop their speaking and listening skills. In a short session with a small group of children in the Nursery, children practised sounding out words. They were encouraged to rhyme words while mixing 'silly sounds' in a cauldron. Consequently, they made good progress through learning that was fun.
- Where teaching is outstanding, work is tailored precisely to the needs of all pupils. In a Year 1 mathematics lesson the varying needs of all pupils were met extremely well because the class was carefully and thoughtfully split into three groups of different ability. Each group was given very interesting and challenging activities while constructing graphs. Pupils were very clear about how to record their findings and, as a result, made rapid progress. Occasionally, in less effective lessons, the work planned is not always hard enough for the more able pupils to show what they are capable of.
- Teachers have high expectations and engage pupils well. In Year 6 pupils were highly engaged in work related to the Second World War, preparing for an 'Evacuation Day'. They used their targets for learning well in their writing lesson and made increased progress. In some lessons

pupils are not given enough opportunities to find out how well they are getting on and progress is slower.

- The school has good systems for marking pupils' work in both mathematics and English. Teachers use marking to promote pupils' progress by clarifying misunderstandings and they give pupils time to respond and to improve their work. This feedback has already had a positive impact on speeding up pupils' progress. Even so, points for improvement made in teachers' marking sometimes do not make it clear enough exactly what they need to do to improve or challenge pupils well enough.
- The school has recently reviewed its teaching of mathematics, such as more formal methods of calculation, which has already had a positive impact on pupils' progress and in raising standards.
- The teaching of phonics (sounds that letters make) is effective across the school. All staff have good subject knowledge and deliver lessons well with good, crisp sessions which encourage pupils' progress. Although the school also promotes the teaching of spelling and handwriting through regular daily sessions, these practices have not yet resulted in the same rate of improvement in pupils' writing skills as has been made in reading and in mathematics.
- Skilled teaching assistants support the work of teachers well. They effectively deliver a range of sessions both in and out of lessons. They meet the needs of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, well because they work closely with teachers and use their planning effectively.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils enjoy coming to school. Relationships are good and pupils' welfare is at the heart of the school's work. The curriculum promotes pupils' personal development well. It has had a positive impact on improving pupils' behaviour and increasing their engagement in lessons. Pupils' good behaviour is often praised when they go out of school on visits. Pupils behave well in lessons. They engage in their learning because teachers are adept at motivating pupils to learn. Staff skilfully manage any unacceptable behaviour but this is a very rare occurrence. Pupils work well together in groups and are keen to talk to their partners in lessons about their work. Their attitudes to learning are good.
- Pupils play well together in the playground. 'Playground Buddies' take on the responsibility of supporting younger pupils with their play. 'Sports Leaders' from Years 5 and 6 ensure that pupils have plenty to do at playtime.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school, including in the breakfast club. They have a very good understanding of how to keep safe, particularly when using the internet. The school is proactive in making sure pupils know how to keep safe by providing opportunities for them to meet with community professionals, such as the police and fire brigade.
- Pupils understand about different types of bullying. They say that, if bullying did occur, they are confident adults in the school would sort it out. This is a very caring community where all pupils are valued as individuals. Pupils are well-mannered and everyone is treated with respect.
- Attendance is broadly average. Comprehensive systems are in place to ensure that pupils attend regularly. Good attendance is rewarded and pupils understand the importance of coming to school regularly and on time.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher's vision that all pupils can achieve their very best and her strong leadership have ensured that the school has made rapid progress since the last inspection. She has been well supported by a strong deputy headteacher and a cohesive staff team who are determined to do their very best for the pupils in their care.
- The school rigorously uses its information about pupils' progress. They use this information to make sure that all pupils have the same opportunity to be successful and achieve well. Meetings with teachers and observations of the quality of teaching in lessons have helped teachers to

improve and, as a result, pupils' progress has accelerated. The school is keen to share outstanding teaching practice among staff so that all teaching becomes outstanding.

- The school rewards teachers so that it accurately reflects the effectiveness of their performance in the classroom and in undertaking any additional leadership responsibilities. Targets set for teachers and leaders are linked to improving the quality of teaching, pupils' progress and performing leadership responsibilities. Training and the coaching of all staff have been instrumental in bringing about improvements since the previous inspection.
- The school has an accurate view of its own performance. Consequently, the school's plans for further improvement are specific and rigorous enough to ensure the school has the ability to improve even further.
- The curriculum is wide and varied and well tailored to meet the varying needs of pupils. It enriches pupils' experiences through visits and visitors. This broadens their horizons and motivates pupils to learn. Clubs, such as 'gardening club' at lunchtime, further support pupils' learning and progress.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well developed. Music is a great strength, particularly singing. During assembly the pupils sang their school song tunefully and were given time to think about how to get on well with others.
- The school works well with parents. Activities such as craft sessions and parenting programmes enable them to make strong links with their child's learning. The school's parent support worker is instrumental in developing good relationships with parents.
- The local authority has provided good support to improve teaching and learning in this rapidly improving school.
- The school is rigorous in ensuring pupils are well cared for and kept safe; as a result, safeguarding meets requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are knowledgeable about the work of the school as they have specific responsibilities and are well trained. They regularly visit the school and ask challenging questions as well as supporting the headteacher in improving the school. They have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and appropriately reward staff who take on extra responsibility. They have a good understanding of the school's data and how well the school is performing. They know how the pupil premium funding is allocated and its impact on pupils' progress.

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	111581
Local authority	Hartlepool
Inspection number	405342

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	162
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cath Hill
Headteacher	Susan Sharpe
Date of previous school inspection	2 February 2011
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