

Red Row First School

Red Row, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 5AS

Inspection dates

6–7 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- Teaching is consistently good, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage, with some outstanding teaching of writing in Year 2 and mathematics in Years 3 and 4.
- From starting points which are typically below those expected for their age, pupils make good progress. Attainment has risen at the end of Year 2 and Year 4.
- Pupils' behaviour is good; they feel extremely safe as a result of very friendly and respectful relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils are always polite and determined to do well in their work. Attendance is average.
- The new headteacher has a very clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. He has quickly established the respect of staff, pupils and parents and is well supported and challenged by the governing body.
- Together, leaders have taken decisive action. As a result, the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement has improved. Teachers are set targets to improve their performance and these are used successfully to increase the rate of pupils' progress. This is clearly an improving school.
- All teachers welcome opportunities to contribute to school improvement. They relish the responsibility and accountability they now have for their own classes and for subjects across the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, teachers do not organise the curriculum skilfully enough to allow children plenty of time to play and learn together and give teachers sufficient opportunities to focus the teaching of reading, writing and calculation on smaller, targeted groups of children.
- While pupils make good progress in reading, teachers would benefit from refreshing their skills in teaching how to link sounds and letters (phonics).
- When teachers mark work, they do not always make clear to pupils how to make their work better next time or allow time for pupils to act upon advice given.
- Some parents require constant reminders about the importance of ensuring their children attend regularly.
- Recent developments in offering teachers more responsibility and accountability for pupils' progress have not had time to be fully effective.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector had meetings with staff, groups of pupils and the Chair of the Governing Body. The inspector also met the school's local authority School Improvement Partner.
- The inspector 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 inspector observed teaching and learning in six lessons taught by five teachers and listened to a group of pupils read. In addition, the inspector made a number of short visits to lessons.
- The headteacher conducted five joint observations of lessons with the inspector. The inspector also observed the headteacher reporting back to teachers on their findings regarding the quality of learning and pupils' achievement in lessons.
- The inspector took into account the 13 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), as well as speaking to a group of parents.
- Ten staff completed questionnaires and the responses were analysed.

Inspection team

Gordon Potter, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding (pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and children from military service families) is well-above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- There are a breakfast club and many lunch-time and after-school clubs which are managed by the headteacher and run voluntarily by staff.
- The headteacher has been in post since September 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to outstanding and thus raise further pupils' progress and attainment by:
 - organising the curriculum in the Early Years Foundation Stage better so that children have more time to learn and play together and teachers have more opportunities to focus the teaching of reading, writing and calculation on smaller, targeted groups of children
 - refreshing teachers' skills in the teaching of how to link sounds and letters (phonics)
 - ensuring that all teachers mark work for pupils in a way that helps pupils to do better next time and allows them time to act upon that advice
 - making sure that the new leadership and management structures within school are fully effective through the targeted use of training to help leaders continue to improve and understand how to accelerate pupils' progress in their areas of responsibility.
- Further improve attendance by working closely with families who still do not appreciate the value of their children attending school regularly.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children start school with skills that are below, and occasionally well-below, those typically expected for their age. Children do well in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that most children start Year 1 with skills which are in line with those expected for their age.
- Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 and in Years 3 and 4. Attainment has risen at the end of Year 2 and is average in reading, writing and mathematics. Attainment has also risen at the end of Year 4 so that standards are in line with age-related expectations for nine-year olds.
- Pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs make good progress from their starting points as a result of work that is well-suited to their abilities and the good support they receive from teaching assistants.
- Attainment for pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium has improved and is now in line with age-related expectations in reading, writing and mathematics. However, although narrowing securely, the gap remains between them and other pupils in the school. Improvements in their attainment in Key Stage 1 have not yet had time to help them close the gap fully by the end of Year 4.
- Inspection evidence shows that progress in reading is good. This is a result of good teaching of how to link sounds and letters (phonics) 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. However, teachers would benefit from refreshing their skills in the teaching of phonics so that pupils' progress in reading can become even more rapid.

The quality of teaching is good

- In all lessons, teachers make sure that work is set at the right level for pupils of all abilities. They ask questions which encourage pupils to explain their ideas and use their answers to reshape work during lessons. Lessons are interesting; teachers involve pupils in experimenting and finding out things for themselves. As a result, pupils learn quickly.
- All of these highly effective approaches were seen in outstanding teaching of science and mathematics in the Year 3 and 4 class where pupils made rapid progress in understanding how line graphs can be used to show how water cools over time.
- In the teaching of writing in Year 2, outstanding teaching helped pupils make excellent progress in their independent writing about information they had researched. Pupils were excited by the activity. They made excellent progress in the development of their researching and experimenting skills, as well as in their speaking, listening and writing skills.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, there is good teaching of linking sounds and letters (phonics) and a strong focus on helping pupils to become confident in the basic skills of writing and calculation. However, teachers do not plan the curriculum well enough to give pupils sufficient time to learn and play together. Nor do teachers make time for enough opportunities to work with smaller, targeted groups of pupils.
- Pupils' work is regularly marked and teachers helpfully tell them how successful they have been in their work. However, teachers do not always make it clear to pupils how they can improve their work or give them time to act upon any advice given.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Attendance has improved as a result of initiatives by the school to encourage pupils to attend and is now average. It is also improving because pupils are excited by their lessons so they enjoy coming to school. However, some parents do not fully appreciate the importance of ensuring their children attend regularly.
- Pupils say that behaviour is good in their lessons and any minor misbehaviour is quickly dealt

with by their teachers. They respect one another, work and play well together and are very polite to adults. Indeed much excellent behaviour was evident in lessons during the inspection and around the school.

- Inspectors' analysis of the school's records of behaviour show behaviour is consistently good. This is as a result of the successful use of clear expectations, a consistent system of rewards and sanctions and the pupils' own very clear understanding of how to behave well. Pupils particularly like the honour of sitting at 'Top Table' as a reward for excellent behaviour and work.
- The needs of a very small number of pupils who have significant behavioural problems are very well managed by the school in cooperation with the local authority. As a result, there have been no exclusions in recent years.
- Pupils feel very safe and are aware of different forms of bullying. They develop social skills well in the well-supervised and safe breakfast and after-school clubs. Older pupils help younger children at playtimes. They say that any form of bullying, including name-calling, is rare and when it does happen they are confident that it will be quickly dealt with.
- Pupils know that other pupils, as well as the teachers and other adults in school, will help with any problems should they occur. Indeed, while there are playground 'buddies' who help pupils play safely and enjoyably together, pupils say they are not needed. Likewise there is no school council as all pupils can talk about their concerns and ideas and know they will be listened to.

The leadership and management are good

- In a short time the headteacher has had a significant impact on improving the school. He has quickly gained a clear picture of its strengths and relative weaknesses and developed high expectations among all staff. He has skilfully built upon earlier improvements and strengthened the staff team by offering all teachers greater responsibility and accountability. He is well-supported in this by the deputy headteacher and the governing body. The school's self-evaluation is therefore accurate and offers clear and appropriate areas for development.
- Teachers are used well and there are clear procedures to help those leaders who are new to their roles to develop their skills quickly and effectively so that they can be in charge of pupils' progress in their areas of responsibility. However, these new arrangements have not had time to be fully effective.
- The headteacher has improved teaching through a rigorous approach to assessing its quality. He carries out regular observations of teachers giving firm judgements and offering detailed and precise advice about how teachers can improve. This advice is clearly linked to training programmes which help teachers to become better.
- Performance management is clearly focussed on raising attainment and improving the quality of teaching. Staff have only been financially rewarded when their pupils have done as well as they should have done. Information about pupils' progress is used well to provide leaders with a clear understanding of how much progress pupils are making in different classes. As a result, leaders set targets for teachers and pupils which are demanding enough to ensure pupils' progress becomes even more rapid. The good progress made by all groups of pupils shows the school's commitment to promoting equal opportunities and tackling discrimination.
- The curriculum helps pupils see the links which can be made in learning in different subjects. There is a good understanding of how careful planning of interesting activities in Key Stage 1 helps pupils to make more rapid progress. Teachers ensure pupils have enough opportunities to write at length and practise mathematical skills in a variety of subjects across the curriculum. There are many chances for pupils to develop their spiritual and cultural awareness, especially of local history and geography, and many opportunities for pupils to practise their skills in sport and art.
- The local authority has provided successful advice on how to improve the teaching of mathematics and English and promote developments in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Such advice has helped to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. It has also supported the school in finding the best solution for those few pupils who find it extremely difficult to

behave well.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body has clear procedures to hold the school to account. They carry out routine assessments of the overall provision, including how the pupil premium funding is helping these pupils to achieve better. This gives them a very clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They ensure that the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities for safeguarding. They ensure that staff are trained appropriately to keep pupils safe and free from harm. The governing body has effective procedures to check on pupils' achievement and on the budget, successfully reducing a deficit and planning for future expansion. With the headteacher, they have taken decisive action to improve the quality of teaching and establish a team of good and outstanding teachers whose performance is clearly assessed and whose training needs are effectively met.
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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	122197
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	402085

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	3–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	116
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Claire Clark
Headteacher	Richard Bollands
Date of previous school inspection	21 November 2011
Telephone number	01670 760282
Fax number	01670 761617
Email address	Admin@redrow.northumberland.sch.uk

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