

Woodham Burn Community Primary School

Humphrey Close, Newton Aycliffe, County Durham, DL5 4EX

Inspection dates 31 January–1 February 2013

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		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Teaching requires improvement. In Years 1 and 2, work is not always well matched to pupils' different needs, especially that of the most able. Teachers spend too long on explanations and do not give enough time for pupils to practise their skills.
- Standards are below average in reading and writing by the end of Year 2. Pupils are not always able to use their knowledge of letters and sounds to help them read more fluently and do not have enough opportunities to develop their writing skills.
- The attainment in reading and writing of pupils eligible for free school meals is lower than it is for those who are not. This gap is closing rapidly in Year 6 but remains in Year 2.
- Pupils supported at school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are reaching lower than expected levels in writing by the end of Year 2.
- The leadership of the school, including the governors, have not yet ensured that plans to raise standards are detailed enough, that teachers' targets are clear and precise, and that middle leaders are routinely involved in checking the quality of teaching and pupils' progress.

The school has the following strengths

- Teaching is consistently good or better in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2. Pupils make rapid progress because teachers have high expectations and meet their differing needs very well.
- The headteacher and governors have put good systems in place to check the quality of teaching and learning.
- Pupils are friendly, enjoy school and behave well. This is because adults promote positive relationships so that pupils feel valued and safe.
- The school is improving quickly as seen by the rapidly rising standards in mathematics, with a growing proportion of pupils reaching above average levels by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons taught by 14 teachers and made several shorter visits to lessons to look at pupils' work.
- Inspectors talked to groups of pupils and heard others read in Year 1, Year 2 and Year 6.
- The views of 17 parents, who responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View), as well as informal conversations with parents at the start of each day, were taken into account.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior and middle leaders and members of the governing body, as well as speaking to a representative of the local authority.
- The school's improvement plan and records of achievement, teaching, behaviour and safeguarding were examined.
- Inspectors observed behaviour in and out of lessons; a group of Year 5 pupils showed an inspector round the school and discussed teaching, behaviour and bullying.
- Eleven staff submitted their views via a questionnaire and inspectors took these into account.

Inspection team

Christine Cottam, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Alan Keenleyside

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Woodham Burn Community Primary is a similar size to the average primary school.
- A higher than average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is much higher than is usually seen.
- The school meets the current floor standards, which set the government's minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school holds the International Award.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 so that it is consistently good or better by:
 - having higher expectations of the most able pupils by providing more challenging work for them
 - using assessment information to match work more accurately to the abilities of pupils
 - reducing the amount of time in lesson that teachers spend explaining, so that pupils have more time to complete their work.
- Raise standards in reading and writing in Year 1 and Year 2 so that attainment is much closer to the national average by:
 - teaching pupils how to apply their letters and sounds and use a wider range of skills, so that they are able to read more fluently
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to write independently, to write at length and to use letter sounds confidently when they write, so that they can achieve higher levels
 - providing more targeted support for pupils identified with specific additional needs, as well as those eligible for free school meals, so that all make good progress.
- Strengthen leadership and governance so that all leaders are fully involved in checking the quality of teaching and pupils' progress against concise and detailed plans for improvement by:
 - training new leaders in techniques to check and feedback on the quality of teaching so that it continues to improve, particularly in Year 1 and Year 2
 - making sure improvement plans have more specific actions, targets, timescales and responsibilities
 - ensuring targets for individual teachers are more precise, so that there is a more rigorous approach to managing their performance.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Children enter the Reception class with skills and abilities that are well below those usually found for their age. They make good progress, particularly in their literacy and language development, so that many are beginning to acquire the skills they need by the time they start Year 1.
- Through Years 1 and 2, pupils' progress slows. Standards by the end of Year 2 have been below average for two years. Mathematics attainment has improved and is now much closer to the national average, but reading and writing attainment remains below average. A lower than average proportion of pupils reached the standard expected in the Year 1 phonics screening check, with boys achieving less well than girls.
- Achievement in Years 1 and 2 requires improvement in reading and writing. While pupils make good progress in learning how to blend their letters and sounds, they are not yet able to use this skill to read more fluently and do not have a wide enough range of other reading skills to help them. Pupils find it difficult to write at length because they are not given enough opportunities to develop their writing skills.
- The standards reached in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 improved significantly in 2012, so that attainment was broadly average. Higher ability pupils made particularly good progress in mathematics, where a significant proportion reached Level 6. As a Year 5 pupil said, 'I am making good progress in English, but my mathematics is going very high.'
- Learning and progress in Key Stage 2 is good because teachers have high expectations, so that pupils produce work of a good standard. Pupils enjoy reading and their attainment is improving. The quality of pupils' writing has also improved and is now broadly average. Pupils are developing a neat handwriting style and take pride in the presentation of their work.
- In 2012, the attainment in reading, writing and mathematics of pupils who are eligible for free school meals was below that of non-eligible pupils. This gap is closing rapidly by the end of Year 6 but is still too wide in Year 2, particularly in reading and writing.
- Pupils supported at school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs have achieved less well than similar groups nationally in the past. A new coordinator is now in post and provision for these pupils has improved, so that they are now making similar progress to other pupils in the school in Key Stage 2, particularly in reading and mathematics.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Adults provide a stimulating environment within the classroom and outside, so that children are happy and want to play and learn. This environment is rich in opportunities to develop speaking and listening and, as a result, children make good progress in their literacy and language skills. Independence is encouraged and children develop good social skills and behave well.
- Teaching is consistently good or better throughout Key Stage 2. Pupils make good progress because the work is pitched at just the right level to both support and challenge them appropriately. Teachers ask questions which expect pupils to explain their reasoning in order to deepen their understanding.
- In a lesson where pupils were learning to solve money problems, the teacher and teaching assistant worked extremely well together to make sure pupils had enough time to work independently, whilst intervening sensitively to accelerate progress.
- Teaching in Year 1 and Year 2 is not yet good because teachers spend too long on explanations, which prevents pupils from having enough time to practise their skills and consolidate their understanding. Sometimes the work set for pupils is the same regardless of their ability; this inhibits the progress of those who are more able and those who are less so.
- There is a consistent approach to the teaching of letters and sounds across the school, so that younger pupils are making good progress in their ability to blend sounds together to read words

and phrases. Teaching assistants are used well to teach small groups of pupils. However, in Years 1 and 2, the important element of applying these skills is not taught well enough.

- Teachers mark work regularly so that pupils know how well they are doing and are encouraged to improve.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are proud of their school and have good attitudes to their learning. They are polite, friendly and hard-working. The work in their books shows that they take good care with their presentation and always try to do their best.
- Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. This is because pupils thrive in a warm, caring atmosphere. The vast majority of parents say that behaviour is good.
- All staff manage behaviour in the same way so that pupils know what is expected. Incidents of poor behaviour are rare and, as a result, exclusions have reduced dramatically since the last inspection.
- Pupils have good social skills and strong moral values. This is because they have frequent opportunities to work together in lessons and they develop good levels of mutual respect as a result.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different forms of bullying. There are relatively few incidents of bullying or racism and these are dealt with quickly and effectively.
- All parents spoken to during the inspection, and those who responded to the online questionnaire, say their children are kept safe in school. Pupils have a good knowledge of how to stay safe, for example when crossing the road or using the internet.
- There are good systems in place to monitor attendance and links with the local authority to follow up pupils who are persistently absent. Attendance is broadly average.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders, including governors, share a commitment to provide the best education for their pupils. There have been improvements in pupils' behaviour and the quality of teaching, which demonstrates that the school has a good capacity to improve. Leadership and management are not yet good because the quality of teaching and the achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2 require improvement.
- The headteacher regularly and accurately checks the quality of teaching by visiting lessons and looking at pupils' work. A good system is used to track the progress pupils are making. The local authority has provided good support to the school and this has helped to identify accurate priorities for improvement. A number of new leaders are awaiting training, so that they can be more involved in checking the quality of teaching and learning.
- The school's priorities have been included in plans for improvement, but the plans do not always have precise enough actions, targets and timescales.
- This is also the case with the records of teachers' performance management, where targets are not yet detailed enough for individual teachers to be confident about what they need to do to improve.
- There are good partnerships with parents who say that the school is approachable and caring. The school regularly involves parents in discussing their children's progress and setting targets. Many parents attended a family assembly during the inspection. The new special educational needs coordinator has informal meetings in school to support parents who have children with additional needs, as well as the statutory formal reviews of pupils' progress.
- The curriculum makes a good contribution to the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. The school has recently focused on English and mathematics in order to raise standards in pupils' basic skills. The mathematics curriculum is a strength,

particularly in Key Stage 2, where good opportunities are given to the most able pupils to extend their skills and understanding.

- The school takes the safety of pupils seriously and has good systems in place that meet all safeguarding requirements.
- Senior leaders have taken effective action to address inequalities, for example in appointing a new special educational needs coordinator, so that supported pupils are now making better progress. The school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles any discriminatory behaviour well.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - is knowledgeable about the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement because governors ask challenging questions and receive good information on pupils' progress. Governors strongly support the headteacher in managing the performance of teachers, ensuring that good teachers are rewarded and that where teaching is weak, the ensuing problems are tackled. The governing body manages finances prudently and uses the pupil premium funding to provide additional tuition for eligible pupils who are underachieving so that the gaps, between those pupils eligible for free school meals and those who are not, are closing, particularly in Key Stage 2. However, the governing body has yet to ensure plans to raise standards are detailed enough.

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	109302
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	405230

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	Bede Feechan
Headteacher	Riannon Rowe
Date of previous school inspection	8 June 2011
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