

Heathfield Primary School

The Broadway, Darlington, DL1 1EJ

Inspection dates 13–14 February 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	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.

- The quality of teaching is good, with some that is outstanding. Teachers set clear targets and then help pupils to achieve them. They mark pupils' work thoroughly and give them good feedback so that they know how to improve.
- Standards are rising because pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage Two.
- The specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs is outstanding. These pupils make rapid progress because the provision meets both their emotional and learning needs exceptionally well.
- The curriculum helps pupils to understand other cultures. It also gives pupils good opportunities to develop culturally through singing, art and musical performances.
- Pupils are polite, friendly and courteous. They behave well in lessons, because they are usually interested and want to do well. There is a calm, safe atmosphere where adults and children show high levels of respect towards each other. Pupils know how to stay safe and the school keeps them safe.
- The school is effectively led by the headteacher, governors and a team of other leaders. All who lead are ambitious in their desire to make sure pupils achieve well and have been successful in raising standards, particularly by the end of Year 6. This is because leaders, including governors, check the quality of teaching regularly so that it has improved. Leaders closely watch the progress pupils are making and provide extra support when any are underachieving.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The quality of teaching is not always good and not enough is outstanding. Sometimes the work set for pupils is either not interesting enough or it is not matched well enough to their ability.
- Pupils make slower progress in reading and writing in Year 1 and 2 than they do in the rest of the school. This is because they do not always have good enough opportunities to practise their skills.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons taught by 18 teachers as well as making shorter visits to lessons to look at pupils' work. Some of these observations also involved the headteacher.
- Inspectors talked to groups of pupils and heard others in Year 1, Year 2 and Year 6 read.
- The views of 36 parents, who responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View), were taken into account. Inspectors talked to parents at the start of each day.
- Inspectors met with senior and middle leaders, members of the governing body and a school improvement adviser who works with the school.
- The school's improvement plan and records of achievement, teaching, behaviour and safeguarding were examined.
- Inspectors observed behaviour in and out of lessons, as well as talking to groups of pupils about behaviour and bullying.
- Thirty staff submitted their views via a questionnaire and inspectors took these into account.

Inspection team

Christine Cottam, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Mark Lovell

Additional Inspector

Graeme Clarke

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Heathfield Primary is much larger than the average-size primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is similar to the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is similar to that usually seen.
- There is a specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs with specialist teaching for up to 16 pupils with moderate learning difficulties as well as social and emotional needs. There are currently 14 pupils on roll.
- The school meets the current floor standards, which sets the government's minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school holds the Investors in People and International School awards.
- Heathfield Primary converted to become an academy in June 2012. When its predecessor school, also called Heathfield Primary, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is always good and a greater proportion is outstanding by:
 - ensuring pupils have enough opportunities to respond to marking and feedback in a way that helps them to learn and make even better progress
 - planning learning activities that motivate and inspire pupils so that they concentrate and work hard in all lessons
 - making sure learning activities are always consistently matched to the differing abilities of pupils.
- Raise standards in Year 1 and 2, particularly in reading and writing, by:
 - giving pupils more opportunities to record their work independently so that they are practising their writing and spelling skills more often
 - regularly teaching a wide range of reading skills so that pupils become more confident readers.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start school in nursery with skills and abilities below those usually found for their age. They make good progress throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage so that they gain the skills they need by the time they start Year 1. This is because teaching is consistently good.
- Attainment by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 has improved over time and is now broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because the school quickly identifies any pupils who are falling behind and provides good support for them to catch up.
- Standards in reading are improving in Key Stage 2 so that, by the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6, they enjoy reading widely and fluently. This is because they are taught a wide range of reading skills on a daily basis.
- Achievement in writing by the end of Year 6 has also improved. Pupils organise their written work well and it is interesting to read. For example, Year 6 pupils have researched famous people from the United States of America and then used their knowledge to write informative biographies.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics. Their work is carefully matched to their different abilities and teachers challenge pupils to reach higher levels if they can, whilst providing good support for those who are struggling.
- Achievement in reading and writing in Year 1 and 2 requires improvement. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to practise their skills, say by recording their work, in order to be able to write independently and spell more accurately. Many pupils are not able to read well enough by the end of Year 2 because they have a limited range of skills to help them.
- Pupils who are eligible for free schools meals are making rapid progress, although their attainment remains below those who are not eligible. This gap in attainment is closing considerably.
- The achievement of pupils who are supported at school action, school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is good overall.
- Pupils who are educated in the specialist resource base often making outstanding progress with a carefully tailored approach that is well suited to the needs of individuals.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently good in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Adults have high expectations and plan interesting learning activities that help children to make rapid progress. Consequently, most children gain the knowledge and skills appropriate for their age by the time they start Year 1.
- Teaching is good in Key Stage 2 and some is outstanding. Teachers plan engaging learning activities that are well matched to the different abilities of pupils. These teachers have high expectations and challenge pupils to do their best so that they make rapid progress. For example, in a mathematics lesson pupils were able to work out the area of a complex shape made of five rectangles because the teacher asked probing questions so that pupils were able to work out the solution for themselves. Pupils enjoyed the brisk pace and challenge. As a result, their behaviour was exemplary.
- Teaching in the additional resource base is outstanding. The specialist teacher and teaching assistants work together on well-planned and interesting activities that are carefully tailored to the needs of individual pupils so that they achieve rapid success.
- Whilst there is some good teaching in Year 1 and 2, there is also some that requires improvement. This is because pupils either do not find their work interesting enough or it is too difficult or too easy and this affects their concentration.
- Daily, well-structured reading lessons throughout Key Stage 2 help pupils to become fluent, avid

readers. Whilst pupils in Year 1 and 2 have daily sessions to improve their knowledge of letters and sounds, they are not yet taught a wide enough range of skills to help them make more rapid progress in their reading.

- Teachers mark pupils work consistently well with useful comments that help pupils know how they can improve. There is less consistency in the way this feedback is followed up so that pupils do not always act on the teachers' advice in a way that will help them to make even better progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are well behaved in lessons and around the school. They are happy, polite and courteous. There are good routines in place and teachers praise pupils frequently for their good behaviour. The standard of presentation in books has improved over time with pupils taking an increasing pride in their work and achievements.
- In a small number of lessons, pupils' concentration wanes a little because either they have finished their work or it is not interesting enough to maintain their engagement.
- Pupils transfer into the resource base because they have complex needs, and this often includes difficult behaviour. The specialist knowledge of staff helps these pupils to improve their behaviour very rapidly so that they feel safe and happy both within the resource base and in mainstream lessons.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different forms of bullying and a well-developed sense of right and wrong. They are taught how to keep themselves safe and have a particularly good knowledge of internet safety.
- Pupils say that behaviour is usually good at play and lunchtimes. They say that there is some bullying, mostly name-calling, but pupils are confident that the school deals with it effectively. Incidents of a more serious nature are rare so that exclusion is hardly ever used.
- A small number of parents, who responded to Parent View, disagreed that pupils are well behaved and that the school deals effectively with bullying. There is an 'anti-bullying' governor who helps the school to address specific concerns expressed by parents and any incidents the school knows about are dealt with well.
- Attendance and punctuality have improved over time and are now broadly average. There are good systems in place to monitor attendance and the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent is decreasing as a result.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is determined and ambitious. The leadership team have together created an expectation that all pupils, regardless of their ability or background, will thrive and achieve, thereby promoting equality and tackling discrimination well.
- There are particular strengths in the quality of leadership of English, mathematics and special educational needs where the enthusiasm, ambition, skills and knowledge of middle leaders are used effectively to drive improvements. The special educational needs leader is also responsible for the resource base which is managed exceptionally well.
- Leaders check the quality of teaching by looking at pupils' work and visiting lessons. This has led to improvements in teaching with standards rising as a result, thereby demonstrating that the school's capacity to improve is good.
- The school carefully tracks the progress of pupils and uses this information to identify any improvements to teaching and the curriculum that are needed. These are set out in a precise improvement plan.
- The performance of teachers is managed well. All teachers check their competencies against the Teachers' Standards and this information is used to set targets and plan professional

development.

- The curriculum is interesting with innovative projects chosen by pupils. It is rich in opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual and cultural awareness by studying other countries, faiths and cultures and by experiencing musical and sporting activities. However, the curriculum in Years 1 and 2 does not always provide enough opportunities for pupils to develop their reading and writing skills.
 - The school works in partnership with a small group of local academies and universities. This gives staff good opportunities to develop as they are often involved in supporting other schools. The school is supported well by an external adviser.
 - The majority of parents are happy with the school. Governors hold regular 'drop-in' sessions for parents and the web-site and newsletters give regular information to them. A minority of parents feel they are not kept well-informed.
 - The school takes the safety of pupils seriously and has good systems in place that meet all safeguarding requirements.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Is knowledgeable and involved. Governors take their roles seriously and regularly take part in activities to check the quality of teaching and the progress of pupils. They are both supportive and challenging, for example, they have set rigorous targets for the headteacher and have investigated thoroughly when parents have raised concerns. Governors manage resources carefully. Pupil premium funding has been used well so that those pupils who are eligible for free school meals are making rapid progress.
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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	138179
Local authority	Darlington
Inspection number	404557

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

Type of school	Academy converter
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	492
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sandra Geraghty
Headteacher	Nick Blackburn
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01325 252144
Fax number	01325 252010
Email address	admin@heathfieldprimary.com

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