

Kenton Bar Primary School

Ryal Walk, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear , NE3 3YF

Inspection dates

12–13 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		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Despite effective action to reverse the decline in recent test results, a sustained pattern of good progress and broadly average attainment has yet to be established.
- A majority of teaching observed was good, but requires improvement because over time it has not yet had sufficient impact in consistently motivating pupils to achieve well.
- Information available from the rigorous checking of pupils' progress and development is not always used consistently to ensure work is hard enough for pupils.
- Increasingly, lessons are thought-provoking but, at times, in both lessons and intervention and support sessions, adults do not use questions well and relentlessly enough to test pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- Senior leaders have a good understanding of what is working well in school. Nevertheless, on occasions, they do not examine the impact of their actions analytically enough when judging just how well new initiatives are helping to speed-up pupils' progress and how teachers can inspire, stretch and challenge pupils even more.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are keen to learn, are polite, confident and friendly. Pupils say that they enjoy school and feel safe. All parents agree.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed effectively. The friendly atmosphere and well-planned activities ensure that children settle quickly and make good progress.
- The school provides high quality care for all of its pupils, including those in the Communication Centre.
- The school provides a good curriculum that develops pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- Partnership working with parents is a real strength of the school. Leaders and governors are highly effective in managing support to boost the personal development of those pupils entitled to additional government funding.
- The strong governing body have a clear vision for the school's future direction in close collaboration with their partners.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons of which four were joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. In addition, inspectors made a number of short visits to lessons and walks around the school site to check the quality of what is provided for pupils.
- Inspectors held discussions with pupils, parents, members of the governing body, school staff, including senior leaders and those with responsibilities such as the leadership of key stages and subjects and a local authority adviser.
- Inspectors took account of the 30 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- Inspectors observed the school's work and examined a range of documentation including the school's own records of pupils' current progress, records from the observation of lessons and checking of pupils' work and the school's improvement planning. Records relating to behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding were also taken into consideration.

Inspection team

Clive Petts, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Kathleen Mullen

Additional Inspector

Dean Jackson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Kenton Bar is a broadly average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding (which is provided to support the learning of pupils who are entitled to free school meals, in the care of the local authority or the children of members of the armed forces), is twice the national average.
- The school extends its services in that it provides a sponsored breakfast club each day.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is twice the average.
- The school includes a specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs. This consists of a full-time, six place Communication Centre for pupils with autism in Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Most pupils are White British. A lower than average but steadily increasing proportion of pupils is from minority ethnic groups with a few at an early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language.
- A higher than average and increasing number of pupils join or leave the school other than at the normal time.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of teaching that is at least good by:
 - providing more specific detail to staff of how to be imaginative, inspiring and thought-provoking in their approaches, in order to spark pupils' own imagination and thinking
 - using a wider range of high-quality questioning that matches pupils' varying needs, in both lessons and classroom support sessions, to constantly test their knowledge and understanding
 - ensuring that all pupils know how to improve the quality of their work rapidly.
- Make certain that all progress in Years 1 to 6 is rapid and sustained to ensure that the proportion of pupils exceeding what is expected is higher-than-average in English and mathematics by:
 - providing activities and tasks that are more closely matched to pupils' individual abilities, needs, talents and interests, using available progress information, including making sure work is hard enough
 - increasing the opportunities through the school to celebrate independent writing, especially of boys
 - making sure leaders and managers analyse and use the findings of lesson monitoring better, to check the quality of teaching even more carefully and confirm actions taken to raise achievement are consistently effective in all lessons.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- In summer 2011, test results at the end of Year 6 demonstrated good levels of achievement for all groups of pupils. However, this pattern was not sustained in 2012 when achievement and attainment declined noticeably. Inspection evidence, confirmed by school progress information, demonstrates that the underachievement evident in the 2012 tests is being effectively tackled. Gaps in pupils' skills are being eliminated across all groups. Nevertheless, the pattern of pupils' progress over time is not yet good.
- The majority of children start the Nursery with skills and experience significantly lower than those typical for their age. A large proportion has underdeveloped speech and language skills. An increasing number speak English as an additional language. All children settle quickly and happily in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They make good progress as a result of the effective teaching, especially the Reception classes, enjoying a broad range of well-planned interesting activities. Their eagerness to learn is fostered really well.
- Currently pupils make similar progress in English and mathematics from their low starting points. The school predicts that standards at the end of Year 6 will be below average by July 2013, with any gaps in the performance of groups eliminated, such as in boys' writing. This presents a far more positive picture than last year when standards in English were exceptionally low and well-below average in mathematics.
- Even though achievement in Years 1 to 6 requires improvement, a more consistent pattern of quicker progress is clearly emerging. For example, a group of younger pupils were observed totally absorbed, confidently and expressively describing in their writing the hunt for Blakey, the black hen. Some unevenness in the demands made of pupils does remain when expectations of what pupils can achieve are sometimes not high enough.
- The positive action taken to improve pupils' speaking, listening and writing, including those in the Communication Centre, is successfully improving their skills. More interesting approaches are capturing and holding pupils' interest for longer. Pupils are increasingly skilled using partner discussions to exchange ideas and extend their thinking. Yet, opportunities are sometimes missed to celebrate their success, such as in their extended writing.
- Pupils in the Communication Centre make the progress expected of them for their age, ability and needs. In individual cases, good progress is made developing improved self-control and boosting self-esteem.
- Those pupils supported by pupil premium funding make similar progress as their classmates. Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals attain the same standards as others do. Careful checks kept on pupils' progress are making certain that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs also make the same progress.
- A whole school push to foster reading enjoyment is improving skills. Increasingly consistent use of skills to blend letters and sounds together enables younger pupils to read tricky words more fluently. Attainment in reading by the age of six is well-below average but rising steadily. Older pupils speak enthusiastically about their current reading. They demonstrate an awareness of a chosen author's style or use of a theme to capture the reader's imagination. By the end of Year 6, reading skill is below average.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- There is an increasing proportion of good teaching, but the more even pattern of challenging teaching has not been sustained consistently enough over time to judge its full impact on achievement and standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The good teaching observed is making certain the rate of pupils' progress quickens, including for those whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable and those who arrive at other than the normal time. Yet, opportunities are sometimes missed to adopt more imaginative approaches

to inspire, spark and excite pupils' thinking even more.

A broad range of first-hand experiences, practical problem-solving activities and partner discussion fosters pupils' positive attitudes well. Advances in the use of pupils' progress information to plan tasks are underpinning improvements in teaching well, but inconsistencies remain.

- In the best practice when progress is fastest:
 - pupils are clear about what they are expected to learn
 - activities and tasks are a close match to pupils' abilities and interests
 - questioning constantly checks pupils' thinking and strengthens their knowledge and understanding
 - challenging targets are set for pupils and they are encouraged to judge their own performance and work independently.
- When teaching is less effective and challenge and pace uneven:
 - expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough across all ability groups, including those in the Communication Centre
 - activities are not a close enough match to pupils' needs and opportunities are missed to add to the demands and pace of lessons
 - questioning is too general and marking not used effectively enough to set clear steps for improvement
 - classroom support is not consistently effective enough following pupils' learning and prompting and stretching their thinking.
- Although the gap in attainment between those eligible for pupil premium funding and other pupils can vary a little, positive action, particularly in Years 3 to 6, is making certain any shortfalls in literacy and numeracy skills are being eliminated.
- In Reception, imaginative approaches are used to encourage children to explore and investigate the world around them. The positive involvement of parents in their children's learning is adding to the momentum of improvement, such in their early reading.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well in lessons and are eager to learn. The behaviour of older pupils is often exemplary. This is the result of the high quality of care and support provided by staff and the clear boundaries for their conduct in and around school. As one pupil observed, 'Adults are our guardian angels; they care so much for us.' The happy, lively atmosphere in the popular breakfast club provides a cheerful start to the day.
- Pupils respond really well to the excellent role models that staff provide. For example, older pupils were observed listening quietly and intently and responding positively to the experiences of former professional footballers promoting, 'Show Racism the Red Card'. Individuals, including those in the Communication Centre, whose circumstances might put them at risk, are sensitively managed and encouraged by staff to better manage their emotions and behaviour.
- Pupils play happily and safely together. There is a very calm atmosphere in the dining room where pupils enjoy talking to their friends. Playing outside, for example in the snow, pupils are sensible and safety-conscious. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes display excellent self-control and consideration of others for their age.
- In conversations, pupils demonstrate an awareness of what bullying comprises. They observe that if they have a worry or concern staff are, 'never too busy to help us'. Pupils are well-informed about how to avoid risk and danger. Pupils' enjoyment of school is evident in their enthusiastic participation in school life. Although their attendance is average, it is rising as a result of the whole-hearted encouragement from staff.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher leads the school with passion, commitment and great care. He is ably supported by a senior leadership team, who, during a period of unsettled leadership, made certain that day-to-day management was effective, including in the Communication Centre. There is a high priority on equal opportunities and the tackling of discrimination. A committed and enthusiastic team of staff share the headteacher's resolve to sustain improvements.
 - The checking of pupils' progress is increasingly rigorous and accurate. Senior leaders have appropriate plans to tackle shortfalls in performance they have identified by frequent monitoring. Insufficient sharpness in the analysis of monitoring information and the use of the findings to extend staff skills and increase the amount of inspiring teaching, accounts for some of the inconsistencies in lesson challenge and pace.
 - The good curriculum is enriched by a broad range of visits and visitors. For example, a residential weekend for older pupils extends their first-hand experiences and independence. Whole-school action to improve reading, writing and mathematical skills is increasingly successful. Pupil premium funding is being used thoughtfully and effectively to provide extra support for this group of pupils. As a result their achievement continues to rise and is ever more successfully sustained.
 - The leadership and management of teaching are increasingly effective. Performance management targets are linked to the quality of pupils' learning in lessons. Successful teachers are rewarded and where a teacher's performance requires improvement, well-organised support and training is organised. Newly qualified teachers are really well-supported and encouraged.
 - The expertise of local authority specialists have been well used to support initiatives aimed to secure and sustain improvements.
 - Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements, with much best practice adopted to support the high quality of care and support provided for pupils.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body shares the headteacher's and senior leadership team's view of just how successful the school can be. Their expertise has been enhanced by recent partner appointments as they prepare for trust status. The governing body manages school resources very effectively. They hold senior leaders to account in positive ways and provide the challenge necessary to make further improvements in the quality of teaching and school performance. They make sure that staff performance management targets reflect school improvement priorities.
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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	108489
Local authority	Newcastle Upon Tyne
Inspection number	405173

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	254
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Cleghorn
Headteacher	Tony Leonard
Date of previous school inspection	9 March 2011
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