

Consett Junior School

Beechdale Road, Consett, County Durham, DH8 6AY

Inspection dates 18–19 April 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.

- Standards are rising. More pupils are reaching the higher levels in reading, writing and especially in mathematics.
- Teaching is consistently good across the school and sometimes outstanding. Teachers are enthusiastic and ensure that all pupils are inspired to learn through exciting lessons.
- The curriculum offers a wide range of exciting experiences, including clubs during and after school, and local and residential visits. It makes a positive contribution to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils feel extremely safe because they know that adults in the school care for them and help them if they have any problems.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher are ambitious for the school.
- Senior leaders regularly check how well teachers and pupils are doing in order to identify what can be done to improve teaching and raise attainment.
- Governors have an accurate picture about the work of the school and are relentless in sharing their high ambition for the pupils' learning.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They have good attitudes to learning. Parents overwhelmingly agree that their children feel very safe at school. Attendance is above average.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not yet enough teaching which is outstanding.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to produce extended pieces of writing in subjects other than English.
- Work planned for pupils is not always hard enough and in some lessons pupils who show they can do the work are not always moved on quickly enough.
- Pupils' work is not always presented neatly.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 18 lessons of which one was a joint observation carried out with the headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made a number of short visits to lessons and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with pupils from Year 3 to Year 6, four governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, senior and middle leaders and a representative from the local authority. Short discussions were held with pupils at break times and lunchtime.
- The inspectors took account of 11 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, had discussions with parents during the inspection and at the end of the school day to ascertain their views of the school, and also analysed 19 staff questionnaires.
- The inspectors observed the school’s work and took into account the work in pupils’ books, the school’s own data on pupils’ current progress, the school’s improvement plans, planning and monitoring information and minutes of governing body meetings. Records relating to behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding were also considered.

Inspection team

Anthony Kingston, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Deborah Bailey

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Consett Junior is smaller than the average-sized junior school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and the children of families in the armed forces, is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is slightly above average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment and increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - further raising teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving
 - ensuring that there is always sufficient challenge in the work provided in lessons to ensure more pupils make better than expected progress
 - ensuring pupils are quickly moved on to more challenging work once they have demonstrated their understanding of what is being taught
 - providing pupils with more well-planned opportunities to write creatively and at length in subjects other than English.
- Improve the presentation of pupils' work by:
 - making sure that there is a consistent style of handwriting taught throughout the school
 - raising the expectations which teachers have of their pupils to present their work neatly.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Since the time of the last inspection, pupils' attainment has improved and is now slightly above the national average especially in reading and mathematics.
- Generally, standards in writing have lagged behind that of reading and mathematics. However, training to help teachers to understand how to improve pupils' writing is quickening the rate of progress and as a result, the proportion reaching the expected and higher levels are now similar to that in reading and mathematics. Nevertheless, the handwriting of some pupils is untidy because there is no consistent style taught and teachers do not always expect high enough standards of presentation.
- The proportion of pupils making expected progress is above average. The proportion making better than expected progress is accelerating. This is reflected in the greater proportion of pupils who now at the end of Year 6 reach the higher levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics, compared to the higher levels they reached on entry to the school. The proportion of pupils reaching Level 6 in mathematics is above the national average.
- Inspection evidence shows that progress is continuing to accelerate quickly and that attainment is improving rapidly throughout the school.
- Reading is given a high priority. The regular teaching of letters and sounds, particularly in Year 3 is securing pupils' basic reading skills. As pupils move through the school, they develop a love of reading and are keen to discuss moral and ethical issues within the text, such as those in John Boyle's harrowing story, 'The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas.'
- Pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs make progress similar to that of their classmates. Their progress is checked carefully, programmes of work are planned to help them improve and teachers and teaching assistants provide good support.
- Overall, pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding including those known to be eligible for free school meals make progress similar to that of their classmates and attain similar standards, especially in reading and mathematics. Effective use of the recent addition of the well-resourced learning bases for small group and one-to-one tuition makes a very positive contribution to pupils' good progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved. Because of good training opportunities and support from senior leaders teaching continues to improve rapidly, with almost all being good and an increasing proportion now outstanding.
- There is a very positive climate for learning in classrooms in which pupils work hard both independently and in small groups.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They use this well to question and deepen pupils' understanding. The quality of discussion between teacher and pupils is good and this provides pupils with the opportunity to share their ideas and to learn from one another.
- Teachers plan enjoyable lessons that generally meet the needs and interests of pupils well. In the best lessons, teachers use assessment very effectively to plan lessons that enable pupils to build on what they already know and can do. This helps them to make good progress. However, this is not always the case and sometimes there is too much focus by teachers on pupils completing an activity or undertaking repetitious tasks, rather than concentrating on what is being learned. As a result, pupils do not always make the progress of which they are capable because they are not moved on quickly enough nor made to think hard enough.
- Rightly, the school places emphasis on the teaching of basic skills in English and mathematics. Pupils are given interesting opportunities to apply and develop their mathematical skills to imaginative real-life problem solving activities. However, pupils are not provided with enough

opportunities to be involved in extended pieces of writing across subjects other than in English.

- Marking and feedback across the school are regular and thorough. It informs pupils of what they have done well and what the next steps are to improve further.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work in excellent partnership. Teaching assistants are clear about what is required to help pupils make good progress and provide good support to ensure the needs of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are met. Their work is carefully checked to ensure that no pupils fall behind.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The school provides a caring and supportive environment in which all pupils are valued. All parents who responded to the on-line questionnaire said that their children were happy and felt safe at the school.
- The good behaviour and positive attitudes of pupils are important factors in their improving levels of achievement. However, on very few occasions, when teaching does not sustain their interest, a small proportion of pupils become slightly restless. Pupils are keen to be at school, want to do well, and work hard for their teachers.
- Pupils are eager to work in collaboration with others, listening sensibly to each other's opinions and encouraging one another to do their best. They readily accept the feedback given by their teachers and take on board the comments for improvement that teachers make in their books.
- Around school and at playtimes pupils are polite and friendly. They accept responsibility willingly. For example, the play leaders are excellent role models and are greatly respected by their peers for the work they do.
- Pupils respond very well to the many opportunities to think deeply about the world around them, and reflect on their role within this. In particular, they like wrestling with the difficult issues they discuss during lessons, such the unrest in Syria and the potentially frightening consequences of the political differences between North Korea and the rest of the world.
- Pupils say any form of bullying is very rare. They fully understand what constitutes bullying, such as persistent name-calling and cyber bullying. If any unkindness does happen it is dealt with quickly. Pupils say that there is always someone they can talk to if they are worried and are confident that the adults keep them safe.
- They feel safe in school and know what they can do to help themselves to stay safe in a range of different situations, including when using the internet.
- Attendance is above average.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is extremely ambitious for the school. Her high expectations are shared by all staff ensuring a strong sense of teamwork. The staff questionnaires reflect this strong team spirit.
- Leaders and managers know the school well. Leaders carry out sharply-focused checks on teaching and learning and provide clear guidance and strong support where required. This process has been supported by effective performance management, through which the very best teachers have been promoted into positions that have enabled them to drive up the quality of teaching across the school. Enthusiastic and committed subject leaders have received good support. They coach and mentor other staff and check on the quality of teaching and how it impacts on pupils' attainment and progress in the subjects for which they are responsible.
- The local authority checks rigorously on the school's performance and quality of teaching and offers excellent support which is greatly appreciated by the school.
- The curriculum is imaginative. It excites and motivates pupils. It rightly stresses the importance of reading, writing and mathematics and provides a range of opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills to real-life problem-solving activities. However, is not yet outstanding

because it does not sufficiently enable pupils to practise and apply their writing skills in a range of subjects.

- The school promotes positive behaviour through a broad range of experiences, such as encouraging pupils to take on roles of responsibility. These and the range of after-school activities, such as the enthusiastic involvement of a high proportion of pupils in the school's thrilling and rousing brass band, contribute extremely well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school promotes and checks that all pupils have equality of opportunity. For example, additional income received by the school to support pupils eligible for the pupil premium is used well to provide additional support such as one-to-one or small-group work, focusing on English and mathematics.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors visit the school regularly, understand data and have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Governors attend relevant training, oversee the progress of all different groups of pupils, are challenging in their discussions about the value of spending decisions and check the impact these have on pupils' learning and progress. This has led to effective decisions about what the school spends the pupil premium funding on. Governors ensure that reviews of teachers' work are linked closely to the progress and attainment of pupils, to the standards expected of teachers and to teachers' pay scales. Safeguarding has a high priority and governors ensure that statutory requirements are met.

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	114051
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	401404

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	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	169
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr M Bolam
Headteacher	Mrs A Willmot
Date of previous school inspection	9 December 2009
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