

# Battle Hill Primary School

Berwick Drive, Battle Hill Estate, Wallsend, Tyne and Wear, NE28 9DH

**Inspection dates** 2–3 May 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Teaching is consistently good and occasionally outstanding. Teachers make lessons interesting and move learning on at a brisk pace. As a result, pupils make good and occasionally outstanding progress.
- In 2012, pupils in Year 6, including those known to be eligible for the pupil premium and those with special educational needs, made outstanding progress in English in Key Stage 2.
- The lively activities-based curriculum, which runs throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, ensures that pupils make good progress. As a result, attainment has risen at the end of Year 2.
- Marking and target setting are used effectively to help pupils know how to improve their work.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They care exceptionally well for one another; they say they feel extremely safe. They are determined to do their best in their work. Attendance is improving.
- The school offers excellent care and support and provides very well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The headteacher and the governing body have a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have been determined to improve the school and know clearly how to make it even better. This is an improving school.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils have too few chances to write at length in English and other subjects or to apply their mathematical skills in real-life situations.
- Pupils' handwriting is not well formed or neat enough.
- Occasionally work is not well matched to the individual learning needs of the most able pupils. Opportunities are missed to offer them extra challenges during lessons.
- Middle leaders do not have a clear enough picture of the progress pupils are making in individual lessons or over the school year.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors had meetings with staff, groups of pupils and the Chair and other members of the Governing Body. The inspector also spoke to the school's local authority School Development Partner.
- The inspectors 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 inspectors observed teaching and learning in 24 lessons taught by 17 teachers and listened to groups of pupils read. In addition, the inspectors made a number of short visits to lessons.
- The headteacher and a phase leader conducted two joint observations of lessons with the inspectors. The inspectors also observed these leaders reporting back to teachers on their findings regarding the quality of learning and pupils' achievement in lessons.
- The inspectors took into account the 29 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors also spoke to parents and analysed the school's own questionnaire of parents' views.
- Thirty-nine staff completed questionnaires and the responses were analysed.

## Inspection team

Gordon Potter, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Philip Scott	Additional Inspector
Karen Holmes	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school. The numbers on roll have increased since the last inspection report.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well above average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and children that are looked after.)
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- There are a breakfast club and many after-school clubs, which are organised and managed by school staff.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment.
- The school shares its site with a playgroup which is managed by the governing body and subject to a separate inspection.
- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are taught through an approach to teaching and the curriculum which continues the best aspects of Early Years Foundation Stage practice.
- The headteacher is retiring in the summer after 25 years in post.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently outstanding, to raise standards and rates of pupils' progress further, by:
  - sharing the outstanding teaching practice that is in the school already
  - offering more interesting opportunities in mathematics for pupils to apply their skills in solving problems related to everyday life
  - offering pupils even more opportunities to write at length in English and in other subjects
  - using the school's detailed information about pupils' progress to set work which is more closely matched to pupils' needs, especially ensuring sufficient challenge to stretch the most able
  - improving pupils' handwriting skills.
- Increase the impact that middle leaders have on pupils' attainment and progress, by:
  - improving their skills, through effective use of training in analysing data and lesson observations, so they better understand the progress pupils are making in individual lessons and over the school year.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Most children start school with skills that are well below those typically expected for their age. Pupils make excellent progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 units. There is good teaching of number and calculation, writing and how to link letters and the sounds they make, to help pupils rapidly develop their early reading, writing and mathematical skills.
- As a result, standards at the end of Year 2 have improved in the last three years and are average in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2012, the gap in achievement between the pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium and other pupils in the school was narrow. They were one term behind in reading and half a year behind in mathematics and writing.
- At the end of Year 6, standards are typically average. Improvements in standards at the end of Year 2 have not had time to impact on attainment at the end of Year 6. However, pupils typically make good progress. In 2012, pupils in Year 6 had made outstanding progress in reading and writing in Key Stage 2.
- All pupils who were eligible for the pupil premium made at least expected progress in English and mathematics. In mathematics their attainment was in line with age-related expectations and in English it was slightly above. They were one term ahead of other pupils in the school in reading and mathematics and two terms ahead in writing. This success in ensuring good and outstanding progress for all groups of pupils shows the school's commitment to promoting equal opportunities and tackling discrimination.
- The work of pupils currently in Year 6 is below average. This is a year group with a high proportion of pupils who have special educational needs. They have made good progress from standards that were well below average at the end of Year 2.
- Inspection evidence shows that progress in reading is good. This is a result of a strong focus on reading and good, consistent teaching in how to link letters and the sounds they make to help pupils read words they are not used to. There is a strong and developing focus in all classes on helping pupils to enjoy books and read more often in school and at home.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers are very skilful at explaining what pupils are to learn and leading them through ways to do tasks. Lessons have interesting topics, a range of exciting activities and move at a brisk pace. Teachers involve pupils in using information technology and role play to explore ideas and solve problems. In these lessons, pupils learn quickly.
- All of these excellent approaches were seen in Year 1 in outstanding teaching of writing about the seaside. Teachers and teaching assistants engaged pupils in activities and skilfully questioned them about rocks, shells and seaweed. They encouraged pupils to express and develop their ideas and write poems using adjectives. Pupils made rapid progress.
- Pupils' work is regularly marked and helpfully tells them how successful they have been in their work and how to improve it; teachers give pupils time to act upon any advice they give. Teachers also use targets well so that pupils know what they need to do to reach the next level in their work.
- There is good teaching of mathematics, which offers pupils opportunities to improve their understanding of a wide range of mathematical skills and they make good progress. However, there are too few chances for pupils to practise their skills in mathematics in solving problems related to everyday life.
- Teachers check pupils' understanding and, with the help of very skilful teaching assistants, offer extra help as the lesson progresses. However, teachers do not use information about pupils' skills and abilities well enough to plan work that stretches the most able pupils or give them extra work that challenges them further during lessons.
- Teachers use pupils' reading and the many exciting topics they cover in a range of subjects as

the starting points for writing activities. As a result, pupils write regularly in English and in subjects across the curriculum and attainment has risen. However, teachers do not ensure pupils have enough opportunities to write at length. Despite a clear programme to teach handwriting skills, pupils' handwriting is not tidy enough or well enough formed.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**

- Pupils say that behaviour is excellent in their lessons. There are clear expectations and a consistent system of rewards and sanctions. As a result, pupils have a very clear understanding of how to behave well. Indeed, impeccable behaviour was evident in lessons during the inspection as well as around the school.
- The school's records of behaviour show that the behaviour of the vast majority of pupils has been excellent in the past three years. As a result, there have been no exclusions. Attendance is average and improving.
- Pupils play and work exceptionally well together. They respect and care for one another remarkably well. They are extremely polite to adults, eagerly talking about their school. They are extremely happy in school and enjoy their learning. Indeed, they are determined to succeed in their work. They develop social skills in the breakfast and after-school clubs.
- Pupils feel exceptionally safe. They are aware of different forms of bullying, including name-calling and cyber-bullying. However, they are adamant that there is no bullying. Indeed, they say that they do not need the type of 'buddy' system that other schools have because all pupils look after one another. The 'bullying box' introduced by the school council is very rarely used.
- The school council has helped to plan and raise funds to improve the playground and organises competitions and fund-raising for various charities. It has drawn up plans so pupils know how to keep fit and eat healthily.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- The headteacher has a very clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. While the self-evaluation summary he presented to the inspection was optimistic about the school's effectiveness, the in-depth evaluation seen in school reflected accurately the school's current position.
- The headteacher has acted determinedly since the last inspection to improve teaching and the curriculum. In particular, he has stuck to his belief that the activities-based approach to the Key Stage 1 curriculum was best for his pupils. He was correct. As a result, teaching has improved and standards have risen at the end of Year 2. Progress is good in all areas of the school. It was excellent in English for pupils in Year 6 in 2012.
- The headteacher and all phase leaders work well together. Indeed, there is strong teamwork and high morale across the school which ensure that all staff work together very well. On the headteacher's retirement, the deputy headteacher is to act as headteacher to ensure a smooth transition. She is very well informed about all aspects of the school and has the skills to move the school forward.
- Performance management is clearly focused on increasing the rates at which pupils make progress, improving the quality of teaching and raising standards. The headteacher has set demanding targets for teachers that have had an impact on all these areas. Teachers are very clear that they will only be rewarded when their pupils have achieved as well as, or better than, they should have done.
- Leaders regularly assess the quality of teaching and how it helps pupils to make good progress. They offer clear advice about how to improve teaching and teachers welcome and act upon this advice. This has ensured that teaching across school is consistently good or better. As yet, there have been few opportunities for sharing the outstanding practice that already exists within the school.
- However, some middle leaders are less clear about how to measure the progress pupils are

making in individual lessons. While there is much information about pupils' attainment, some middle leaders are less skilled in using it to understand the amount of progress pupils have made over the school year.

- The curriculum is highly innovative. While it is clearly focused on developing pupils' basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics, it also provides many opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.
- The local authority works very effectively with the school. It has offered helpful guidance on appointment procedures and advice that has led to improvements in the curriculum and the quality of teaching across school.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body has an extremely clear view of the strengths of the school and has acted determinedly to tackle the areas identified for improvement in the last inspection report. Governors make regular visits to classes to see how well pupils are learning and how well subjects are taught, and they feed back systematically to other governors. The governing body skilfully manages the budget of this expanding school. Governors monitor the performance of all staff. They have a clear understanding of school data and have ensured that the gap in achievement between pupils eligible for the pupil premium grant and other pupils in school has closed. The Chair is very well informed about the school and highly involved in its everyday life. He offers extremely focused leadership so that all governors carry out their allotted roles highly effectively. Governors and staff have received appropriate training, for example to ensure that pupils are kept safe from harm and to improve teaching. Leadership arrangements to follow the headteacher's retirement in the summer have been very well prepared. The governing body is determined to ensure that it appoints an excellent headteacher.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	108595
<b>Local authority</b>	North Tyneside
<b>Inspection number</b>	400992

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	363
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Bill Appleby
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kevin Arthur
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 November 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 2007246
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