

Sunnybrow Primary School

Hunwick Lane, Crook, County Durham, DL15 0LT

Inspection dates 21–22 May 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.

- Children make good progress in the Reception class from their low starting points. Pupils of all ages achieve well and make particularly fast progress in mathematics.
- Pupils behave well and know how to keep themselves safe. They are polite and considerate to others.
- The quality of teaching is good and sometimes outstanding. Teachers' use of assessment to plan 'next steps' in pupils' learning and meet their individual needs is a particular strength.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership. All school leaders are highly committed to ensuring that pupils make as much progress as they are able.
- Governance is good and provides effective support and challenge to the school to improve further. Several governors volunteer to help in the school and so gain first-hand knowledge of the quality of teaching and how well pupils are achieving.
- The curriculum has improved markedly and pupils now have good opportunities to develop their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects, such as history, science and geography.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Progress in writing is not quite as fast as in reading and mathematics. Pupils' skills in grammar, punctuation and spelling are not as good as they could be.
- Teachers do not always ask challenging enough questions to promote pupils' thinking further.
- Although attendance has improved to broadly average, there are still a few pupils who do not attend school as often as they should.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed seven lessons, made a number of brief visits to other lessons and heard some pupils read.
- The inspector held meetings with pupils, subject leaders, members of the governing body and the headteacher and held a telephone discussion with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents including records of the progress of pupils, teachers' planning, pupils' work, leaders' monitoring records, minutes of governing body meetings, reports from the local authority and documents relating to attendance and safeguarding.
- There were not enough responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) at the time of the inspection but the inspector took account of the views expressed by parents and carers in the school's own survey.

Inspection team

Christine Inkster, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well above average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for children in local authority care, children from service families and those known to be eligible for free school meals).
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage and none speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, supported through school action is above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- Pupil mobility is above the national average and more children leave or join the school midway through their primary education than is typical.
- All classes except for the Reception class comprise two year groups.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher took up her substantive post this term, although she has been acting headteacher since September 2012. Two of the school leaders have just returned from a period of unavoidable absence.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to outstanding by:
 - ensuring teachers ask more challenging questions to enable pupils to think more deeply about their learning
 - improving pupils' skills in grammar, punctuation and spelling to increase rates of progress in writing.
- Improve attendance further to above average by engaging parents and carers more fully in ensuring their children come to school regularly.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start in the Reception class with skills and abilities well below those typical for children of their age. This is particularly true of their communication, language and literacy and personal, social and emotional skills. They make good progress and by the time they enter Year 1, most children are working slightly below the expectations for their age in all areas of learning.
- Attainment at the end of Year 6 shows a rising trend over time. Attainment in English is broadly average and improving and attainment in mathematics rose to well above average in 2012. This represents at least good and sometimes outstanding progress from pupils' individual starting points. Caution is needed when considering test results as cohorts of pupils are very small and each child represents a high percentage. In addition, the high numbers of pupils joining the school mid-key stage make comparisons between year groups and key stages less meaningful than in larger schools.
- Pupils achieve well in reading. The results of the national screening check on how well pupils in Year 1 know sounds and the letters they represent (phonics) were below average in 2012. Steps have already been taken to address the needs of the very few pupils who did not meet the standard. Attainment in reading in Key Stage 1 is improving and was broadly average in 2012.
- Pupils across all age groups are keen readers and use their phonic skills well to tackle any unfamiliar words. They say they thoroughly enjoy reading and can talk knowledgeably about their favourite authors. They read fluently and with good comprehension. They make good progress and by the end of Year 6 in 2012, almost all pupils attained the expected Level 4 and some attained the higher Level 5.
- Pupils' progress in writing is not quite as rapid as in reading and mathematics with fewer pupils making more than expected progress. This is because their skills in grammar, punctuation and spelling are not quite as good as they should be. Pupils now have more opportunities to write at length and are able to practise their skills more regularly when completing work in other subjects.
- Achievement in mathematics has improved greatly since the last inspection. All groups of pupils make at least good progress with some pupils, including boys and those known to be eligible for free school meals, making outstanding progress. Pupils are able to apply their skills very well, particularly when solving problems in real-life situations.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs also make good progress in English and some make outstanding progress in mathematics from their starting points. Work provided for them is matched closely to their individual needs and they receive high quality targeted support from well-trained teaching assistants.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals make similar progress to their peers in English and often better progress than their peers in mathematics. The school has managed the use of the funding well to ensure that these pupils make as much progress as they can, through providing additional teaching support. Assessments for 2012 showed that pupils known to be eligible for free school meals attained similar results to other pupils in English but were approximately 16 months ahead of other pupils in mathematics. Funding is also used to ensure that these pupils can join in any extra activities and visits and this ensures equality of opportunity.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is good and some is outstanding. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and set challenging learning targets for pupils. Each pupil has a staff mentor who monitors their progress closely and assists them in understanding what they have to do to improve. Pupils know what National Curriculum level they are working at and this information is also shared with parents and carers on a regular basis. Pupils are able to assess

for themselves how well they are doing.

- Day-to-day assessments are used exceptionally well by staff to plan work at the right level for each pupil. Teachers promptly deal with any misconceptions and ensure any gaps in previous learning are addressed. This enables pupils to make rapid progress, particularly those pupils who are new to the school. The quality of marking and feedback are also effective and pupils are given time to respond to feedback, usually at the beginning of the next lesson.
- Teaching assistants are highly skilled in supporting different groups of pupils in lessons, particularly those pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs and those who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium. They plan closely with the teachers to ensure that the individual needs of pupils are met so that these pupils can make the maximum amount of progress.
- Teachers' questioning skills are good and pupils are expected to give reasons for their answers. However, on some occasions, questions are not always challenging enough to enable pupils to think more deeply.
- Some teaching is outstanding; pupils say they thoroughly enjoy their lessons and that learning is fun. This was shown in an English lesson where short video clips of 'Gulliver's Travels' were used to stimulate pupils' writing. The teacher rightly identified that pupils needed further reinforcement in the use of direct speech. Pupils took great pride in their very good quality writing, but were also very comfortable when the teacher used some samples of writing where minor errors had been made to discuss these as learning points. Pupils clearly understand that correcting any errors or misconceptions helps them to learn more.
- In another lesson, pupils successfully used their persuasive writing skills to write to the local council to address issues of pollution in rivers and the sea, linking their writing to the geography topic. Pupils showed a very good understanding of the issues involved.
- Work in pupils' books shows that they are practising their writing skills well in other subjects, but that there is room for improvement in respect of pupils' skills in grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- Pupils' work and the school's data show they are making very rapid progress in mathematics and attainment is rising. This is because of the high quality of teaching in mathematics lessons, for example, where pupils use their mathematical skills to solve problems. This was shown in a lesson in Years 1 and 2 where pupils were using their skills in measuring to find a suitable home for 'Barry, the Hermit Crab'.
- Children in the Reception class make good progress in their learning, particularly in developing their skills in reading, including learning letters and the sounds they represent (phonics). There are a wide range of interesting and stimulating activities provided for them and effective adult questioning helps children develop their speaking and listening skills well. Children are able to work well independently both indoors and outdoors and they are developing good social skills by learning to play together and share equipment.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils say that behaviour has improved over time. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good and they show respect and consideration towards adults and each other. They readily take on responsibilities such as playground 'buddies' and older pupils enjoy looking after the younger ones.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and are interested and motivated in their lessons. They are keen to respond and take a pride in their work.
- Attendance has improved and is now broadly average; persistent absence has reduced. However, the school is not complacent and sends constant reminders to parents and carers about the importance of good attendance so that pupils do not miss out on important learning. School leaders have sought the help of other agencies to help tackle the small amount of persistent absence which remains.
- The results of the school's own survey of parental views shows that parents and carers feel that

their children are kept safe. Pupils say they feel safe and they have a very good understanding of fire, road and water safety. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe when using computers and social media.

- Pupils are adamant that there is little or no bullying. They say there are very occasional incidents of name-calling but that these are promptly dealt with by staff. Pupils are sure they can talk to 'buddies' or any adults within the school if they have a worry or concern. Pupils are arranged into 'behaviour teams' which meet each week. The team captains in Year 6 record any concerns that pupils may have, pupils' successes and rewards are celebrated and they discuss ways in which behaviour can improve in the following week.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides strong leadership and is determined to improve the school. Other leaders and all staff share her high ambitions for the school and are working closely as a team to help make further improvements. There are now strengths in the way leaders and managers check and evaluate the work of the school, identifying any areas of underachievement accurately and taking prompt action to address any issues. The success of the actions is checked to ensure they are having an impact on pupils' learning.
- Leaders have a good understanding of how much progress pupils are making through regular 'pupil progress' meetings where staff are held accountable for pupils' achievement. The performance of staff is monitored closely. Teachers do not progress through pay scales unless they are able to demonstrate the impact of their teaching on pupils' achievement and only if they have met their targets.
- There are good opportunities for training and for staff to share good and outstanding practice. The headteacher and governors have taken decisive action to address any teaching which was not good.
- The school improvement plan identifies ambitious, but realistic targets. All staff and governors were involved in creating the plan which identifies appropriate priorities, actions and timescales. All the areas for improvement identified at the last inspection have been addressed effectively, particularly in the use of assessment data and the re-organisation of the curriculum to ensure it is more vibrant and stimulating. Pupils are now confident learners. School self-evaluation is accurate.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity well and tackles discrimination by ensuring that all pupils have the opportunity to succeed and have their views taken into account. All pupils are included in all that the school has to offer. The headteacher is keen to involve parents and carers more fully in the work of the school and ensures they receive regular information on how well their children are learning.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well, particularly through the improved curriculum. Their spiritual development is promoted effectively through assemblies and religious education lessons. They tackle issues such as when writing to local councillors about pollution in geography lessons and take responsibility as members of the eco-group and anti-bullying group. They have developed links with schools in a number of other countries through the Comenius project which has promoted pupils' understanding of cultures different to their own.
- The curriculum has improved markedly since the last inspection. There is a strong focus on developing basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics and pupils have many opportunities to practice their literacy and numeracy skills through many aspects of the curriculum. They benefit from an increasing number of educational visits, including a residential visit for older pupils, which ensures they have first-hand experiences that widen their knowledge and understanding of the world. There are a range of extra-curricular activities including sport and gardening clubs which pupils participate in with enthusiasm.
- The local authority has provided good support for the school, particularly during the induction of the new headteacher and the absence of the assistant headteacher and another leader. All three leaders in the school have had the opportunity to take on the role as assistant headteacher, which has strengthened their leadership skills. Training has been provided for staff, such as in

phonics teaching and they have had the opportunity to work with staff from other schools at local authority 'network' meetings.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Members of the governing body are well informed about all aspects of the school through detailed and comprehensive reports from the headteacher. They provide good support and challenge, asking pertinent questions about the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. Several governors act as volunteers in the classrooms and therefore have a good understanding of any strengths or areas for improvement. They can see first-hand how well pupils are progressing in their learning. Governors are reorganising the way they check and evaluate the work of the school so that there is a more coherent approach involving all members of the governing body. They have ensured that safeguarding systems are rigorous and that they meet all current regulatory requirements. The governing body has been effective in overseeing the arrangements for relating teachers' pay to their performance. They have a good understanding of the impact of the pupil premium funding on the outcomes for these pupils.

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	114060
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	401406

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	71
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Meshiel Brown
Headteacher	Suzanne Binks
Date of previous school inspection	10 December 2009
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