

West Park Primary School

Coniscliffe Road, Hartlepool, County Durham, TS26 0BU

Inspection dates 12–13 June 2013

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| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Outstanding | 1 |
| | 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.

- Pupils make good progress from their respective starting points, reaching high standards in reading, writing and mathematics by Year 6.
- The progress of individual pupils is carefully tracked so that those needing extra help receive the support that they need. As a result, all groups of pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- Children make a good start to their learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage where strong relationships ensure children quickly grow in confidence and independence.
- Teachers plan interesting lessons that promote pupils' good learning over time.
- Parents and pupils are confident that behaviour is good. Pupils say that they are very happy in school because staff look after them well.
- Pupils demonstrate their initiative and responsibility in the significant contributions that they make to the life of the school.
- Leaders and governors monitor the work of the school in order to accurately identify areas for improvement. Action taken has been successful in maintaining high standards in reading and further raising standards in writing and mathematics.
- The rich and varied curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is good but there are variations. The approaches used by some teachers, which promote a rapid pace to learning, are not embedded in all classes. As a result, rates of progress vary across the school.
- Managers with responsibility for subjects do not use information about pupils' progress sufficiently well to ensure that any dips in progress are swiftly identified and timely action is taken to address them.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 20 lessons or parts of lessons and the support provided to individuals and groups of pupils within and beyond classrooms.
- Inspectors talked to senior leaders including governors, groups of pupils, teachers and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work and examined a range of documents, including the school's own analysis of its performance, achievement information and safeguarding procedures.
- The views of 66 parents who responded to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) were taken into account.

Inspection team

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|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| Janet Bennett, Lead inspector | Additional Inspector |
| Lesley Richardson | Additional Inspector |
| Patrick Hargreaves | Additional Inspector |

Full report

Information about this school

- West Park is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well below average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below average.
- Many fewer pupils leave or join the school midway through their primary years than is usually the case.
- The school meets the government's 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?

- Further improve teaching by extending the most effective approaches, already used by some teachers in school, to all classes by ensuring in particular that all teachers consistently:
 - use questioning that challenges pupils' thinking and deepens their understanding
 - match activities precisely to pupils' next steps in learning
 - make regular checks during lessons to identify and address misconceptions
 - ensure that pupils respond to marking to improve their work.
- Further improve progress by ensuring that managers with responsibility for subjects make greater use of information from the analysis of assessment data and work in pupils' books so that any decline in progress is accurately and swiftly identified and addressed.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter school in Nursery with a broad range of skills but overall these are higher than might typically be expected for their age. They make a good start to their learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage and by the time they enter Year 1 they have reached a good level of development in all areas of learning with many children exceeding this.
- Pupils' skills are built upon well in Key Stage 1 so that standards at the end of Year 2 are well above average. In recent years, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in writing has been lower than in reading and mathematics. However, action taken by leaders has secured improvements so that more pupils are currently reaching the higher Level 3 in this subject.
- Learning is promoted well in Key Stage 2 so that pupils reach high standards by the end of Year 6. Improved opportunities for writing, particularly for boys, and greater consistency in teachers' assessment of mathematics, has increased the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in these subjects.
- Although pupils make good progress from their respective starting points, the pace of their learning varies. Learning accelerates in upper Key Stage 2 where teaching consistently focuses sharply on pupils' next steps in learning.
- The progress of all pupils is carefully tracked and effective support is provided for those who need it. As a result, all pupils, including those supported at school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress and achieve well. This reflects the commitment of staff to tackling any form of discrimination and actively promoting equal opportunities for all pupils.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to ensure that eligible pupils requiring help with their learning receive the support they need. Because the number of eligible pupils is small, comparisons between their performance with that of others in school is unreliable and shows significant variations from year to year. However, leaders carefully track progress to identify gaps in attainment and take appropriate action to address these.
- The well-planned curriculum which provides rich, varied and interesting experiences contributes well to pupils' enjoyment of school and to their good achievement across a range of subjects.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is usually good and is sometimes outstanding.
- Where teaching is most effective:
 - teachers use questioning exceptionally well to challenge pupils' thinking and deepen their understanding
 - activities are precisely matched to pupils' next steps in learning so that all pupils are challenged and the pace of learning is rapid
 - regular checks are made of learning in lessons in order to address misconceptions and to use the ideas of individuals to help others to learn.
- However, these highly effective approaches are not used consistently by all teachers. For example, learning slowed in a mathematics lesson when pupils were occupied for too long in colouring in their work which reduced the time they spent practising their measuring skills.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage staff provide a wide range of interesting activities that engage children in purposeful and productive play. They use questioning well to explain tasks and to promote children's understanding. However, occasionally the tasks set and the range of equipment provided do not challenge all children sufficiently well and so the pace of learning slows.
- Across the school teachers consistently:
 - provide a supportive climate for learning so that pupils are confident to spontaneously share

their views and opinions

- provide good opportunities for pupils to work together, learning from each other and refining their thinking through productive discussion
 - plan interesting activities that make lessons meaningful and use resources that inspire and engage pupils.
- For example, in a religious education lesson the teacher made use of a beautifully bound bible to develop pupils' respect for highly valued, sacred artefacts. This prompted pupils to reflect deeply on their own feelings and values, contributing exceptionally well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
 - Work is regularly marked and provides pupils with personal targets for improvement. Where this is most effective pupils have opportunities to respond to this guidance but these opportunities are not frequent enough.
 - Support staff make a good contribution to learning by ensuring that all pupils receive the help they need to be fully involved in lessons.
 - Reading is taught systematically and teachers effectively promote very positive attitudes to reading across all groups of pupils irrespective of their starting points. Improved teaching of sounds and letters for the youngest pupils ensures that they have the necessary skills to tackle unfamiliar words. The school works productively with parents which results in pupils reading widely and often, both in school and at home.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- In the Early Years Foundation Stage staff provide good role models, contributing well to children's personal and social development. As a result, children play productively together and demonstrate good levels of independence.
- A positive climate exists in school because pupils get along well with one another.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are consistently good, evidenced by the pride they take in their work and their good attendance. Attendance across the school is above average.
- Pupils make a significant contribution to the life of the school, for example by taking responsibility as members of the eco team, tending the school garden or being 'Playground Friends'. They show high levels of initiative and maturity in the fund-raising events they initiate both to support charities and for improvements to their school. For example, some Year 6 pupils bake cakes to sell in school in order to raise money for the school's newly planned sports pitch.
- In the main, pupils' behaviour makes a strong contribution to their learning. However, in a very small minority of lessons, particularly when tasks are not well matched to prior learning and staff do not manage behaviour well, some pupils disengage and as a result, their off-task behaviour slows the pace of learning.
- Pupils say they feel very safe in school and parents are confident that children are cared for well.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe, including when using the internet.

The leadership and management are good

- Challenging targets are set for pupils and performance management is used well by senior leaders to hold teachers accountable for the progress pupils make.
- When progress slows for individual pupils, teachers identify the action they will take to ensure that pupils quickly get back on track with their learning.
- Senior leaders accurately identify priorities for school improvement. For example, improved opportunities for writing across a range of subjects have inspired pupils, particularly boys, to apply their skills with enthusiasm and to good effect. This has contributed well to improved standards in this subject and reflects the school's good capacity to build further upon its successes.
- Managers with responsibility for individual subjects undertake an appropriate range of checks

and the actions they take improve what is provided. For example, consistent approaches to measuring how much progress pupils have made in mathematics have improved teachers' ability to tailor lessons that build well on pupils' prior learning. This has been especially successful in upper Key Stage 2.

- Assessment data are regularly used by senior leaders to check the progress that pupils make overall. However, this information is not shared well enough with managers with responsibility for individual subjects so that it informs the actions they take. As a result, there are variations in progress across the school. In addition, the work in pupils' books is regularly reviewed, but this does not consistently focus on the progress that pupils are making, therefore, the most effective approaches used by some teachers, which result in pupils' rapid learning, have not been successfully embedded in all classes.
- The curriculum is well organised and provides rich opportunities for learning both indoors and outside. Activities motivate pupils and provide good opportunities for them to become successful, independent learners. Pupils say that the experiences provided inspire them to produce work of which they are proud. Pupils have a very mature understanding of the wider world and reflect deeply on moral issues, illustrating the outstanding contribution that the school makes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors draw well upon their respective skills and experiences in their leadership of the school and the contribution they make to the curriculum.
 - They draw well on information from meetings with staff and visits to classrooms to gain insights into teaching and learning.
 - They regularly seek the views of parents and take action as a result. For example, the vast majority of parents are satisfied with improvements that have been made to strengthen communications between home and school. However, a small minority of parents feel this could be further improved.
 - Governors have a good understanding of performance data and use this to hold leaders to account for the standards pupils reach.
 - They make prudent financial decisions to ensure that all pupils are well supported, including those pupils that are eligible for pupil premium funding.
 - Safeguarding arrangements are robust and fully meet all statutory requirements.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| 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

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| Unique reference number | 111613 |
| Local authority | Hartlepool |
| Inspection number | 413211 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 361 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Ray Priestman |
| Headteacher | Mark Parry |
| Date of previous school inspection | 20 January 2009 |
| Telephone number | 01429 282090 |
| Fax number | 01429 282090 |
| Email address | admin.westpark@school.hartlepool.gov.uk |

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