

# Biddick Hall Infants' School

Galsworthy Road, South Shields, Tyne and Wear, NE34 9JD

**Inspection dates** 19–20 June 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- Pupils achieve well, especially in reading, writing and the use of computers.
- There is an outstanding atmosphere for learning throughout the school.
- When pupils do not make the expected progress in reading the school provides very effective teaching to help them catch up.
- Consistently good and sometimes exceptional teaching enables pupils to make good progress between Nursery and Year 2.
- The school consistently provides outstanding guidance and support to parents and their children.
- Pupils really enjoy school, behave exceptionally well and display excellent attitudes to learning. They are eager to participate in the excellent range of activities that teachers prepare for them.
- Attendance has improved substantially in response to the school's very effective monitoring procedures but it is still just below average.
- Good leadership and management at all levels, including governance, ensure that pupils consistently receive good-quality education and achieve well.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although teaching is at least good overall, there is insufficient outstanding classroom practice to lift pupils' progress to the highest levels. The marking of pupils' work requires improvement.
- Annual planning for improvement is good but lacks easily measurable numerical targets and timescales, especially for further raising the quality of teaching.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of 16 lessons, including three joint observations with the headteacher.
- They held meetings with the headteacher, representatives of the governing body, members of staff, groups of pupils, parents, and conducted a telephone discussion with a representative of the local authority.
- They looked at many documents, including governing body minutes, school self-evaluation, development planning, records of pupils' progress, local authority monitoring reports and safeguarding procedures.
- They took account of responses to the staff questionnaire. There were not enough responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) to inform the inspection.

## Inspection team

John Paddick, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Deborah Bailey

Additional Inspector

Patrick Hargreaves

Additional Inspector

# Full report

## Information about this school

- The school is of average size.
- Most pupils are White British.
- There are very few pupils from minority ethnic groups.
- There is a well-above-average proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium (the pupil premium is the additional funding provided by the government to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and the children of service families).
- Pupils supported by school action, school action plus or a statement of special educational needs make up above-average proportions of the school roll.
- The school provides a breakfast club and an after-school club.
- A few pupils receive specialist education at the local authority assessment unit.

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

- Improve the overall quality of teaching from good to outstanding by:
  - planning to get more done in the time available in some lessons and so increase the pace of learning
  - eliminating over-lengthy explanations and instructions
  - using the existing outstanding practice as a model for teachers to learn from
  - ensuring that marking provides pupils with a clear indication of how to improve their work.
- Strengthen school development planning so that it includes easily measurable numerical targets and timescales for increasing the proportion of outstanding teaching and accelerating pupils' progress from good to outstanding.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Inspectors observed pupils of all ages making consistently good and sometimes outstanding progress in class. Checks on written work show that pupils make sustained good progress over time in writing, mathematics and a wide range of other subjects. Observations of pupils confirm that they also make good progress in reading, listening and speaking.
- Children make an excellent start in the Nursery. They make outstanding progress in personal and social education and rapidly improve their communication, language and literacy skills.
- On entry to the Nursery children's development is well below expected levels for their ages. At least good and often outstanding progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage means that by the time children join Year 1 they have substantially but not completely closed the gap on expected attainment levels.
- Good progress throughout Years 1 and 2 in reading, writing and mathematics ensures that pupils consistently reach average attainment levels in these areas by the time they are ready to transfer to junior school at the beginning of Year 3. Pupils generally take a pride in their work and set it out well. However, there are instances of progress with handwriting in Year 2 being rather slow.
- Year 2 National Curriculum assessments in reading, writing, and mathematics have been broadly average for several years and reflect the good progress that pupils make in the school. In many cases progress is quite exceptional, given the potential barriers to learning that some pupils face. Assessments in mathematics dipped slightly in 2012 but have recovered to previous average levels this year.
- The school uses pupil premium funding exceptionally well because pupils known to be eligible for free school meals reach the same levels in reading and writing as other pupils by Year 2. Funding provides extra staffing to enable pupils to receive effective support in small groups if they fall behind.
- As a group, pupils with disabilities or special educational needs attain more highly in English and mathematics than similar pupils do nationally. The good progress that they make reflects the effectiveness of the very good levels of support that the school provides for them. The small group of pupils who receive specialist education off site also make good progress, often to the extent that they can eventually be integrated into mainstream education.
- Pupils' broadly average attainment in English and mathematics and their competence with computers, coupled with their excellent attitudes to work, mean that they are well prepared for their transfer to junior school.

### The quality of teaching is good

- The school's records show that teaching is consistently good and often outstanding. This fully matches inspection evidence. Evidence from joint lesson observations with the headteacher confirms that the school's judgements are rigorous and accurate.
- Teachers demonstrate fully the qualities outlined in the national Teaching Standards. They have a good understanding of the subjects that they teach, although some are more confident with literacy than with mathematical topics. Teachers' class management is excellent and they organise a wide range of interesting activities well. They have high expectations of behaviour and consistently generate an excellent learning atmosphere. This means that pupils can listen to each other or to the teacher or concentrate on their written work free of distraction. Well-managed classes mean that pupils settle very well into the activities that their teachers and classroom assistants prepare for them.
- Where teaching is of the highest quality, pupils make very impressive progress in developing skills and understanding in a very short time. Examples of this are to be found throughout the school but very frequently in the Nursery. Here teachers and their assistants display exceptional

skill in fully engaging a large class of over 30 children. Their approach is so compelling and magnetic that the children are eager to get to school and anticipate activities that they know will be really fun and exciting.

- The difference between the good and outstanding teaching lies largely in the pace of learning and how much is achieved in the time available. Teachers are good at matching work to pupils' abilities, often through the organisation of several smaller groups within the class, but where teaching is outstanding pupils work much more quickly because the pace of the lesson is substantially higher than where it is good. Occasionally, teachers take rather a long time with explanations. This causes the pace of learning to dip.
- The marking of pupils' work requires some improvement. Most work is marked and pupils' errors frequently identified. Teachers are good at writing comments which praise pupils' efforts. However, there are several instances of weak presentation and untidy handwriting not being adequately challenged in Year 2, and comments on pupils' work do not as a general rule tell them what the next steps are for improving it. Some written comments on younger pupils' work are too long and difficult for them to read and understand.

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

- Pupils display excellent attitudes to learning. The foundations are firmly laid in the Nursery where children soon get used to routines and expected patterns of conduct. In Reception and Years 1 and 2 teachers build rapidly on these secure foundations. They continue to expect impeccable conduct and good attitudes, but because they can trust pupils to work alone they increasingly give them more independence in their learning. Evidence strongly suggests that pupils' behaviour observed during the inspection is typical of the school on a day-to-day basis. There is no evidence of racist incidents or bullying.
- The staff questionnaire and a survey of parents' views confirm that pupils' behaviour is consistently outstanding.
- Attendance is improving and persistent absence reducing substantially. The school makes every effort to reach parents when pupils are absent, even to the extent of knocking on doors when there is no response to telephone calls. There have been many recent successes where pupils' poor attendance has become good. Excellent care, guidance and support mean that each pupil is really valued and treated as a vitally important individual. Members of staff go the extra mile at this school to ensure that no stone is left unturned in a relentless and effective drive to ensure that pupils get a good start to their education. It is for this reason that the school is over-subscribed and has such a good reputation for success with pupils who have special educational needs or disabilities.
- Pupils say that they feel perfectly safe in school and recognise that members of staff are always willing to help them when problems arise. Pupils understand how to keep safe and have learnt about a wide range of potential risks to their welfare outside school.

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

- The headteacher leads the school very well. She shares her vision for good-quality education effectively with the whole staff. She is passionate about giving every child, especially those who experience barriers to their progress, a really firm start to their educational journey. Parents and members of staff fully recognise this quality and all speak highly of her. Members of staff are proud to be associated with the school and their morale is excellent.
- Since the previous inspection the school has been very effective in ensuring that pupils have good access to computers and that the more-able pupils are better challenged in mathematics. The assessment of pupils' work in class is also much better and leads to pupils often working in groups of similar ability. Hence, the school has good capacity to improve further.
- Procedures for gaining a clear picture of the school's performance are effective. Managers know exactly where pupils are in terms of attainment and the progress they are making. Good-quality

leadership of teaching means that regular lesson observations provide members of staff with accurate feedback and areas for improvement. Performance management arrangements are secure and effective. A good tracking system clearly identifies pupils who are not making enough progress and triggers extra help for them until they catch up again.

- The school's plans for making improvements are written out clearly and have a high profile in meetings at all levels. Monitoring of intended developments is effective in ensuring that they materialise. However, the plans themselves do not contain easily measurable targets and timescales to ensure that teaching moves from good overall to outstanding.
- The consistently good and often outstanding teaching provides strong evidence of the school's good leadership. Even so, not enough use is made of the outstanding teaching to act as a model for other teachers.
- Equality of opportunity has an exceptionally high profile because it lies at the very heart of the school's daily operation. Its success is reflected in the way that pupils supported by the pupil premium reach the same levels of attainment in reading and writing as other pupils. It is also reflected in the good and frequently outstanding progress that pupils with disabilities or special educational needs make. There are very many instances where the school has successfully intervened where families have needed support and advice in ensuring that their children thrive educationally.
- Safeguarding procedures meet all requirements.
- A good curriculum provides pupils with wide-ranging opportunities, experiences, visits, extra activities and hearing about the experiences of visitors. It enables pupils to make good progress in the four years that they are in the school and promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- The headteacher values the support provided by the local authority because it provides an alternative appraisal of the school's performance and the opportunity to carry out joint lesson observations.
- The school takes every opportunity to involve parents fully in the daily life of the school. They have the opportunity to discuss matters with members of staff when they need to, attend some assemblies and go to the community cafe which is run by parent volunteers. The very-well-run daily breakfast and after-school clubs provide a safe and secure environment for pupils to socialise and play together at the beginning and end of the school day.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are effective. They have a good general understanding of the school's strong features, including teaching, and where improvements still need to be made. In ensuring that robust performance management procedures are in place they are effective in ensuring that salary progressions and promotions are merited. They understand why pupils progress well but their detailed knowledge of how pupils' attainment and progress in their school compare with other schools nationally is an area for further development.

## 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>	108682
<b>Local authority</b>	South Tyneside
<b>Inspection number</b>	412673

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>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	251
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	K Cannon
<b>Headteacher</b>	Myra Edwards
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 January 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 4244859
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