

Eslington Primary School

Hazel Road, Gateshead, NE8 2EP

Inspection dates 12–13 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Almost all pupils make expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics and many make good or outstanding progress. This outstanding achievement is the result of pupils rapidly developing very positive attitudes to learning and by making a very good response to teachers' high expectations.
- Teachers and their assistants are well-qualified and expert in supporting pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. They are very effective in helping pupils learn and make progress, particularly in literacy and numeracy.
- Teachers assess pupils' learning thoroughly and plan lessons meticulously. Work challenges pupils and is closely matched to their point in learning.
- Teacher mark pupils' work carefully and give them good advice on how to improve. However, some teaching was not outstanding because very occasionally pupils were not given the support they needed to meet the high expectation teachers set for them.
- Pupils enjoy school and are regular attenders. The very good relationship with staff helps their self-confidence and ensures that they quickly adopt the school's positive values. Pupils feel very safe and their behaviour rapidly improves.
- The excellence seen throughout the school, the outstanding outcomes achieved for pupils and the continuous work on further improvement are driven by the high aspirations of the headteacher and senior leadership team. They are a powerful and highly competent leadership who have embedded high expectations in every aspect of the school's work.
- Leaders' and governors' thorough checks on pupils' progress and on the quality of teaching ensure a constant sharp focus on the improvement of both. However, there is not close enough attention paid to how well some teaching helps pupils cope with the challenge of their work.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited nine lessons and observed all of the school's seven teachers. The headteacher joined the inspector in observing six of the nine lessons.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, representatives of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. The inspector spoke informally to pupils during lessons.
- A sample of pupils' work in writing and mathematics was checked and the inspector met with a small group of Year 1 pupils to hear them read.
- The school documentation scrutinised included data on pupils' attainment and progress, the school development plan, policies and procedures for safeguarding pupils and the school's own evaluation of its work.
- The inspector took account of the views of 12 parents who completed Ofsted's on-line questionnaire (Parent View) as well as outcomes from the school's own surveys of parents and pupils.

Inspection team

Alan Lemon, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a primary school for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The very large majority of pupils have a statement of special educational needs.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and the large majority are boys. A significant proportion of pupils are involved with social services and other agencies. A small number of pupils are looked after by the local authority.
- In addition to the 30 pupils permanently on the school's roll there are seven pupils who attend but remain on the rolls of their mainstream primary schools. These pupils present social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The school provides them with education and support while their needs are assessed.
- Pupils are admitted to the school throughout the year and they are at all points in their primary education. Nearly a half of the pupils currently on roll were admitted to the school in September 2013.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported through the pupil premium is very high. 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.
- The headteacher is temporarily away from school and in the meantime the deputy headteacher is acting headteacher.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - ensuring that all teachers pay close attention to how well pupils are managing the challenge of their work and give support when they are seen to struggle and the pace of learning slows
 - leaders, when checking teaching, observe whether teachers intervene in good time to support pupils who are having difficulty with their work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- From low starting points nearly all pupils make the progress expected in reading, writing and mathematics. The large majority of pupils make good or outstanding progress in each subject. As a result, achievement across the school is outstanding.
- Teachers' expectations for pupils' progress are based upon challenging targets. The school's high expectations for what pupils should achieve, matched by the exceptional progress they make, contribute significantly to minimising the inequality that would otherwise arise from academic underperformance.
- The learning and progress taking place in lessons, that seen in pupils' books and shown through the school's tracking, confirm over time that all groups of pupils, including the few pupils on the rolls of other schools, are performing exceptionally well.
- Pupils on the school's roll for most of their primary education make up most of those whose progress is more than expected, even though their attainment remains below average. By the end of Year 6, the most-able pupils achieve average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. A few attain an above-average standard in English and mathematics which, from their low starting points, is an exceptional achievement.
- The pupils who have spent fewer years at this school still make rapid progress during this time in reading, writing and mathematics. This considerably narrows the gap in their attainment and together with vastly improved attitudes to learning prepares them well for secondary school.
- In Years 1 and 2, pupils make very good progress in developing good attitudes to learning and acquiring a range of learning skills such as communication and language as well as important social skills for learning like turn-taking, paying attention and concentrating on their work.
- Many of these pupils start school well behind in reading but quickly improve by learning to link letters and the sounds they make. They try hard to read and tackle new and difficult words by effectively linking letters and sounds. Their skill, confidence and accuracy in reading rapidly increase and this improves their interest in and enjoyment of books. Many older pupils read effectively, extracting information from text and interpreting meaning from stories and factual accounts.
- Writing topics capture boys' interest, especially as they have had a part in choosing these. As a result, writing is enjoyed and carried out enthusiastically. Handwriting, grammar and language improve rapidly and increasingly pupils learn to write clearly and expressively.
- Over time, pupils systematically build mathematical knowledge and skills. They work methodically and set out their calculations clearly, neatly and accurately.
- Most pupils' achievement is supported through the extra pupil premium funding. Overall, from low starting points, these pupils are able to significantly improve their reading, writing and mathematics. In particular, the extra teaching given to the lowest-attaining pupils and those who have the greatest difficulty learning numbers and to read and write is very effective in raising standards.
- Short periods of intensive individual work using specialist approaches for reading, writing and mathematics boost progress. A wide range of key skills are covered very effectively in a short time and pupils catch up quickly. In 2013, over the period of a year, two thirds of these pupils progressed in reading, writing and mathematics at a rate equivalent to or better than that seen in most primary schools.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- All of the teaching seen was good or outstanding. Over time, teaching is outstanding because of the exceptional impact it has on pupils' very rapid progress. It also ensures that they develop highly positive attitudes to learning. High quality teaching results in pupils overcoming much of

what has slowed their learning. It prepares some for a successful return to mainstream school and prepares them all very well for secondary school.

- Teaching gains its exceptional strength from teachers' very good subject expertise and their assistants' knowledge and skill in supporting pupils' learning. Expertise in teaching literacy and numeracy is very well-developed. The approaches used for teaching literacy and numeracy are very effective in helping those pupils who find learning more difficult than most.
- Teachers and their assistants are outstandingly adept at managing pupils' behaviour. With expert care, guidance and support they very effectively encourage pupils to settle in lessons, work hard and learn.
- Teaching is lively and captures pupils' interest. Relationships between pupils, teachers and classroom assistants are very positive. This reassures pupils, builds their confidence and trust and leads to pupils achieving high levels of engagement in learning.
- Teachers know pupils extremely well and develop a fine understanding of their academic and other needs. Pupils' needs are firmly established by thorough assessments which are the basis for very effective lesson planning. Pupils' work is closely matched to their point in learning and teaching is consistent across the school in ensuring that lessons are challenging.
- Pupils' work is conscientiously checked and marked by each teacher. They give each pupil clear advice on how they can improve and the extent to which they are succeeding in reaching their targets.
- The expectations of all pupils are high and teachers match these with what is expected in a mainstream primary school. Outstanding teaching ensures that pupils meet high expectations. Where teaching was good, rather than outstanding, some pupils got stuck and were unable to achieve the lesson's challenging objective. For example, when Year 5 pupils were redrafting a letter each had written, adding more elaborate language, some who could not think of new words to use were not given enough help to find them.
- The teaching of reading and writing is adventurous and uses pupils' first-hand experiences. Pupils were inspired to write about a visit to a Remembrance Day memorial in connection with their topic on the World Wars. Strange doorways appeared around the school and pupils were given clues as to what lay behind them which really stimulated their imagination and encouraged the development of exciting ideas for writing.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils rapidly develop exemplary attitudes to learning and these are firmly consolidated the longer they are pupils in the school.
- The significant number of pupils who started school this term are well settled. Very positive relationships with staff encourage trust and co-operation. Like other pupils, new pupils are keen to please and they show respect for staff.
- Pupils enjoy school and the surveys of pupils' and their parents' views strongly agree. Attendance is above average. The school's values, its calmness and clear expectations, and the very effective way in which clear routines are maintained, contribute significantly to pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Topics studied by pupils teach them well about different cultures and religions. Links with schools are used effectively so pupils make contact with pupils from diverse cultures and who have different beliefs to their own.
- In lessons, pupils settle quickly and they get ready to learn without having to be reminded of expectations or needing much encouragement. They rightly anticipate worthwhile learning and are quick to engage in lessons, listening attentively and confidently making contributions.
- Pupils work with confidence and are prepared to take risks in getting things wrong and not be defeated when this happens. They mostly persevere with tasks and keep up their efforts until work is completed.
- Pupils work together on tasks very constructively and get along very well with each other. They

take pride in their work, do it methodically and value what they achieve. Staff encourage accuracy, neat presentation and good handwriting and most pupils strive hard to achieve this.

- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good even though there are occasions when pupils are unable to cooperate and they cause minor distractions. Over time, behaviour improves significantly.
- Inappropriate behaviour is managed by staff extremely effectively so that it does not escalate or unduly interfere with the learning and well-being of others. Incidents are rigorously recorded and analysed leading to changes in procedures and the curriculum which reduce the causes of unacceptable behaviour.
- Pupils feel safe and parents are assured that their children are kept safe in school. Staff provide a very comprehensive oversight of each pupil's emotional and social well-being. Issues such as bullying are managed robustly and this greatly minimises incidents. Pupils are confident of reporting if they are being bullied, in the knowledge this will be dealt with immediately and effectively by staff. There is very effective provision for supporting pupils when they are feeling vulnerable. Very close partnerships with external agencies ensure a co-ordinated and consistent approach to supporting pupils and their families.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Leaders' aims and ambitions are infectious and this has forged a very cohesive staff group who pursue improvement relentlessly and with enthusiasm. There is a very firm belief that pupils' social, emotional and behavioural difficulties are no excuse for low attainment. There is real determination throughout the school for pupils' achievement to compare favourably with that found in mainstream primary schools.
- Leaders ensure that staff constantly improve their expertise in meeting pupils' social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Their outstanding care, guidance and support for pupils is complemented by the strong partnerships with parents, schools and external agencies. Safeguarding procedures are robustly implemented and kept under regular review.
- Teachers and their classroom assistants are continually improving the ways they help pupils to learn and actively seek new approaches and training opportunities to increase their knowledge and skills in the classroom.
- The management of the school's work is rigorous and very systematic. A thorough check is kept on pupils' progress and on the quality of teaching. Occasionally, because the quality of teaching is scrutinised more robustly than pupils' experience of learning during lessons, reasons are sometimes missed as to why some pupils struggle with their work.
- Leaders achieve a high level of coherence in setting teachers' objectives and the school's development priorities and link these firmly to their understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, the quality of teaching, pupils' progress and the curriculum in particular. This contributes significantly to the school's substantial capacity to continue improving.
- The curriculum is very well matched to pupils' needs and offers a broad range of work and activities to interest them and ensure that they enjoy school. The provision for literacy and numeracy is extremely well planned and meets comprehensively the wide range of pupils' learning needs. Physical education and the promotion of a healthy lifestyle are strong aspects of the curriculum and this is being further developed with the use of the Physical Education and Sports Grant. An outdoor gymnasium and adventure activities are being planned as well as training for staff in providing a wide range of sports.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are closely involved with the school and very well-informed about its work. They ensure that they have a wide range of information and this is dealt with systematically. Appropriate priority is given to checking the school's analysis and evaluation of pupils' progress and of the quality of teaching. Governors have the experience and expertise to draw accurate conclusions from information and use this effectively to question and challenge

leaders. Governors visit the school regularly and pursue specific lines of enquiry to follow up their discussions of the school's work. They look in particular at the spending of the pupil premium and how this is improving pupils' outcomes.

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	133397
Local authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	429396

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	37
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Kennedy
Headteacher	Michelle Richards / Heather Stokes (Acting Headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	29 March 2011
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