

Washingwell Community Primary School

Bucks Hill View, Broom Lane, Whickham, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear, NE16 4RB

Inspection dates 19–20 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- There is too much variation in pupils' attainment and too few pupils make good progress compared to that in other schools.
- Pupils' skills in writing do not develop at a good rate because they do not have enough opportunities to practise their skills when undertaking work as part of lessons across the curriculum subjects.
- Teaching is inconsistent over time, as some lessons are not sufficiently well adapted to the needs of all pupils, including challenging the most-able pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2.
- Pupils are not encouraged to follow up the teachers' advice on how a piece of work might be improved after it has been marked. This means that they do not always learn from their mistakes.
- The leadership of the school, including the governing body, does not yet monitor effectively enough how different groups of pupils, such as the most-able pupils, are doing to ensure that all groups of pupils achieve equally well.

The school has the following strengths

- Attainment at Key Stage 1 has improved, particularly in reading, where more pupils are now making good progress.
- The gap between the attainment of pupils eligible for free school meals, and other pupils, has reduced substantially.
- Pupils behave well in class and they have a very positive attitude towards their learning. This is because good behaviour is taught as soon as they enter Reception.
- Pupils feel safe in school and have a high regard for school staff.
- The headteacher has strengthened the leadership of the school. Leaders, coupled with a supportive governing body, which now holds the school to account more effectively, have begun to make improvements to teaching and pupils' achievement across the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 14 lessons or parts of lessons taught by eight different teachers.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and talked to them about how much reading they do as well as looking at their work in class.
- Discussions took place with members of the governing body, staff, groups of pupils and a meeting was held with a representative of the local authority.
- Documents were examined, including those relating to safeguarding, the school's improvement plan, and records of its checks on teaching and learning, as well as the school's own assessment data.
- The views of 38 parents who responded to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), one parental letter as well responses to the school's own questionnaires, which surveyed 48 parents' views were also taken into account.
- One member of staff completed a questionnaire about their view of the school.

Inspection team

Frank Cain, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Benjamin Harding

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Washingwell is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, children of forces personnel and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- Sixty pupils across different year groups joined the school since 2010 after another local school was closed.
- An Additionally Resourced Mainstream (ARMS) unit was set up in the school in November 2010 for up to 16 autistic children. It currently provides for 13 pupils.
- There have been substantial changes in the school staffing over the last two academic years, including a new headteacher in June 2011.
- Government floor standards, which relate to minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress, were not met in 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching across the school and so improve pupils' attainment by:
 - ensuring that all lessons have work which is appropriate to the different abilities of all pupils, including to challenge the most-able pupils and particularly in Key Stage 2
 - giving pupils time to learn from their mistakes after their books have been marked
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills across the curriculum subjects.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, including governance, by ensuring that they monitor how well different groups of pupils are performing more regularly.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- When children enter the school in Reception they have skills that are broadly typical for their age, apart from in reading where it is lower. By the time they leave at the end of Year 6 their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is usually broadly average. This represents expected progress for the majority of pupils across each key stage. Too few make better than the expected rate of progress and consequently, achievement requires improvement.
- Achievement in writing requires improvement because there are inconsistencies in pupils' attainment and progress across the different year groups. Although attainment in writing is improving, pupils' achievement is still held back because they are not given enough occasions to practise their skills and to develop opportunities for more imaginative writing, such as when writing stories.
- In reading, although pupils in Year 1 did not achieve well in the 2013 screening check on how well pupils understand the sounds that letters make (phonics), inspection evidence shows that pupils who did not meet the standard, who are now in Year 2, are capable of reading passages of text very well. More pupils are now making better progress in reading because of improvements to quality of teaching of phonics. By the time pupils reach Year 6, many are confident, fluent readers.
- Recent Key Stage 1 results showed improvements for the most-able pupils in all areas. At Key Stage 2 however, for the most-able pupils these improvements are not evident because the work they do is not always sufficiently challenging.
- Recent variations in pupils' attainment have, in part, been due to the admission of pupils across the year groups following a local school closure. Pupils joined with little or no validated information on how well they were doing or had achieved thus far. In 2013, the Year 6 class contained only five pupils (out of a total of 26) who had been in the school since Year 3. Pupils new to the school made progress comparable with that of other pupils.
- Pupils in the ARMS unit are fully integrated into mainstream classes across the school and are supported well by additional specialist staff. These pupils, and others who are disabled or have additional special educational needs, make progress similar to that of others in the school in English and mathematics.
- The difference between the attainment of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and other pupils in the school in English and mathematics, has reduced substantially so that it is now equivalent to about half a term by the time they leave at the end of Year 6. This gap is considerably smaller than the gap between eligible and non-eligible pupils nationally. Inspection evidence shows that they work well in lessons and more pupils are now making better progress than previously.
- The school takes appropriate steps to promote equality of opportunity, but efforts to do so are hampered because the systems used to review the varying achievement of different groups of pupils are not yet effective.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Although teaching is improving and the majority of teaching observed during the inspection was good, overall teaching requires improvement. This is because pupils' achievement over time has been too inconsistent and as a result, too few pupils have made good progress, particularly in writing.
- Some teachers do not always provide work that is matched well to pupils' varying abilities to allow all pupils to achieve well. At times, the most-able pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2, are expected to complete more work, rather than doing more difficult exercises. This means that the most-able do not always achieve as well as they could.
- Teachers give advice to pupils about where they could improve a piece of work. However, they

do not give pupils enough opportunities to make additions and changes so that they learn from their mistakes.

- Teachers now place a stronger emphasis on ensuring that pupils' basic literacy and numeracy skills develop at a good rate. The teaching of the sounds that letters make (phonics) for example, is good and progress in reading is improving strongly. Lower-ability pupils in Year 2 for example, can read complex words such as 'twilight' confidently. Teachers encourage pupils to develop good handwriting skills and praise pupils for doing so. Even so, teachers do not yet provide enough opportunities for pupils to practise their skills and to write imaginatively and as a result, attainment in writing is not improving at a strong enough rate.
- In a Year 5 science lesson, where the teaching was good, pupils were conducting experiments on the properties of different objects to see, for example, if they were magnetic. One group was puzzled to find that some two-pence coins were attracted to a magnet while others weren't. The teacher skilfully turned this into a wider study to see if pupils could discover why this was the case. Some pupils rightly realised that it might be due to when the coins were made.
- Many teachers use effective questioning and pupil discussions, along with helpful visual prompts, to make sure that pupils make good gains in acquiring skills and knowledge. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson on percentages for example, the teacher effectively used group work to link what the pupils knew to new mathematical problems when using percentages.
- In Reception, there is a good mixture of teacher-led and child-initiated activities and there are many opportunities for learning, particularly in the outdoor area. Changes in the Early Years Foundation Stage have improved the provision and the quality of teaching since the last inspection.
- The high number of teaching assistants makes a significant difference to how well the pupils they support learn, including those from the ARMS provision. They provide a helpful balance between providing support and guidance and encouragement for pupils to do things for themselves.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The vast majority of parents surveyed indicated that behaviour is good and inspection evidence confirms this.
- At the start of the day, pupils line up in an orderly way ready to start school. They move about the school sensibly in the narrow corridors and outside the classroom their behaviour is good.
- On the school yard at break times, pupils behave well, although they indicated they would like more play equipment to be made available. At lunchtime however, there is plenty of equipment. Some pupils take responsibility for tidying it away five minutes before lessons restart.
- Pupils are proud of their school and the work they do, including their good handwriting. One child, who in the past had struggled with his reading, was so thrilled with how well he had improved, exclaimed 'I'm a star'.
- Adults have high expectation about behaviour and good routines are insisted upon. In Reception, when the teacher claps her hands all the children copy her. They know this is a signal to stop what they are doing and listen carefully.
- Overall, pupils have positive attitude towards their learning. Occasionally, the attitudes of a few pupils can falter a little when part of a lesson is less captivating. However, staff manage behaviour well, quickly bringing back learners to focus on their task.
- Pupils indicate there is very little bullying and say that when it does occur it is dealt with quickly and effectively. They are very complimentary about school staff. Pupils say they feel safe in school because of the site security.
- The school has a 'behaviour hub' where any pupils who misbehave go during break times, but there are also positive aspects with many rewards and trophies to celebrate good behaviour.
- Attendance is just below average but it is improving at a good rate. The proportion of pupils who are absent for prolonged periods has reduced.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management are improving, but inconsistencies in pupils' achievement and teaching, over time, means that it requires improvement.
- Leaders are yet to ensure that teachers provide work in lessons that is always closely tailored to pupils' different abilities. This has resulted in variable achievement in the school, including for the most-able pupils.
- The ways of tracking how well pupils are doing has also improved as it now pinpoints any variances between the achievements of individual pupils more readily. However, these systems need refining and simplifying, so that they more routinely highlight how well different groups of pupils are performing to see if they are achieving well, such as the most-able pupils.
- The headteacher has successfully strengthened the quality of leadership in the school and particularly the leadership of teaching. Senior leaders of the key subjects of literacy and numeracy for example, now regularly observe lessons, conduct detailed reviews of pupils' work in books and model good teaching practice with demonstration lessons for other staff. Their increased effectiveness in their roles is resulting in improvements in teaching and as a result, pupils' achievement is speeding up. Furthermore, the accountability of both teachers and leaders has been sharpened by better links between teachers' performance and salary progression.
- The vast majority of parents support the school and believes that the school helps their children to do their best. A small minority think that they could be better informed about their child's progress.
- The school works well with outside agencies to help pupils with emotional and learning difficulties, so that they are able to operate successfully in a mainstream classroom.
- The headteacher has been given support from the local authority, including providing training for governing body so that it is better placed to hold the school to account.
- The curriculum is improving. It is well balanced and ensures enjoyable learning, particularly in studying how other people live in different countries. Literacy and numeracy skills are now given greater attention across subjects to enable pupils to reinforce their key skills. The school's effective promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is shown by pupils' willingness to work together with their fellow pupils.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet current requirements. There is a member of the governing body who oversees safeguarding.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Effective training allows the governing body to be very knowledgeable about information on the school regarding how well individual pupils are doing. Governors understand how successful the teachers are in improving pupils' progress. They have made sure that teachers' pay has been linked more closely with classroom performance and understand how the pupil premium funding is impacting on the target groups' improved achievement. Governors are aware of the new sports funding and were able to explain that it was having an impact on the number of new clubs and the uptake of physical activities by some who did not normally participate.

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	108356
Local authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	425777

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	177
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sally Lovatt
Headteacher	Alison Hall
Date of previous school inspection	29 February 2012
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