

# Aycliffe Village Primary School

North Terrace, Aycliffe Village, Newton Aycliffe, County Durham, DL5 6LG

**Inspection dates** 22–23 January 2014

<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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve well from their individual starting points in reading, writing and mathematics.
- By the end of Year 6, standards of attainment are generally close to and sometimes above average.
- Pupils read avidly for pleasure. They borrow books frequently from the well-stocked school library.
- Teaching is good. Pupils enjoy their lessons because they are interesting. Marking tells pupils what to do to improve their work.
- Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Pupils are polite, friendly and helpful. They enjoy the school's many different clubs.
- The school makes sure that pupils are safe and secure. Pupils say, 'We are like one little family'. Parents agree that their children feel safe at school and are happy.
- Good leadership of teaching means that pupils' achievement continues to improve, especially in reading and mathematics.
- Governors support and challenge the school in equal measures. They visit often and know what is going on.
- The headteacher has created a school to which pupils enjoy coming and which parents recommend to others. Attendance is high and the school is getting bigger because it is popular.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Aspects of teaching and subject leadership are not wholly successful in raising achievement in writing, particularly for the most able pupils.
- Pupils do not write often enough or at length or practise writing skills in different subjects. Some of their handwriting and presentation is untidy.
- Subject leaders do not focus sufficiently well on developing teachers' skills throughout Key Stages 1 and 2 so that the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in writing increases.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed nine lessons or parts of lessons taught by six teachers.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, staff, five governors, including the vice-chair of the Governing Body, and two groups of pupils from Year 6. She had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection took into account the 46 responses in the online questionnaire (Parent View). The inspector also had a conversation with parents who requested a telephone call.

## Inspection team

Lesley Clark, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium is low. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The number of pupils on roll has increased by almost one third since the last inspection. The school takes pupils from a much wider geographical area than formerly.
- There have been several staffing changes and an increase in teaching and support staff over the past two years.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Improve aspects of teaching and subject leadership in order to raise achievement in writing, particularly for the most able pupils, by:
  - giving pupils more opportunities to write in lessons and at length
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to practise and apply their writing skills in other subjects
  - expecting high standards in handwriting and presentation
  - ensuring that subject leaders focus on developing teachers' skills throughout Key Stages 1 and 2 so that the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in writing increases.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils achieve well from individual starting points that are generally a bit below expected levels. By the start of Year 1, the majority are working within the level expected of their age and a few reach a good level of development.
- Reception children make good progress. They learn and practise new skills at a good rate. For example, the most able children practised simple addition, counting on from large numbers such as 51p in the fruit shop.
- Pupils achieve well in Key Stage 1. Their attainment in the phonics (letters and the sounds they make) screening check at the end of Year 1 is above average.
- Standards of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics are broadly average by the end of Year 2. Comparatively few pupils reach the higher Level 3, especially in writing.
- Pupils make good progress overall so that by the end of Key Stage 2 standards are close to and sometimes above average. Currently, half the pupils in Year 6 are working at above expected levels in reading and mathematics, with just under one-fifth performing at the level expected of 14-year-olds.
- Pupils read widely and avidly, often borrowing books from the well-stocked school library. They discuss and recommend favourite authors or swap books with each other because they are keen to read a whole series involving favourite characters. They skim read accurately for information.
- In mathematics, pupils make rapid progress. For instance, the most able pupils quickly understood the relationship between ratio, proportion and equivalence and used this knowledge to solve a mystery for the Mathematics Detective Agency!
- Although results in national tests fluctuate because of the small numbers in year groups, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 in writing is usually small. This is because pupils are unused to writing regularly at length or in a wide range of different subjects. They learn the technical skills but do not practise using them often enough. Some handwriting and presentation is a bit careless and hurried and so not as neat as it should be.
- Pupils supported through school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs make good and sometimes better progress. They do well compared to similar groups nationally. Most reach expected levels in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 because of the consistently good quality support they receive throughout the school.
- The pupil premium funding is used well to support individual pupils. They make as good progress as others in the school. However, year by year the numbers of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals are so small that any comparison between their attainment and other pupils in the school would be statistically meaningless. The school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination successfully.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good in the Reception class. Short, taught sessions are followed by stimulating, challenging and constructive indoor and outdoor activities. As a result, children concentrate for increasingly long periods of time as they practise newly acquired skills.
- Pupils' learning is strongest in Year 2 and Year 6. Lessons are lively and fast-paced but interspersed with frequent examples from pupils' work which teachers then use as teaching points. This sharpens pupils' understanding and challenges them further. The most able pupils in Year 6, for example, moved on to solve complex mathematical problems more efficiently once they had grasped the principle behind simplifying fractions.
- Most teachers use up-to-date technology well to show pupils what they are learning and how to tell if they are successful. This helps pupils to make good progress because they check periodically how well they are doing and whether there is something they have missed.

- Teaching assistants are used well in all lessons to help individual pupils and to support the learning of different groups of pupils, including those supported through the pupil premium or those who have special educational needs.
- Teachers have a good knowledge of the different techniques to make writing effective. As a result, pupils know that they must paragraph their work, use different length sentences, a range of punctuation and varied vocabulary.
- Teachers do not always allow sufficient time for pupils to complete writing tasks or plan enough opportunities for pupils to write more often and at length. This minimises the opportunity for pupils to practise what they have been taught.
- Teachers also miss opportunities to promote writing skills in other subjects and so pupils are not used to writing in a range of different contexts.
- Marking is good and tells pupils how to improve their work. It is detailed and helpful.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite, helpful and friendly, offering to carry books or to tidy away resources.
- Pupils move around school calmly and with consideration for others, holding open doors and showing respect for others. They say this is because, 'The teachers treat us with respect.'
- Lunchtimes are happy occasions. Pupils eat lunch sociably together and then take full advantage of the school's extensive outdoor play areas to play games and different sports activities with their friends.
- Extra-curricular clubs thrive because the pupils reflect the leadership's view that 'Keeping fit is a life skill.' Consequently, pupils of all ages attend many different clubs, including dance, gymnastics and gardening clubs, for example.
- The last hour of each week, known as 'Privilege Time', gives pupils further opportunities to develop their wide-ranging interests in sport and the creative arts.
- Pupils behave well in lessons. They listen attentively and carry out tasks well. When the most able pupils select their own level of challenge they work assiduously. However, sometimes, pupils dash off writing or leave it incomplete.
- Older pupils have many responsibilities such as running the school council, sports committee and the 'mega motion' committee. As a result, pupils take an active interest in what goes on, many cycle, scoot or walk to school and attendance is much higher than average.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Parents agree.
- Pupils are not afraid of being bullied. They know about the different forms of bullying and have a good understanding of e-safety, cyber-bullying and of how to stay safe. They do not call each other names, explaining, 'We argue over little things but nothing serious.'

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

- The headteacher has created a happy learning environment where pupils thrive and teachers enjoy working.
- As a result, the school is popular with parents and the school is much bigger than it was when it was last inspected. It is enjoyed by pupils who say, 'Teachers care about you. It's easy to make friends.'
- Well-organised leadership of teaching means that teaching is good or better in most classes. Senior leaders identify accurately where teaching needs to improve and put in suitable support based on an accurate evaluation of what needs to improve further.
- Teachers are fully accountable for the progress their pupils make. They hold regular meetings to check on pupils' progress so they can give timely support to those who need extra help.
- The pupil premium funding is used well to support pupils' academic achievement and so they do

as well as other pupils.

- The school uses performance management and appraisal effectively to ensure that experienced teachers have suitable responsibilities and to give further support and professional development when needed.
- Subject leaders have yet to focus on developing teachers' skills throughout both key stages to ensure that the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels in writing increases.
- The curriculum is varied and wide ranging and develops pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding well. For instance, learning a modern foreign language and communicating with schools in several different countries across Europe and Africa give pupils insights into different cultures.
- The new primary school sports funding is allocated to improve pupils' skills in competitive sports, provide swimming lessons for more pupils and to provide coaching and training for teachers. The impact is seen in improved participation rates in festivals and competitions and a great enthusiasm for sport across the school.
- Safeguarding ensures that staff and pupils are safe. It fully meets current government requirements.
- The local authority gives light touch support to this good school.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors support and challenge the school in equal measures. They are very well-informed and check the data on the school's performance thoroughly. As a result, they know how well pupils, including those supported through the pupil premium funding, are progressing. They are currently checking the performance of the most able pupils, especially in writing. Governors know what is happening in school because they visit often, check pupils' work on display and leave comments on sticky notes or in the 'governors' comment book'. They understand how well teaching is led and the impact of continuing professional development on staff performance. Detailed discussions in governing body meetings show that governors are closely involved in the management of staff. Timely decisions have resulted in the expansion of the school.

## 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>	114101
<b>Local authority</b>	Durham
<b>Inspection number</b>	431329

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>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	136
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Susan Hindle
<b>Headteacher</b>	J Gargan
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 March 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01325 300227
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