

Berwick Hills Primary School

Westerdale Road, Middlesbrough, North Yorkshire, TS3 7QH

Inspection dates 11–12 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- Children have an excellent start in the Nursery and Reception classes. They make good progress from their starting points throughout the rest of the school. Pupils' progress in Key Stage 2 is outstanding in writing.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teaching staff are highly motivated to improve their skills continually.
- Pupils' attendance and punctuality has improved because of the work by the school. Attendance is now average and punctuality is good. Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils are motivated to learn and show high levels of respect to each other and adults. They are very proud of their school.
- The school provides a very safe, harmonious and nurturing environment. The school's work to keep pupils safe is outstanding and they feel extremely safe. The staff ensure that all pupils are given every opportunity to engage in school life fully.
- Strong leadership by the headteacher and deputy headteacher have ensured that changes are having a positive impact on improving pupils' progress and teaching. Excellent team work and mutual support are evident across the school.
- The governing body effectively challenges all aspects of the school's work and provides high quality support.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' progress in mathematics is good, but not as good as it is in writing. Pupils are not always confident in applying their skills to solve problems.
- Teaching is not yet outstanding. Some lessons do not sustain pupils' interest. Marking of pupils' work it is not consistent in telling pupils how to improve.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons. In addition, inspectors made short observations to a number of lessons where pupils were working in small groups. Inspectors also listened to pupils read and reviewed their written work.
- Meetings were held with different groups of people involved with the school. These included pupils, members of the governing body, the headteacher and deputy headteacher, senior leaders, members of teaching staff and an officer from the local authority.
- The 12 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and the school’s surveys for parents were examined. The school’s website was also reviewed.
- A range of documents including the information on pupils’ achievements, school’s data on pupils’ current progress, documents relating to planning for improvement, procedures for checking the quality of teaching, documents relating to safeguarding and records relating to behaviour and attendance was reviewed.

Inspection team

Barbara Hudson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Julia Bayes

Additional Inspector

Janice Stephenson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is larger than an average-sized school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is above average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement for special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium, which provides funding for children in local authority care, those from service families and those known to be eligible for free school meals, is well above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the last inspection there have been five changes in the teaching staff.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate progress in mathematics even more by:
 - ensuring the relatively new school's calculations policy is embedded into the teaching
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to apply their number skills to solving problems rather than practising skills for too long
 - insisting that pupils present their mathematical work to a consistently high standard.
- Improve teaching and the rate of progress pupils make by:
 - ensuring a more consistent approach to the marking of pupils' work so that pupils know exactly what they need to improve, have time to make improvements and use their improvements in subsequent lessons
 - ensuring that pupils are not given too long to complete activities so that they lose interest and the challenge diminishes.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' achievement is good because they want to learn, are very well cared for by staff and the teaching is good.
- Children join the Nursery with skills and abilities that are well below those expected for their age. They make excellent progress in the Nursery and Reception classes because they are provided with a wide range of high quality learning experiences. The staff are very adept at asking pertinent questions at the correct time which enhance the children's speaking and listening skills. Social skills move on at a rapid pace because staff frequently demonstrate what they expect the children to do and learn in a variety of situations. This was evident when a teacher helped three children to resolve the problem of one too many children playing inside the Ice Cream Parlour. Children are swiftly introduced to numbers and letters and their sounds through games and rhymes, so that by the time children start in Year 1 many of their earlier gaps in skills have been closed.
- As pupils move through Key Stage 1 they make good progress from their starting points. In 2013, standards at the end of Year 2 showed a decline in reading, writing and mathematics. This was because in that year group there were many more lower-ability pupils and fewer higher-ability pupils. Evidence from school data and pupils' work showed that most pupils had made good progress from their individual starting points. Current attainment in Year 2 shows that many more pupils are getting closer to and some will exceed the levels expected in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils in Key Stage 2 make good progress and leave the school with standards that are broadly average. Pupils' progress in writing is outstanding and results in the 2013 Year 6 test were above average and this continues to be the case. This is because the school's focus on improving pupils' writing skills has been successful. Pupils in Key Stage 2 benefit from the focus within the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 on extending pupils' speaking skills so that they can explain their ideas clearly and then produce them in writing.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics is good, but it is not yet as good as it is in writing. The school is already working on this with the recent introduction of a new policy on calculations, but this is not yet fully embedded. In some lessons pupils spend too long practising their mathematical skills rather than applying them to problem-solving activities. This slows their learning and reduces their ability to apply their skills to solving problems. In some classes, pupils' presentation of their mathematical work is not as good as it is in their written work and this leads to some errors that could easily be avoided.
- Progress in reading has rapidly improved because the strategies put in place are now embedded. This is especially the case with the teaching of letters and their sounds which enables children in the Early Years Foundation Stage to make an excellent start to reading. Pupils in Year 1 are building on the excellent start and the vast majority of pupils are now working at the expected level. In the 2013 Year 1 screening check for letters and their sounds, achievement was low because the work the teachers were doing had not had an impact on the results. Predictions are higher this year. Throughout Key Stage 1 pupils have many opportunities to practise their skills individually, in groups and with the whole class. Older pupils read widely and with understanding across the curriculum. The excellent library is used well by pupils to research information and to read for pleasure. Pupils say they are finding the new reading record booklets very useful and because of them they are reading much more frequently at home.
- Staff are very vigilant to ensure that all pupils have every opportunity to achieve their very best. As a result, the progress of the most-able pupils is good overall, although in mathematics some could move on at a faster rate if they did not spend so much time repeating skills that they had accomplished.
- The funding from the pupil premium has provided more teachers to support pupils who are struggling with their reading, writing or mathematical work. It has also provided enhanced pastoral intervention for those families with particular social and personal needs. As a result,

pupils supported by the funding, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, make good progress from their starting points. In 2013 tests, these pupils' attainment was one term behind that of their peers in school and was the same as for similar groups nationally in English and mathematics.

- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress from their starting points. Staff seek the best advice that they can from support services and they use this to tailor support carefully for individual pupils.
- Equal opportunities are ensured in a variety of ways. For example, the school's comprehensive tracking systems monitor pupils' progress effectively and if a child is falling behind, additional support is very quickly put in place.

The quality of teaching is good

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have ensured that improving the quality of teaching is the main focus of the school. Since the previous inspection, weaker aspects of teaching have been improved and although teaching is not yet outstanding, there are more examples of outstanding practice, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage, Year 6 and in writing.
- Teachers use their good subject knowledge effectively to plan lessons that build on pupils' skills and extend their learning. This is better in English than mathematics, but is improving as the new calculation policy becomes more embedded.
- Information about pupils' progress is used effectively to set work that meets the needs of different groups of pupils. Exceptionally good teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants ensures that all pupils are provided with support when it is most needed. This increases pupils' learning.
- Pupils enjoy their learning and most are very eager to do their best. Most listen attentively in lessons and settle promptly to their tasks and try hard. Expectations of pupils' work are high in writing and work is presented exceptionally well. In mathematics, teachers do not always insist that work is presented neatly and this leads to some pupils making errors.
- Pupils respond very positively to the well-framed questions and instructions from staff. This was evident in a Year 6 mathematics lesson about area and perimeter. Occasionally, some pupils lose interest and quietly disengage when the pace of learning slows. This happens when pupils are given too long to complete activities so that they lose interest and the challenge diminishes. This happens most often in mathematics lessons when pupils are given too long to complete an activity.
- Pupils make excellent gains in their learning when teachers consistently provide high levels of challenge throughout the lesson for pupils of all abilities. This was very evident in the Nursery class when children were learning how to spread jam on to their bread for snack time.
- Marking of pupils' work is regular, with some examples of very specific feedback that helps pupils to improve further. This is not consistent throughout the school. Too often pupils are not given the time to respond to the written comments and they do not follow the advice provided in subsequent lessons.
- Parents feel that their children are taught well and are supported very well so that they can make good progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils have a very clear understanding of the rewards and consequences of their behaviour. As one pupil said, 'We just behave well because we know that it is expected.'
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy their school life and are very respectful and show great care for each other and adults. They work and play co-operatively in lessons, playtimes and lunchtimes. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very well in all aspects of school

life.

- Their attendance is average. The vast majority of pupils are punctual. Attendance has improved year on year due to the rigorous systems in place to ensure that pupils and their parents are aware of the importance of coming to school and on time.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils feel exceedingly safe in school and are aware of how to keep safe outside school. They are confident that if bullying should occur, the staff would quickly ensure that this was resolved.
- Staff provide outstanding support and care for all pupils. Procedures to safeguard and care for all pupils are followed effectively in school. Praise from staff is abundant so that pupils feel good about themselves and want to learn. Staff are particularly good at listening to pupils' concerns and helping them to resolve their problems. Pupils are also very confident that if they have a problem they can talk to a member of staff who will do their best to help.
- Most pupils are eager to learn and have pride in their work. There are, however, a small minority of pupils who quietly disengage when they are given too long to think of an answer or to complete a task. Some pupils do not automatically present their mathematical work as well as they can, because some teachers do not insist on high quality presentation.
- All parents say that their children are very happy and safe in school and the vast majority feel that pupils are well behaved. Inspectors agree staff create a culture where pupils can flourish and enjoy learning.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher are a very strong team. They are insightful, yet highly supportive of the staff. They quickly seek resolutions to a problem and have the tenacity to follow through areas for improvement. An excellent example of this is the improvement in teaching through effective evaluations and follow up, using expertise within the school, from outside providers and giving support for individual staff where required. Since the last inspection, they have ensured that teaching is consistently good and an increasing amount is outstanding, particularly in writing.
- Senior leaders make good use of information about pupils' progress and have an accurate understanding of what the school does well and how it can improve. Priorities are accurate and the changes made are continuing to have a positive impact on pupils' achievements. Some aspects, such as the new approach to teaching letters and sounds are not yet showing an impact on results of national assessments in Year 1, although there are signs of current improvement.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher are highly skilful at developing staff. This is evident in the development of the senior and middle leadership teams and ensuring that people are accountable for their responsibilities. Their work has had a positive impact on the accuracy of assessment within the school and on pupils' progress in all subject areas.
- Very thorough procedures to check the quality of teaching and pupils' achievements are in place. Staff value the high quality feedback from lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work and only a few aspects, mainly in mathematics, remain needing attention. This information about teaching together with pupil progress meetings ensures that leaders are well placed to tackle variations in performance. This information is used extremely effectively to check how well staff are performing and progress is linked to salary increases.
- The curriculum very effectively promotes pupils' achievements and their personal development. The wide range of events that occur during a school year motivates pupils to learn. Examples include pupils' work with the National Gallery, visits to the theatre and Year 6's involvement in acting part of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. The school provides pupils with a wide range of sporting and creative activities, including educational visits and residential visits, such as a recent visit to London.
- The new primary school sport funding is used effectively to increase teachers' skills and to provide more opportunities for pupils to partake in physical activities within the school day and support a wide range of after-school clubs. In these sessions, pupils are encouraged to enjoy the

activity, understand why physical activity is beneficial to their health and develop their interests and potential.

- School leaders and governors value the effective support provided by the local authority. They feel that the officers in the authority listen to their requests and provide good support. Staff value the range of well-targeted training opportunities offered by local authority.
- The school has good relationships with parents and works very hard to reach all parents. The recent and on-going project Families and Schools Together has proved highly successful. The inclusion of some staff, including administrative staff, in the training has provided even more opportunities for parents to feel more comfortable talking to a member of staff. The parent support advisor is highly effective at relating to parents and keeping them in touch with activities in school.
- The vast majority of parents feel that the school is led and managed well.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has an in-depth understanding of strengths and where the school needs to improve. Governors are challenging, yet supportive of the staff, and have the skills and expertise to hold leaders to account. They actively seek knowledge through reviewing data, asking pertinent questions and seeking additional advice through attending courses. Meetings focus on evaluating improvements in teaching and pupils' standards and progress over the years. Governors use this information well to review the performance of and pay progression of staff. They have a clear understanding of the school's finances, including pupil-premium funding and the primary school sport funding. Governors check that this spending benefits the pupils. They ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet the statutory requirements.

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	111626
Local authority	Middlesbrough
Inspection number	440808

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	357
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ray Holland
Headteacher	Louise Moore
Date of previous school inspection	21 June 2011
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