

# Cragside Primary School

Cragside, High Heaton, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE7 7EL

**Inspection dates** 12–13 February 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
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.

- The inspirational leadership of the headteacher motivates all staff to give of their best for the benefit of the children. The headteacher's passion for learning has created an ethos of hard work and joy in learning which pervades the school.
- Children get off to a flying start in Reception because of the excellent provision made for their learning. They quickly develop the skills and confidence to learn at a rapid rate.
- Pupils' performance in national tests at the end of Year 6 is significantly above the national average. While pupils' achievement in writing is very good, the school recognises there is scope for even higher achievement for some pupils.
- Pupils make outstanding progress from their individual starting points, regardless of their ability or any barriers to their learning, including those pupils who speak English as an additional language. This is because they love learning and are eager to please their teachers.
- Teaching is outstanding. All teachers and teaching assistants share the headteacher's vision to get the best for, and from, every child. They manage the different learning needs of their pupils very well and constantly check that each pupil is secure in their learning.
- Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They show consideration and respect for each other from the earliest age. They work hard in lessons because learning is so much fun. Younger pupils are extremely well cared for by older pupils, who readily take on these responsibilities.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school. Excellent pastoral care from all staff creates a warm, safe environment where excellent relationships flourish. Pupils rightly sense that their interests are at the heart of the school's work.
- The rich, diverse curriculum generates exciting, memorable opportunities for learning. Families particularly value the many opportunities they have to join in their children's learning through 'craft afternoons' and school visits.
- Excellent leadership at all levels has sustained the school's high performance since the previous inspection. Governance is outstanding in its support and challenge for the school.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 27 lessons or parts of lessons, six of which were observed jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Discussions were held with the Chair, and other members of the governing body, senior leaders, staff and pupils.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documentation, including that relating to the school's safeguarding procedures, assessment information and the school's development plan.
- Inspectors undertook an examination of pupils' writing in all phases of the school, and listened to pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 read.
- Inspectors took account of 121 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View; they also took account of 28 questionnaires returned by staff.

## Inspection team

Moira Fitzpatrick, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Geoffrey Seagrove

Additional Inspector

Derek Sleightholme

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Cragside is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- There is a below-average proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after by the local authority.)
- The proportion of pupils supported by school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well-below average.
- The majority of pupils is of White British heritage, and an above-average proportion speaks English as an additional language.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- There is a before- and after-school club that is managed by the governing body.

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

- Further improve achievement in writing for those pupils identified as making slower progress than the majority by:
  - using even more regular checks on the work of these pupils to ensure that they are being stretched to do their very best and consistently make good or better progress
  - implementing existing plans for even closer tracking of the challenge provided for these pupils and taking any necessary action to accelerate their progress.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### is outstanding

- Children enter Reception with skills that are generally at the expected level for their age. Excellent care and good routines help them to settle quickly and learn to share and make friends, so that their learning rapidly gathers pace. By the end of Reception the majority have achieved a good level of development and are extremely well prepared for Year 1. They have very good literacy and numeracy skills, very good social skills and are confident learners with enquiring minds.
- Excellent progress continues as pupils move through the school. By the end of Year 2, pupils' standards in reading, writing and mathematics are consistently well-above national averages. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in these subjects is significantly above national averages and has remained so over a long period. The proportion of pupils making the progress expected of them was above national averages in 2013 in reading, writing and mathematics, while close to half of the pupils made more than expected progress in mathematics.
- Pupils read confidently, fluently and with good understanding and expression. Reading skills are taught extremely well, so that the youngest children quickly learn to apply these to writing, and to reading captions around their classroom. By Year 6, pupils of all abilities are keen readers who are able to explain their reading preferences, and why they enjoy certain authors. Across the school, pupils make frequent use of their reading skills for research into the many exciting topics they study.
- Writing is very well developed because pupils have many opportunities to write in different styles, not only in English lessons, but also in their topic and science lessons. This provides them with some excellent opportunities to design their own layout and present information in many different ways. The very high quality of this work demonstrates clearly pupils' enjoyment and delight in being authors in their own right.
- Pupils' mathematical knowledge and skills are very well promoted by applying them to real-life problems, which helps pupils see the uses of mathematics while making their learning memorable. Teachers provide pupils with frequent opportunities to use their mathematical skills in other subjects, so they are constantly consolidating and extending their skills.
- School data and inspection evidence show that pupils supported at school action or school action plus, and pupils for whom English is an additional language, make good progress because of the close tracking of their needs and the skilful support they receive. This also reflects the schools commitment to ensuring every pupil is given an equal opportunity to succeed and that no one is discriminated against.
- The most able pupils are well challenged in all aspects of their learning, often in small groups which focus on higher-level work. They are highly motivated to do their very best by teachers' high expectations and their own pleasure in seeing just how well they can do.
- The school continues to successfully narrow the gap in attainment between pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and other groups of pupils. Currently, the difference in attainment by Year 6 is less than one term behind that of other groups in English and mathematics.

### The quality of teaching

### is outstanding

- Teaching is outstanding because staff have high aspirations for all pupils in their classes. Teachers fully understand what constitutes high-quality teaching and they willingly learn from each other by sharing the most effective practices.
- High-quality learning begins with teachers' accurate knowledge of their pupils' needs and the skilful way this is used to challenge each individual to make the best progress they can during the lesson. For example, in a very challenging Year 5 English lesson, higher-ability pupils were 'kept on their toes' by the teacher's well-directed questions about a poet's word choices. Her

engagement of other pupils to extend discussion rapidly accelerated pupils' understanding as they probed the possibilities of what the writer intended by using particular words. The class made excellent progress in their understanding of figurative language as a result.

- In many lessons, teachers use investigation successfully to allow pupils to work at their own best rate and develop their confidence as learners. This prepares them well for working independently at home, as seen in many examples of excellent homework research, such as that about Ancient Egypt by Year 3 pupils.
- Investigations are also highly successful when used to challenge pupils to develop their reasoning skills. Pupils in a Year 1 mathematics lesson made excellent progress when sorting objects into groups of the same and different. Skilful questioning by the teacher led pupils to think hard and decide that three groups, not two, were needed to sort the objects by colour and type. Pupils were able to explain their reasons for this decision and went on to learn that they had discovered for themselves how a Venn diagram works.
- High-quality marking is another successful aspect of teaching that contributes to pupils' rapid progress. All staff follow the school's guidelines for feeding back to pupils on what to do to improve their work. They allow pupils time to make these improvements, which helps them to reach their targets quickly and then move on.
- In the Reception classes, learning always moves at a brisk pace, because teachers and teaching assistants are very well organised, know their children well and plan activities that both challenge and enthral children. They give excellent explanations to help children master new learning and carefully group children for activities so that all are appropriately challenged and engaged. Children's mastery of letters and sounds enables them to write at a good level and to read the many notes and captions teachers place around the classroom to reinforce their reading skills.
- Small group teaching is highly effective in boosting pupils' learning. The school uses this to very good effect with pupils who have special educational needs and/or English as an additional language, as well as the most able pupils and those in receipt of the pupil premium.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Behaviour in and around school is exemplary, and pupils encourage each other to conduct themselves well. Pupils are extremely considerate and supportive of each other in lessons. Their consistently thoughtful behaviour is an important factor in their successful learning. It creates a welcoming and friendly atmosphere throughout the school.
- Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning and consistently show a love of learning, because there is so much that is exciting and fun to do in lessons. They have been taught to keep going and support each other so they develop good levels of persistence and resilience. They know they will succeed if they are determined enough.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils are taught very effectively to identify potential risks to their well-being, for example, those associated with roads, railways and the use of the internet. Pupils are clear about what to do if approached by a stranger.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of the different kinds of bullying, such as name calling and cyber bullying. They are adamant that bullying is rare and that, 'everyone knows to tell a teacher if it happens to you or another person'. They are confident that staff deal with it effectively.
- Staff provide excellent pastoral care and support for pupils and their families. Pupils are well known to adults, who are quick to spot any changes in their behaviour. The school has robust systems to support pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, so that they and their families know exactly where to turn for help.
- Parents overwhelmingly agree that behaviour is good, and that their children are safe and happy in school.

**The leadership and management are outstanding**

- Leaders and managers at all levels demonstrate the determination and expertise to continually improve the school. Since the previous inspection, high performance in national tests has been sustained and the quality of teaching has improved further so that now a high proportion of pupils exceed the expected rate of progress.
- Incisive and accurate evaluation by senior and middle leaders provides the school with a clear picture of where further improvement might be needed. This is supported further by excellent teamwork, professional dialogue between staff and sharing good practice, which ensure that follow up action is prompt and effective.
- Excellent systems to monitor pupils' learning ensure any slowing in progress is picked up quickly and remedial action is taken. The introduction of the assertive mentoring tracking and support programme to check on pupils' progress in writing has had a significant impact on raising achievement in the subject. The school recognises that further refinements are needed to ensure every pupil makes the best possible progress.
- The management of staff performance and professional training successfully meet whole-school and individual staff needs. There is a clear link between teachers' performance and their salary progression.
- The excellent curriculum is designed to foster pupils' interests and talents and support them to develop their own lines of enquiry. It is well structured to give pupils frequent opportunities to consolidate their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. There is excellent emphasis on pupils using new technologies to speed up their learning and nurture their independence. The richness and diversity of the curriculum provides excellent opportunities for the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school has used the new primary sport funding effectively to improve the quality and breadth of physical education and sport provision. After-school sporting activities have been extended and pupil participation in sport clubs has increased.
- The local authority provides light touch support for the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body has an excellent understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and is fully involved in driving improvement. It ensures that safeguarding arrangements meet requirements so that pupils are safe. Governors make frequent visits to the school to monitor its work and they take part in a wide range of relevant training to maintain their effectiveness. The budget is managed efficiently so that good levels of staffing support pupils' excellent achievement, and resources for learning are plentiful. Governors challenge the school well through their analysis of school-performance data, and hold it to account for the way funding for pupils supported by the pupil premium is used to raise their achievement. They have good knowledge of the quality of teaching and how senior leaders make checks on this. They hold teachers robustly to account for pupils' achievement, only rewarding those who fully meet their targets.

## 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>	108465
<b>Local authority</b>	Newcastle Upon Tyne
<b>Inspection number</b>	431348

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>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	413
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Geoff Hughes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mike Howard
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 June 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 266 8389
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